

# **Evaluators' Final Report**

## **Independent Evaluation of SDC's Performance in Mainstreaming Gender Equality**

### **Synthesis Report**

Commissioned by the Evaluation + Controlling Division  
of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

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## **Acknowledgements**

This evaluation was conducted between August 2007 and April 2008. It included documentary review, examination of systems, interviews with staff in headquarters, and focus groups with senior men, young women programme officers, young men programme officers, and administrative staff. In the field studies in the Ukraine, Mozambique and Pakistan, national and international staff, partner representatives and some beneficiaries were interviewed.

The authors are extremely grateful to SDC staff in Bern who willingly participated in interviews and focus group discussions. Particular thanks are due to Evaluation and Controlling Division Staff who managed the evaluation, Anne Bichsel, Gerhard Siegfried, Christa Rohner and Regula Herlan. Without their advice, support, coordination and diplomacy this evaluation could not have happened.

We also wish to thank the people who took time to share their knowledge and insight with us. The complete list of those interviewed for the synthesis report is included as Annex B 5.

## **Executive Summary**

There is a favourable climate for gender equality work in SDC, both mainstreamed and addressed specifically to women. Particularly impressive is the advancement of women in SDC through organisational change and redressing imbalances in numbers and opportunities within the organisation. There is also evidence of growing attention to mainstreaming in programming. However, until very recently, there is little evidence of gender analysis at the project design and approval stage. Nor are there objectives or indicators for addressing gender equality in the cooperation strategies. Gender mainstreaming generally occurs when evaluations point to missed opportunities for gender mainstreaming, or when there are gender champions in place. Although the organisation-wide systems for ensuring the mainstreaming element of the policy is implemented are weak, the evaluation identified a number of instances where COOFs or divisions within SDC were developing their own learning and control systems. As a result, gender equality as a development goal and gender integration in operations comes down to chance. In only one of the three case study countries did the COOF invest in the capacity of women's organisations through women-focused or gender specific projects, a programming tool that remains useful when there is great gender inequality, or when there are specific issues that hold back women and thereby undermine development progress.

## **Evaluation findings**

### ***Programme results***

The evaluators found evidence that a growing number of SDC's projects are making significant contributions to gender equality. The country case studies conducted in Ukraine, Mozambique and Pakistan as part of this evaluation illustrate this point well.

In Ukraine, the COOF developed its cooperation strategy (2007-2010) during a period in which governance, at that time a transversal issue alongside HIV/AIDS, was the main driver of in-country

discussions. By the time the cooperation strategy was in preparation, gender replaced HIV/AIDS as the second transversal theme. At a strategic level, the COOF is weak on a gendered theory of change, but has subsequently done much to build gender equality into the annual planning and into the design and implementation of its project portfolio. This has been achieved primarily by introducing a process of “gender certification” of projects/programmes, backed by a local Gender Consultative Committee (GCC) which has a dual role of coaching and appraising.

In Pakistan, the level of gender inequality is one of the highest in the world, especially for poor women. Therefore, the cooperation strategy (2006-2010) gives attention to gender equality and HIV/AIDS as transversal issues to be addressed in all three programming areas: Increasing Income, Improving Governance, and Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation. Efforts have concentrated on ensuring the participation of women in project activities, and in the staffing of partner organisations. The strategy has not explicitly included gender equality objectives – except for the earthquake reconstruction – and projects vary a great deal in how/whether they have addressed gender inequality. This seems to depend on the interest and capacity of the National Programme Officers and on the partners. In those projects that have made an effort, both partners and beneficiaries were able to demonstrate how women had benefited, and how women had gained greater respect and influence in their families and communities. The responsibilities and role of the Gender Focal Point are being redefined, particularly in relation to those of management and National Programme Officers (NPOs) and the COOF intends to include gender equality goals in each of its programme sectors. Pakistan is the only country of the three that were reviewed to invest in women’s organisations. The degree of women’s inequality is so high that the need to support women to organize for their rights is an important development tool. SDC is supporting – with other donors – institutional renewal of one of its key women’s organisation partners because women’s voices are so marginalized in both the public and the private domain.

Mozambique is one of the world’s poorest countries, and is highly aid-dependent. Donor coordination both in terms of sector-wide approaches and for core budget support is an essential element of donor work in Mozambique. For the most part, the government and donors attention to women’s rights and gender equality issues has tended to concentrate in the areas of health and education; progressive legislation exists in a context of extremely weak implementation and lack of government accountability and transparency, and weak gender mainstreaming in development programs. The Cooperation Strategy as a whole and its programs and projects have the potential to benefit women along with men but only some of them are planned on the basis of gender-disaggregated data and a smaller number have gender-specific targets and indicators to monitor progress. In 2006 SDC headquarters organized a staff workshop on gender and HIV/AIDS mainstreaming which the COOF considered helpful and which led to a greater focus on gender issues within the COOF’s annual program planning and review process. The COOF developed minimum standards on gender (and HIV/AIDS) to be reached by 2011 which includes a commitment to elaborate a gender/HIV-AIDS mainstreaming objective for each domain and an outcome indicator on gender mainstreaming at the level of the cooperation strategy.

These illustrative COOF actions reinforce our finding that there is an intuitive sense of good will towards gender equality objectives within the organisation, but that a lack of strategic steering and weak sanctions produces a voluntaristic approach to gender mainstreaming. The COOFs, like HQ, are beginning to work with outcome-oriented programming, instead of monitoring inputs and outputs. This can make it easier to ensure consistent high-quality gender equality outcomes as well.

### ***Organisational dimensions***

Women’s advancement/Equal Opportunities has progressed significantly during the period under review. There is gender balance at the programme officer level, and recruitment of entry-level

professionals has favoured women. In addition, the number of women at senior levels has increased. This is the result of a concerted policy initiative in SDC HQ to correct imbalances in gender representation at all levels.

While the increase in the numbers of women is encouraging, and while there have been policies to encourage women's participation such as part-time work and tele-work, Focus Group Discussions and interviews revealed that among women and men in different levels of seniority there are inter-subjective world views that reflect a lack of communication on workplace norms and culture that may lead to future set-backs.

SDC's Management Information System (SAP) performs a bookkeeping/financial accounting function tracking project inputs. The quality and consistency of information about gender mainstreaming and gender specific projects is inconsistent and therefore unreliable. Because there is no solid information about level of investment in gender equality, observations in this area are tentative, relying on the evaluators' judgment and experience and require further discussion, including agreement on the comparative importance of gender equality for SDC.

### ***Strategic intent***

With respect to strategic intent, the context for strategic mainstreaming of gender equality in SDC means that "gender is optional". This is due to a number of interlinked tensions:

- Thematic/Guideline "fatigue": Gender is widely perceived as just one of a continual stream of thematic requirements and guidelines. The result is that gender equality, along with other formal and informal cross-cutting themes, is devalued and becomes an optional choice. It is significant that the gender toolkit, which was the springboard (along with coaching) in the first phase of mainstreaming, has not been extensively used in operations.
- Decentralised autonomy: Within SDC, on-the-ground contextual sensitivity and flexibility is valued and widely championed as being SDC's comparative advantage over larger donors. This view is reinforced by the findings of successive independent evaluations. The result is that the balance between decentralised autonomy and global strategic coherence and direction often tips in favour of COOFs. Linked to this is a tendency for the various parts of SDC to function autonomously.
- SDC is not yet a learning organisation that is motivated by a curiosity about results, although the shift to outcomes and to a programme approach will push the organisation in this direction. This is reflected in the fact that it lacks an overarching theory of change (with gender equality integrated into this theory). The Gender Equality policy is a strong statement of principles but lacks a "theory of change/effect assumptions", so that there is a "missing middle" between the statement of principles embodied in the policy and the project design and implementation process. The result is a project focussed organisation – in which "pushing the pipeline" gets rewarded despite statements to the contrary.
- Within this "gender is optional" climate, there are, however, good examples of integration of gender equality at the strategic level. This is most notable in the Latin American Department, where strategic approaches have linked a theory of change on women's empowerment and poverty reduction to a system of monitoring outcomes. Every year the department reviews all evaluations for outcomes with a strong focus on gender and empowerment. The Ukraine and Mozambique are developing models for more systematically tracking their contribution to gender equality.

## **Recommendations**

Meeting this challenge of improving SDC's gender equality contribution requires a mix of institutional change and systems reform. Specific areas of technical system reform will be easier to achieve and will have some impact but will be unlikely to have a system wide and sustained impact without accompanying institutional reform.

An innovative feature of this evaluation is that the Core Learning Partnership (CLP) will generate the recommendations for SDC. In the Synthesis Workshop, April 23-24, the evaluation team will facilitate a process of consideration of institutional change and systems reform and assist the CLP in developing recommendations. SDC's Senior Management will take a final stand on the recommendations in COSTRA on June 19.

To facilitate the discussions during the Synthesis Workshop, the evaluation team has identified the areas below as potential areas for consideration by the CLP when it elaborates the recommendations for SDC. The CLP may propose that other or additional issues be addressed.

### **Technical System Reform**

- There is no systematic tracking or monitoring of whether/how the policy requiring gender analysis of all projects/programmes is being done. Similarly, there is no reliable information on the number and value of gender specific projects. The evaluation reviews a number of ad-hoc efforts in this area. Should this be more systematically done, and if so how and by whom?
- There is weak oversight and direction by the senior management board of mainstreaming gender analysis and of gender specific programming, compared to their oversight and leadership of women's advancement/equal opportunities. How can the former be strengthened?
- The current investment in gender mainstreaming in SDC is heavily weighted toward coaching/support compared to monitoring/learning. At the same time, there is a very low level of effort by a number of people across the organization (10% for GFPs is the norm). Is this the optimal organization of SDC's human resources, and if not, how should it be changed, given the constraints on staffing?
- How can SDC ensure greater accountability for gender mainstreaming in its planning and performance evaluation systems (for the programme and for the staff)?
- The Humanitarian Department needs to increase the number of staff (permanent and in the Humanitarian Corps with capacity to ensure gender-equitable design of humanitarian responses. What measures can it take, learning from SDC's women's advancement/equal opportunities and from the experience of other humanitarian organisations?

### **Institutional Reform**

- Is it useful to invest in becoming a learning organisation as one means to add value to its gender mainstreaming work? There is already some work underway on this in SDC, and the trend toward outcome monitoring (as opposed to input/activity measurement) supports this. Meaningful change requires attention to alliance-building and collaboration both inside and outside the organisation (networks, structures, processes). Recent attention to knowledge

management can also support a shift toward becoming a learning organization. What actions does the core learning partnership wish to propose to promote this shift?

- In the review of the women's advancement policy (due before 2010) it is worthwhile exploring the perspectives that different groups of women and men have of the organization, in order to address some of the disjuncture in perception of the organisation and its strengths and weaknesses that were expressed in the focus groups and the interviews (see section 3.2 above). How could this best be done, in way that will generate constructive discussion and recommendations?
- How can this CLP assist SDC to develop a process to enhance the strategic coherence of the organisation? Such a process would help to identify processes and behaviour to build both COOF autonomy and strategic coherence at the organisational level. It would also articulate a conceptual framework to guide programme design and outcome indicators. Such a process would include periodic reviews to ensure new learning was integrated without compromising the coherence of the strategy. Who would develop such a process? Who would lead it? What would ensure buy-in by staff, by partners and peers, by the Swiss Government and the Swiss public? How can gender equality be an integral dimension of such a process?

### **Agreement at Completion**

In an effort to ensure the recommendations were well-targeted, ambitious and achievable, this independent evaluation engaged the Core Learning Partnership in determining whether and how the findings of the evaluation, as reflected in the evaluation team's 'Areas for Recommendations' could be developed as practical and meaningful recommendations. These recommendations, found below, are presented for review and approval by COSTRA.

The recommendations relate to the day-to-day practice of SDC staff, to the planning systems, strategies and accountability at the intermediate level, and to the overall leadership and systematic follow-through of management.

### **At the Organisational Level**

1. Strengthen the role of the senior management board (COSTRA) in leading and overseeing the implementation of the Gender Equality policy. This can be done in a number of ways (staff support to COSTRA for this role; designating a lead person for this role within COSTRA, regular review of Gender Equality progress by COSTRA, etc.).
2. Require the use of the Gender Checklist (which has been developed in conjunction with the OECD DAC) in the preparation of every credit proposal. The checklist will provide useful and meaningful information (for SAP input) to report SDC's contribution to gender equality, and is also a useful conceptual tool to guide programme officers and partners in applying SDC's gender equality policy. Since the Gender Checklist is an outcome-oriented tool, its use could be supported by the 'result-oriented steering working group' that has a related mandate. The Gender Desk will review and report annually to Senior Management on the information generated by use of the Gender Checklist throughout SDC.
3. Ensure that the renewed Women's Advancement/Equal Opportunity policy (2010-2015) builds on the findings of the focus groups conducted for this evaluation.

4. Ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy is reflected in service staff rules of Cooperation Offices.
5. Start a process of independent certification for SDC to support progress on its Equal Opportunities goals.

### **At the Programme Level**

6. Ensure that the programming instruments of all departments (country cooperation strategies, institutional strategies, yearly programs, mid-term strategies) include Gender Equality objectives at the output/results level and at the COOF (country office) performance level. Annual reporting on Gender Equality outcomes shall be done at the Department level (similar to the current annual Latin America ASTRAL process). The departmental reports will be available within SDC and for partners, and will be reviewed by COSTRA. The goals and indicators will be accompanied by appropriate budget allocations.
7. Ensure that the E-Department considers the appointment of a regional gender equality programme manager (responsible for ensuring gender mainstreaming and gender-specific programming) in one or two regions for implementation in 2009. The usefulness of this pilot position should be evaluated after three years.
8. Ensure that the Gender Desk prioritizes working with relevant departments to develop and include tailor-made modules on gender equality issues in existing meeting and training opportunities for different levels of staff (induction for all new staff – both Swiss and national, junior programme officers, management training, annual regional gatherings, humanitarian training, etc.) The purpose of these modules will be to improve the quality and consistency of gender equality work (mainstreaming and gender-specific programming) throughout the organisation. The modules will be oriented to professional development, learning and best practice. All departments shall give priority to including this module in existing training and meeting opportunities.

### **Within Departments**

9. Increase the number of women in the Humanitarian Corps, and report annually on the numbers of women and men applying, recruited and deployed until parity is reached. Use the successful experience of the Women's Advancement programme within SDC as a model within COOFs and at headquarters. (Humanitarian Aid)
10. Recruit and appoint more individuals with social development/gender equality capacity for vacancies in the Humanitarian Department, with a goal of including one person with such skills in every major emergency deployment. (Humanitarian Aid)
11. Integrate staff with Gender Equality skills and training in SDC Humanitarian Response and Reconstruction programmes, through targeted recruitment and specialized training. (Humanitarian Aid)
12. Ensure that Terms of Reference for independent evaluations include questions on how the issue under evaluation addresses the cross-cutting themes of gender equality and governance. (E+C)
13. Ensure that recommendations from independent evaluations include attention to their implications for gender equality goals. (E+C)
14. Ensure that the Gender Desk actively promotes sharing of best practices and application of new and existing tools for Gender Equality. (Gender Desk)

## **Abbreviations**

AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
CAPWIP	Center for Asia Pacific Women in Politics
COOF	Cooperation Office
DAWN	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
E-Dept.	Department for Bilateral Development Cooperation
ERRA	Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (Pakistan)
F-Dept.	Department for Thematic and Technical Resources
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GCC	Gender Consultative Committee
GFP	Gender Focal Point
H-Dept.	Department for Humanitarian Aid
MAP	SDC's system of workplanning and personnel evaluation
M-Dept.	Department for Development Policy and Multilateral Cooperation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NPO	National Programme Officer
O-Dept.	Department for Cooperation with Eastern Europe and CIS (Community of Independent States)
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SWAP	Sector-wide approach
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

# 1 Introduction

## Background and rationale

SDC's Evaluation + Controlling Division mandated an "Independent Evaluation of SDC's Performance in Mainstreaming Gender". SDC has a longstanding commitment to the pursuit of gender equality (gender policy since 1993) and declared gender a transversal theme in 2006.

The rationale for an evaluation at this juncture is three-fold: (i) the long standing emphasis on gender equality and the sheer volume of aid activity; (ii) the changes in donor strategic and operational approaches prompted by the Paris Declaration (PD); and (iii) the recent adoption by SDC of gender (alongside governance) as a transversal issue.

## Purpose and objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is to render accountability and to contribute towards improving SDC's future performance. This has two elements: summative and formative:<sup>1</sup>

- Summative: to render accountability by submitting SDC activities to independent assessment
- Formative: to improve future SDC performance in mainstreaming gender equality through learning; and to contribute to knowledge about promoting gender equality in international cooperation

The objectives of the evaluation are:

- to analyse the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the implementation of SDC's gender equality policy
- to analyze how SDC as an institution (i.e., through its systems, policies, processes, culture) implements its gender equality policy
- to assess institutional learning within SDC with regard to gender equality;
- to assess the coherence and complementarities of SDC's other policies and priorities with its gender equality policy;
- to assess SDC's contribution in promoting gender equality in the context of donor harmonization and alignment with partner country priorities;
- to assess how SDC can best use its limited resources to further gender equality;
- for SDC staff at all levels to reflect on the evaluation findings and make recommendations for improving performance.

## Scope and key questions

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<sup>1</sup> A summative evaluation is a method of judging the worth of a project at the end of project activities, with a focus on impacts. This can be contrasted with a formative evaluation which judges the worth of a project while the project activities are forming or underway.

The scope of the evaluation is in the following three areas, each with an overarching question:

- Programme Results: What is the contribution of SDC programs to gender equality (relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability)?
- Organisational Dimensions: How do SDC's systems, processes, procedures, relations, norms and culture assist or impede SDC's stated policy of contributing to gender equality?
- Strategic Intent: What is the mix of strategies for addressing gender equality and how does this affect the quality and impact of the SDC contribution?

The evaluation included document reviews, interviews and discussions with SDC staff in Bern HQ, and with staff, government and donor counterparts and project partners and beneficiaries in Cooperation Offices (COOFs) in Mozambique, Pakistan and Ukraine. (see Methodology Discussion in the detailed country case studies).

Against each of these three areas and overarching questions, the evaluation addresses a set of key questions at the COOF level which are outlined in the country case study reports.

In Bern, document reviews and interviews with key staff across the organisation examined the link between COOF-level results and processes and Headquarters systems and processes. The evaluators also examined the process of information collection, evaluation and management of SDC gender equality efforts; the degree of organisational monitoring and control of gender equality work; and the process for women's advancement/equal opportunities in SDC. Focus groups with senior men, younger women and younger men professional staff, with gender focal points and with administrative staff gathered data from these perspectives about SDC's culture and ways of working that affect gender equality performance.

### **Expected results**

The evaluation will produce results at output and outcome level.

Evaluation team outputs include:

- Approach and synthesis workshops in HQ and COOFs
- End of mission debriefings with Aides Memoires
- Final evaluators' report
- A DAC abstract.

SDC outputs include:

- Review of findings and recommendations developed
- Core learning Partnership and senior management agreement on recommendations
- Dissemination of evaluation results.

Evaluation outcomes include:

- Sharpening of SDC's understanding of gender relations in development processes
- Improved planning and implementation of gender equality measures
- Improved positioning and focus of gender mainstreaming as transversal issue
- Better understanding of operationalisation of transversal issues in SDC
- Knowledge generation and thematic support with regard to gender equality.

## **Guiding principles**

The evaluation is guided by four important principles:

- Contributing to knowledge
- Understanding the dynamics of policy transmission
- Consultative, participatory and learning oriented
- Learning with regard to transversal issues.

## **The structure of this report**

Following this introduction the report is structured in the following way. Section 2 elaborates on the methodology for developing the synthesis report. Section 3 considers the global context for development assistance and gender equality and elaborates on the findings of the three country case studies and the headquarters research, using the overarching questions of programme results, organisational dimensions and strategic intent to organize the presentation. Section 4 draws out areas for recommendations and concludes.

## **2 Evaluation Methodology**

### **2.1 Analytical framework**

The analytical framework for the evaluation (see Figure 2.1 and 2.2) is an adaptation by the evaluation team of the framework developed by Gender at Work to guide its engagement on gender equality and institutional change.<sup>2</sup>

The framework conceptualises gender equality along two continuums: individual to systemic and informal to formal. The framework can be applied to both *internal* organisational change for gender equality (see Figure 2.1) and *external* strategic and operational change for influencing gender equality outcomes and impacts (see Figure 2.2). The framework focuses on the tension between individual capabilities and structural or systemic opportunities/constraints. Change on the individual continuum (the top half) requires building the capabilities and resources of women and men. The bottom half of the continuum describes the institutional context, which comprises the “rules of the game” governing the behaviour and relationships between men and women. These institutions can be formal (laws, policies and procedures) and informal – and often invisible - sociocultural norms and habits of households, organisations, communities and societies.

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<sup>2</sup> See Rao, Stuart and Kelleher, 1999. *Gender at Work: Organisational Change for Equality* (Washington: Gender at Work); see also Alsop R, M Bertelsen and J Holland, 2006. *Empowerment in Practice: From Analysis to Implementation* (Washington D.C.: The World Bank).

2.1 Analytical framework for gender equality mainstreaming organisational evaluation

<b>Individual</b>	
<p><b>Women’s and men’s consciousness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and men feel respected, confident and secure in their work environment</li> <li>• Staff knowledge and commitment to gender equality</li> <li>• Commitment of the leadership</li> <li>• Capacity for dialogue and conflict management, priority setting and building coherence</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access to and control over resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget, time and human resources devoted to actions to advance equality</li> <li>• Number of women in leadership positions</li> <li>• Training and capacity building for achieving gender equality goals</li> </ul>
<b>Informal</b>	<b>Formal</b>
<p><b>Internal culture and deep structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance of women’s leadership</li> <li>• Organisational ownership of gender issues</li> <li>• Acceptance of needed work-family adjustments</li> <li>• Women’s issues firmly on the agenda</li> <li>• Agenda setting and power sharing open to influence and change</li> <li>• Powerful advocates for shifting agenda on gender equality</li> <li>• Value systems prioritise knowledge and work geared to social inclusion and gender equality</li> <li>• Organisational culture prevents harassment and violence</li> </ul>	<p><b>Formal rules, policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic intent conceptualizes a path toward gender equality within the organisation’s mission and mandate</li> <li>• Gender equality has a high priority in programme and project objectives</li> <li>• Gender analysis is built in early and consistently into programme and project work processes (including planning, implementation and evaluation)</li> <li>• Management and staff are accountable for implementing gender equality policies</li> <li>• Policies for anti-harassment, work-family arrangements, fair employment etc.</li> <li>• Accountability mechanisms and processes that hold the organisation accountable to women clients</li> </ul>
<b>Systemic</b>	

2.2 Analytical framework for gender equality mainstreaming impact evaluation

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Individual</b></p> <p><b>Women's and men's consciousness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women have psychological capability to envision transformative choices towards gender equality</li> <li>• Men have capability to envision and support changes in their own and women's life choices towards gender equality</li> <li>• Men and women have the capability for dialogue and conflict management</li> <li>• Women have decision making opportunities as social, economic and political actors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access to and control over resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women have access to <i>and</i> control over assets including:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Human assets (health, education and skills)</li> <li>○ Social assets (social capital)</li> <li>○ Productive assets (technology, land, value-adding inputs)</li> <li>○ Financial assets (savings, cash, credit, profits)</li> <li>○ Natural assets (including common property resources)</li> <li>○ Political assets (political participation)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Women have control over their bodies</li> <li>• Women have mobility and control over the use of their time</li> <li>• Women have access to information</li> </ul>
<p><b>Informal</b></p> <p><b>Culture and deep structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sociocultural norms permit equality of opportunity between men and women</li> <li>• Informal social, political and economic institutions permit gender equality</li> <li>• Women have social and spatial mobility that permits public participation and inclusion in community associational life</li> <li>• Women have equal opportunities in the labour market</li> <li>• Women have equal access to markets</li> <li>• Household relations permit equal access to resources and opportunities for women</li> <li>• Service delivery culture is inclusive and accessible to women</li> <li>• Organisational norms, systems and culture favour the effective implementation of policies and laws for gender equality</li> <li>• Sociocultural norms prevent patriarchal relations, violence or sexual exploitation</li> <li>• Justice systems (both formal and informal) function to promote gender equality</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Formal</b></p> <p><b>Formal rules, policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human rights and gender equality conventions ratified</li> <li>• Constitutional change in favour of equality of rights</li> <li>• Legislation supports gender equality</li> <li>• Formal procedures within organisations and agencies protect rights and promote gender equality</li> <li>• Political processes allow women a political voice</li> <li>• Local (national and sub-national) governance rules uphold gender equality</li> <li>• Systems of property rights allow equal entitlements for women</li> <li>• Service delivery systems and procedures are inclusive and accessible to women</li> <li>• Core labour standards regulations and compliance protect women in the workplace</li> <li>• Civil society organisations (including Trades Unions) have gender equality policies and procedures</li> <li>• Accountability mechanisms and processes (public, private, legal) are in place to protect human rights and promote gender equality</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Systemic</b></p>

## **2.2 Country and project selection process**

In late summer 2006, the SDC Evaluation and Control (E+C) Department selected Ukraine, Pakistan and Mozambique as the case study countries (E+C has the prerogative for selecting case study countries for the Independent Evaluations). There was no country case study from the Latin America Department. However, the evaluation team examined the Latin American program through document review and interviews with staff at HQ. The selection criteria were as follows:

- countries from each operational department in SDC (Bilateral Cooperation, Cooperation with Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States, Humanitarian Aid and SHA)
- from regions or countries which have not recently been implicated in an Independent Evaluation
- countries in which results from an Independent Evaluation have the potential to make a meaningful contribution for quality improvement.

In each of the three case study countries, the evaluation team (one international consultant and a local consultant) conducted an overview of the SDC program and its gender dimensions. In addition, the evaluators selected in consultation with SDC and examined in greater depth five or six specific programmes / projects.

Research, focus groups and interviews in Bern looked at organisational systems and processes, which were compared and tested with findings from the country case work. Similarly, findings at the country level were compared with each other, and compared with the findings of the Bern work and with information from the Latin America Division.

## **2.3 Methods and instruments**

The evaluation team used a mix of methods and instruments. The team analysed relevant policy, programme and project documents and data. Staff at all levels of the organisation were interviewed. The evaluators used the conceptual framework (see Figure 2.1 above) and the approach paper to guide the interviews and developed an interview schedule (included as adapted for use in the country case studies in Annex B.3.). Because there was great variety in the type of work and organisational position of the people interviewed, it was not possible to have a consistent set of questions that were relevant to all, and the evaluators selected the most relevant questions from the interview schedule as required.

To gain information about how SDC's organisational culture and support for gender equality mainstreaming is perceived by staff, the evaluators organized a series of focus groups (senior men, young women professionals, young men professionals, and administrative staff) at SDC headquarters. A planned group of senior women did not take place, although a number of senior women were interviewed individually. The questions that guided the focus group discussions are in Annex B.2.

In the field, the team conducted interviews with COOF staff, project implementing partners and project primary beneficiaries. Interviews were guided by a set of questions for each group. The evaluation included discussions on organisational elements of gender equality mainstreaming with COOF staff. These discussions were complemented by a short personnel survey administered with all professional and administrative staff. The questionnaire and results from the three case study countries are found in Annex B.4.

Interviews and group discussions were conducted with implementing partners for the selected project case studies. Field visits were conducted, and involved project site visits and discussions with primary and secondary stakeholders.

Interviews were also conducted with in-country national donor partners and government stakeholders in order to elicit perspectives on SDC COOF's strategic and operational approach and impact.

The evaluation process was iterative with periodic engagement of the Core Learning Partnership (CLP)<sup>3</sup> at SDC HQs and in the COOFs. The evaluation began with Approach Workshops at SDC HQs and in each of the Case Study COOFs to introduce the evaluation team and to develop a common understanding of the evaluation process, scope and focus. The evaluation team conducted debriefings with the CLP at the end of the missions to the case study countries and to headquarters. At the end of the evaluation process, the evaluation team conducted Synthesis Workshops in the Case Study Countries and at Headquarters in which the Core Learning Partnerships were asked to reflect on the findings and conclusions of the evaluation and, under the guidance of the evaluation team, to develop action plans and recommendations for SDC. In a final step, SDC Senior Management takes a stand on the recommendations in its Senior Management Response.

### **3 Evaluation findings**

#### **3.1 Background and Context of Gender Equality Mainstreaming in SDC**

Following the 'second wave' of feminism in the late 1960s and early 1970s, women professionals working in international development began to research and document their concerns that international development was leaving women behind. They contended that international development programmes assumed that women were primarily homemakers, and had no economic or political roles or responsibilities. Therefore these programmes diminished women's pre-existing economic roles and responsibilities (e.g. trading in West Africa, agricultural production in many parts of the world) and relegated the development investments for women mainly to child welfare, nutrition and home economics courses.

In addition, in some countries women were the objects of experiments in family planning and population control, often without their informed consent. In other countries, women had no access to birth control.

As these research findings gained in importance, the United Nations responded by naming 1975 International Women's Year, and holding a global conference in Mexico City. This led to the Decade for Women (1975-85) and the establishment of UNIFEM as the United Nations Fund for Women.

Bilateral donors responded by creating Women in Development (WID) officers and units to ensure that women were not left out of the development equation. Some donors developed 'women in development' policies in the early 1980s to encourage their staff to ensure that women benefited from development, and were not harmed or left out of development programming. In a number of

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<sup>3</sup> The Core Learning Partnership (CLP) consists of key stakeholders particularly implicated in the thematic area under evaluation and in the case studies. They are in a position to reflect on the evaluation findings and conclusions and implement the results of the evaluation. A CLP was set up in each of the case study countries and at SDC headquarters. See the Approach Paper in the Annex for more details on the process and on composition of the CLP at headquarters.

donor agencies this led to funding special projects for women as a new 'sector' of development assistance.

World Bank research in the 1980s found that there was a significant correlation between investment in women's education and positive development outcomes – it was said to yield the highest returns of all development investments. Thus, there was both a human rights rationale - 'women's rights are human rights' as the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna put it - and a more instrumentalist development rationale for ensuring development programmes addressed women's needs and interests, as well as men's.<sup>4</sup>

Ongoing political pressure from women's groups (national feminist groups, as well as regional groups like Flora Tristan, CAPWIP, and global groups like AWID and DAWN), combined with the research findings and the development of analytical frameworks (Harvard, Moser) to equip development professionals with tools to understand how women and men were differently affected by development programming, and how to ensure that development benefits (power, resources, skills, assets) accrued to both women and men.

Unfortunately, the application of these tools to development programming has been timid and uneven, for a number of complex reasons. Redressing gender inequality requires sensitivity to imbalance of power, and how it is perpetuated and re-balanced - something that is not consistently part of the more technocratic development understanding of bilateral and multilateral donors and their staff. The most significant theorist in this area is the late Paulo Freire (see also Steven Lukes).<sup>5</sup> If the organisation and its staff do not understand how poverty, development and power are related, their programmes are unlikely to be in ways that can combat power inequality. If they do not understand the dynamics of gender power relations as one specific manifestation of power inequality, they are unlikely to specifically address this dimension.

Many women and men who work in development agencies do not question or challenge existing gender relations, either in their own society or in the societies where they work. They may be satisfied with existing gender relations; they may feel it is culturally inappropriate to challenge them; they may feel it is too difficult to tackle this sensitive area of norms, behavior and values; or they may never consider them consciously in their daily work.

In the face of these obstacles, the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women determined that 'gender mainstreaming' should be a privileged strategy – to embed gender equality in all parts of organisations and their programmes.

The 2005 review of the decade of Beijing implementation deemed the results disappointing. While treating gender as a 'sector' had left most development programmes untouched by gender equality considerations, 'mainstreaming' resulted in rendering gender equality invisible – in 'policy

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<sup>4</sup> See, for example, the references in the April 2007 Report of the Joint Ministerial Committee of the Boards of Governors of the Bank and the Fund on the Transfer of Real Resources to Developing Countries.

<sup>5</sup> Freire, Paulo, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Continuum, New York 1993, and Lukes, Steven, ed., Power, New York University Press, New York, 1986.

evaporation'.<sup>6</sup> Donors began to give new priority to gender equality by undertaking assessments and have begun the process of increasing their investment in gender equality.<sup>7</sup>

SDC formulated and began implementation of its first policy on gender equality in 1993. The current policy views gender as a 'transversal' (cross-cutting or mainstreamed) issue. The policy has been reviewed and updated a number of times since 1993, most recently in 2003.<sup>8</sup> SDC's gender equality policy has three elements:

- The first element is a requirement that all projects or programmes considered for funding by SDC must undertake a gender analysis. In theory, this means undertaking a study of how the needs and interests of women and men (of different ages, classes, ethnicities etc. affected by the project or programme) could be affected by the project. At the very least, the project or programme should not decrease women's access to or control over resources (money or other assets such as time, power, knowledge etc.) and, if possible, increase it if women do not have a fair share of resources.
- The second element of the policy is the permission to fund projects directed specifically to women's equality. This category of funding is intended to enable women to decrease the gap between themselves and their male counterparts. It has been used for funding scholarships for women in fields like engineering where women are scarce, for funding women's organisations to undertake research and public education and advocacy to change discriminatory laws and practices like those permitting honour killings or forbidding women to inherit property.
- The third element of the policy is to promote women's advancement in SDC. This part of the policy has been concerned with recruiting women at entry level, with the promotion of women, with bringing in women at senior levels, and with developing personnel policies like part-time work or job-sharing to facilitate balancing work and family responsibilities. At the time the gender mainstreaming policy was developed, management felt that unless there were more women working in SDC, there would not be success in mainstreaming gender in the organisation's work.

SDC allocates two part-time staff (two 80% positions) in the Governance Division of its Professional Services Department to support the implementation of the policy. These women respond to requests for advice on project design, comment on project or programme proposals when asked, offer or organize training on request on gender equality issues once or twice a year on request, and liaise with the UN's Commission on the Status of Women, the Gender Committee of the OECD-DAC and other bodies. They advise geographic programmes on suitable resource people, and stay abreast of trends in the field of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, as well as what is happening in SDC's programming. They have a budget for travel, research, training activities and consultants. Caren Levy, Director of the Development Planning Unit at the University of London, one of the leading training and consultancy centers for gender and development, has supported the Gender Desk in training, backstopping and strategy development. The desk's greatest emphasis has been on the O and E programme departments. However, we saw little

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<sup>6</sup> Rao, Aruna and David Kelleher, "Is There Life After Gender Mainstreaming?" Gender and Development Vol. 13, No. 2, July 2005. <http://www.genderatwork.org/resources.php>, and Ottiger, Nadja, Capitalisation of Experience from Gender Evaluations and Research: A review prepared for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the introduction to AWID's 2007 Report on the Financial Sustainability of the Women's Movement by Joanna Kerr, available at [http://www.awid.org/publications/fundher\\_2/awid\\_eng\\_2007.pdf](http://www.awid.org/publications/fundher_2/awid_eng_2007.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> For an outline of SDC's efforts in gender equality since 1993, see section 1 of the Approach paper for this evaluation (Annex B.1.).

evidence of substantive investment by the Gender Desk in the humanitarian department (where urgent response is key, and where gender issues often relate to protection and survival) or in building the capacity of the M Department. If there is a request (for example to develop a gender toolkit for the Humanitarian Department), the Gender Desk will try to offer support. The links between Senior Management Board decisions, the Gender Desk and the operational divisions are weak. For example, the Gender Desk developed an SDC CEDAW Action Plan 2005 -2008 which was approved by the Board of the Directors. As part of this action plan, the Gender Desk, in cooperation with external experts, drafted a checklist to assess gender equality mainstreaming in projects and published two gender responsive budgeting reports. The checklist is considered voluntary, and is being tested, and there has been no follow-through by senior management on the budgeting reports.

In addition, the Gender Desk staff convene a group of headquarter-based 'gender focal points' – people who are supposed to be the contact person and resource for their division or department on gender issues. Each COOF may also have a gender focal point, who supports programme officers in undertaking the required gender analysis and monitoring of gender equality in the project management cycle (PCM), liaises with their headquarters GFP, as well as with counterparts in other donor agencies. Resources are available for consulting advice, for monitoring and evaluations, and for staff training. Generally, GFPs allocate about 10% of their time to gender equality mainstreaming.

When the women's advancement strategy was established in the early 1990s, the Director was advised to appoint a person who would report to him, and who would have access to all meetings and processes in the organisation to observe the implementation of the strategy. This person could comment, collect information, and offer advice, but had no decision-making power. The strategy, whose current phase ends in 2010, has been successful in greatly increasing the proportion of women at all levels of the organisation.

### **3.2 Programme results**

SDC has many long-standing partners and programmes/projects that it funds. The evaluators reviewed a number of projects that have been supported by SDC for over a decade. When looking back over this length of time, it is possible to see both changes and deeply embedded practices. While there are many commonalities across the programmes, there are also important differences that respond to the particular context.

In Ukraine, the COOF developed its cooperation strategy (2007-2010) during a period in which governance, at that time a transversal issue alongside HIV/AIDs, was the main driver of in-country discussions. By the time the cooperation strategy was in preparation, gender replaced HIV/AIDs as the second transversal theme. At a strategic level, the COOF is weak on a gendered theory of change, in other words, in understanding how gender inequality is maintained and how that can be changed, but has subsequently done much to build gender equality into the annual planning and into the design and implementation of its project portfolio. This has been achieved primarily by introducing a process of "gender certification", a system of reviewing the gender equality dimensions of projects, backed by a local Gender Consultative Committee (GCC) which has a dual role of coaching and appraising.

In Pakistan, the level of gender inequality is one of the highest in the world, especially for poor women. Therefore, the cooperation strategy (2006-2010) gives attention to gender equality and HIVAIDS as transversal issues to be addressed in all three programming areas: Increasing Income, Improving Governance, and Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation. Efforts have concentrated on ensuring the participation of women in project activities, and in the staffing of

partner organisations. The strategy has not explicitly included gender equality objectives – except for the earthquake reconstruction<sup>9</sup> – and projects vary a great deal in how/whether they have addressed gender inequality. This seems to depend on the interest and capacity of the National Programme Officers and on the partners. In those projects that have made an effort, both partners and beneficiaries were able to demonstrate how women had benefited, and how women had gained greater respect and influence in their families and communities. The responsibilities and role of the Gender Focal Point are being redefined, particularly in relation to those of management and National Programme Officers (NPOs) and the COOF intends to include gender equality goals in each of its programme sectors. Pakistan is the only country of the three that were reviewed to invest in women's organisations. The degree of women's inequality is so high that the need to support women to organize for their rights is an important development tool. SDC is supporting – with other donors – institutional renewal of one of its key women's organisation partners because women's voices are so marginalized in both the public and the private domain.

Mozambique is one of the world's poorest countries, and is highly aid-dependent. Donor coordination both in terms of sector-wide approaches and for core budget support is an essential element of donor work in Mozambique. For the most part, the government and donors attention to women's rights and gender equality issues has tended to concentrate in the areas of health and education; progressive legislation exists in a context of extremely weak implementation and lack of government accountability and transparency, and weak gender mainstreaming in development programs. The evaluation team looked at how well the donor/government consortia integrated gender equality in their planning and tracking, and found that only when there are indicators that include gender dimensions can donors focus their attention on how well their contribution is benefiting women and men. Therefore, attention to the construction of these indicators, both at the country level and more particularly at the sector level is important to influence. Only then can field-level implementation issues feed back to influence policy and overall implementation. The SDC Cooperation Strategy as a whole and its programs and projects have the potential to benefit women along with men but only some of them are planned on the basis of gender-disaggregated data and a smaller number have gender-specific targets and indicators to monitor progress. In 2006 SDC headquarters organized a staff workshop on gender and HIV/AIDS mainstreaming which the COOF considered helpful and which led to a greater focus on gender issues within the COOF's annual program planning and review process. The COOF developed minimum standards on gender (and HIV/AIDS) to be reached by 2011 which includes a commitment to elaborate a gender/HIV-AIDS mainstreaming objective for each domain and an outcome indicator on gender mainstreaming at the level of the cooperation strategy.

What is common in the three SDC country programmes under review, and more widely in SDC is the following:

**Interest in and engagement with gender equality is present and growing in SDC programming.** It is different for different aspects of the policy (mainstreaming gender analysis in the programming, women's advancement,<sup>10</sup> and women-focussed programming). Moreover, while innovative practice on gender mainstreaming exists in pockets within SDC, it does not travel across the organization. For example, the Latin America programme decided in 2001 to institute an annual meta-review of all externally commissioned evaluations. They postulated that empowerment would contribute to poverty reduction. Therefore, each evaluation was asked to include in its terms of reference an examination of the following questions:

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<sup>9</sup> The review of gender equality and the humanitarian programme is described at the end of this programme section.

<sup>10</sup> Discussed in the section on organisational dimensions (3.3) below.

- To what extent did the project contribute to poverty reduction?
- To what extent did the project contribute to empowerment of the beneficiaries?
- To what extent did the project contribute to gender equality?
- To what extent did the project contribute to sustainability?

The first meta-reviews noted that there was little data on any of these questions to be found in project evaluations, since most projects were designed around inputs, and not, as these questions were, around outcomes. There was no evidence of gender analysis, or inclusion of gender equality considerations in project design or implementation. Between 2003 and 2007, the meta-reviews have examined evaluations of 60 projects. Because the findings of these meta-reviews were discussed within the division, and had management sponsorship (the meta-reviews were done by the Deputy Head of the Latin America Division), after several years information on gender equality (and on the other questions) improved. For example, in 2005, there was information on women's participation in small business development, discussion of the need for support to women in microfinance programmes, and greater push for outcome-based monitoring. (The first evaluation which had data on outcomes was noted in the 2007 meta-review). The chief role of the Gender Focal Point in the Latin America programme has been to organize workshops to discuss the gender findings of the meta-reviews and support improvement.

**SDC's policy requires a 'gender analysis' but only a few projects had undertaken any kind of gender analysis as part of their initial design.** Most mention 'women and men' and state their intention to have women and men participate in project activities. A few (more recent) projects or new phases of ongoing projects demonstrate an understanding of the gender dimensions of their project (see for example, Supporting Free and Fair Elections in Pakistan or the Farm Forestry Support Project in Pakistan). Reporting may include gender-disaggregated data.

If the project or programme is planned on the basis of inputs or activities, most likely the gender analysis will consist of counting the number of women and men participating in project activities, since the project designers will be looking mainly at inputs and activities, rather than outcomes. Therefore, the review found that when the project or programme was clear about its intended outcomes, there was greater likelihood of a substantive 'gender analysis' as well - looking at the position and condition of women and men in relation to the proposed objectives, and designing the project in order to ensure that women would benefit also, and/or that their status would be enhanced. Since outcome-oriented planning is relatively recent in SDC, it is likely that increasing familiarity with outcome-oriented work will also benefit the gender equality dimensions of projects.

If a gender analysis results in project goals and activities intended to contribute to gender equality, this should be visible in the project's budget. The evaluators found almost no evidence of this in the projects reviewed. When we inquired, Pakistan partners told us that involving women cost a 'premium' of about 10% - to ensure women's safe travel and accommodation, or sometimes to allow staff to work in teams - there was no evidence of budgeting for gender equality in any of the mainstreamed projects. However, COOF staff told us that this was not a problem since SDC's budgeting process permits flexibility if the need for special expenditures arises.

A significant influence in improving the attention to gender equality in a project seems to be the commissioning of mid-term or end-of-phase project evaluations that include gender equality as part of their terms of reference. Such evaluations have improved attention to gender mainstreaming in Pakistan projects, as evidenced by pre- and post-evaluation documentation, as well as interviews with NPOs and partners. The GCC in the Ukraine will systematically perform this function.

**There is no common view of the desired goals of gender equality in the country strategies.**

Therefore, it is possible to 'include women' in ways that reinforce traditional gender roles. For example, government officials responsible for the 'Women in Prisons' programme in the Ukraine reinforced stereotypes of women's domestic role that do not correspond either to reality or to women's potential and interests. Women were taught how to be 'good home-makers' when they seldom had husbands or homes to go back to, and would have benefited much more from learning marketable skills. Or as in Pakistan, income generating work for women may be done in a way that is completely controlled by men – where women are little more than processing machines – or it may be done (also from Pakistan) in a way that gives women opportunities for solidarity, learning, mobility and winning respect. Clarifying the programme-level goals could help address this gap between the nebulous idea of 'mainstreaming gender equality' and conceptualizing more concrete goals and indicators at the level of the country strategy that will, in turn, guide NPOs in project design and management. This could enable shifting the emphasis 'upstream' toward including gender in the design stage.

**In the case study countries, there was an implicit and emerging 'model' of change,** in which SDC worked at a local or district level to apply and implement changes that were desired and directed at the national level (Ukraine maternal-child health, Mozambique health care delivery, child protection in Pakistan) in order to 'model' change, and to learn more about the barriers to wide-spread implementation. This practice has enough resonance and spread across the organisation, informants told us, to merit consideration as an explicit way of working. If it were explicitly developed as a programming methodology it could address several key questions that are now unexplored:

- What is the real cost of the pilot, and is it affordable by national and local authorities?
- How does SDC better share information and learning between central policy and planning bodies and the experience on the ground?
- What are the systemic barriers that limit local ability to sustain the pilots?

Such a model is not in and of itself gender-sensitive, so gender equality would need to be a primary consideration in its development. The Mozambique review found that when there were gender disaggregated markers, (mainly in health and education) they provided a powerful feedback tool to assess whether women and men were both benefiting from interventions, and to identify constraints that block progress.

**Greater focus and a more programmatic approach in country programming improve the opportunity for learning and benefiting specific target groups including women.** Until a few years ago, COOFs managed a portfolio of projects, many of which were responsive to partner interests or Swiss capacity. Increasingly, COOFs are being asked to work in fewer sectors per country (increasing income, health, justice reform are examples from the countries that were studied). If there is a clear goal for this sectoral work (for example, strengthening the framework and infrastructure for microfinance in Pakistan, or decreasing maternal mortality in Mozambique) it will be possible to link learning among SDC projects as well as with those of others working on a similar issues, in order to improve outcomes. This is particularly valuable for the gender dimensions of those projects. For example, the Forest Sector Support Project in Pakistan has learned from its predecessor projects and work in different districts what strategies are likely to enable women to benefit from income-earning possibilities: engaging senior women and men in the community, working with extended family groups, encouraging women to form their own groups, etc. Similarly, a programmatic approach could encourage learning within SDC and with its partners and peers.

**The impact of SDC's gender equality work could be strengthened if there were stronger links between experience at the local project level and policy-level in the context of alliances with government, multilateral, bilateral and local civil society actors.** Despite a wide range of partners – local and international NGOs, institutions, government departments and UN agencies – the 'mental model' of SDC remains, as one informant noted, that SDC plans and manages its programmes as if it were dealing with small, dependent NGO partners. This mindset needs to shift, and staff need to learn different types of skills in order to achieve sustainable development outcomes. Articulating a new model, like this one, of linking the local implementation with the larger policy-level changes can assist SDC management to identify the skills needed. For example, in Pakistan, several of the UN agency-implemented projects were 'SDC' projects.<sup>11</sup> This will become less and less common practice as pressure for harmonisation grows. In the new scenario, NPOs and other SDC staff will need different skills and practices to ensure SDC's contribution is valuable, visible, and valued. Examples of what will be needed at staff level include the ability to build alliances, to influence based on relevant knowledge rather than exercise of power; to build relationships of trust across difference; to understand how change occurs in complex systems; or to bring together actors from across SDC's departments (from Bern to New York to the COOF to the village) to shape joint strategy and action. At the organisational level, there will need to be agreement that time invested in building these relationships is as important as the project pipeline, and agreement on a framework to shortcut traditional bureaucratic processes (across departments rather than up, across and down). In particular, because of the pressure for harmonisation, present in all the case study countries, but most strongly in Mozambique, for Switzerland as a small donor to play a useful role in SWAPs or budget support, this 'model' could allow for gender disaggregated learning to influence policy development and implementation.

Only in Pakistan did SDC fund women-targeted projects, funding major women's NGOs like Shirkat Gah. This mechanism is particularly important in societies where there is a high level of inequality between women and men, or where there are important gendered issues like violence, land ownership or property rights, in order to enable and support women to organize and be heard. In other instances, as in the Ukraine, women's organisations can provide a useful and independent sounding board and advice on the quality of SDC's gender mainstreaming work, and could be supported or contracted for that purpose. The evaluators were asked to comment on the relevance of SDC's strategies (mainstreaming gender equality, women-focused programming and women's advancement). All three are valuable, and the context needs to determine which mix is appropriate – and also which requires emphasis at a particular moment.

This evaluation looked at the inclusion of gender equality considerations in SDC's humanitarian work by interviewing humanitarian personnel at headquarters, and by reviewing the housing reconstruction dimension of SDC's earthquake response in Pakistan. This humanitarian response programme is the only example we found in SDC where gender equality was built into every level of the response, from the strategy to the implementation and the monitoring. This was not viewed to be standard practice in Humanitarian Aid (or in the development programme), and took place for a number of reasons. First, the Humanitarian Department staff responding to the emergency insisted that there be a senior woman advisor with experience in addressing the social and gender dimensions of humanitarian response. The humanitarian team in Pakistan felt that 'build back better', the slogan of the Earthquake Response Authority, included the potential for building more equal social and gender relations, since old patterns were disrupted by the disaster and at least some new behaviour and attitudes could be encouraged. The gender advisor was able to ensure that gender dimensions of the response were considered in the planning and that women were hired alongside men as social animators. Men on the team told us that without her presence and

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<sup>11</sup> The evaluators saw one example of a UN agency project funded by SDC that had adopted the SDC logframe rather than its own.

leadership, they would have been restricted from meeting or working with women on their own. In addition, the Government of Pakistan's Earthquake Response Authority, ERRA, had a strong gender equality team. Together with the SDC staff and those of other agencies, they were able to document gender equality issues and promote changes in ERRA's policy and practice.

The strong and relevant inclusion of gender equality mainstreaming in the Pakistan earthquake response however, does not seem to be the norm. There are few women in SDC's humanitarian department or in the Humanitarian Corps, and SDC's gender toolkit does not address humanitarian response.<sup>12</sup> Only one brief session of the humanitarian training for Corps members addresses issues of gender and humanitarian response. However, staff had access to excellent toolkits available on this subject developed by other agencies; SDC is currently in the process of producing its own version based on these materials.

### **3.3 Organisational dimensions**

The most successful aspect of SDC's policy on gender equality has been the women's advancement policy. Since 1993, senior management has consistently set goals to increase the proportion of women at all levels of the organisation, has monitored the results, and has engaged an advisor to observe and participate in discussions at all level of the organisation to determine the blocks to gender parity in all parts and levels of SDC. SDC's success in this area has been recognized by awards from the KV Schweiz (Kaufmännischer Verband) for its achievements.

In the COOFs there is also recognition of the importance of women's advancement/equal opportunities, both on staff and as a consideration for partners. COOFs are adopting personnel policies that address the need for women's advancement, that punish harassment, and that facilitate work-family balance. The surveys of COOF staff recognize and appreciate that these policies are being developed and applied (see Annex B.4).

The model that SDC has used to make these gains is worth noting: it includes consistent senior management attention and monitoring, alongside a capacity to learn what is succeeding and what is failing and to propose solutions. For example, the women's advancement advisor regularly attends meetings on annual staff transfers and promotions, and can intervene to note if there is a perceived gender bias. Sometimes her observations influence a decision, and sometimes they do not. The point is that there is systematic monitoring, identification of problematic patterns and identification of potential solutions.

SDC has instituted a number of policies to make it easier for women to advance within the organisation – the intake of junior professionals has favoured qualified women. Junior professionals are given a wide variety of assignments to give them the broad base of experience required for advancement. It is possible to work part-time to balance work and family responsibilities. Tele-working is possible with a supervisor's permission.

But the very success of the women's advancement and equal opportunity efforts has created a new series of challenges that only attention to more deeply embedded ways of working can address. Staff reported that although it is possible to work part-time, job responsibilities are seldom reduced to match: in other words, they feel they are expected to carry the load of a full-time worker. This means that there is little time for learning or reflection. The administrative work required to facilitate decisions and programme implementation dominates the agenda. In addition,

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<sup>12</sup> Nor does it address gender equality in policy dialogue.

it is mainly women who take advantage of part-time work: their male counterparts feel less able to do so, or are only beginning to consider that possibility. Young men are worried that they may be overlooked for advancement in favour of young women: young women fear that if they are not there working long hours they may be seen as lacking commitment. Tele-work is grudgingly allowed or refused by some managers, and there is no perceived consistency in permission or refusal. Some senior managers see little possibility of any way of working other than the model they themselves have lived: having a primary commitment in time and dedication to work at the expense of work/life balance. Many of these men come from a tradition of wives whose job it is to raise the children and support their husband's career. Few of the senior women have young children. A few of the senior managers agree that the model has to change, but do not know how to change it. Many of the highly qualified young professionals feel that there is a hierarchy in terms of who speaks at meetings and a lack of delegation that leaves little room for them to exercise the judgment and creativity they were hired for. They feel that their main role is to push projects through the pipeline. On the surface there is a culture of participation and 'being heard' in SDC, but because decisions that include the perspective of all are seldom viable – real decisions require trade-offs – the decision-making process becomes opaque or choices become optional.

These challenges are not insuperable, but they imply that maintaining the gains made in this area will require further problem-solving, and monitoring of retention rates, exit interviews, job quality and job satisfaction assessment that goes well beyond numbers of women and men in positions across the organisation

There are several other organizational systems where gender mainstreaming could be more consistent. When evaluators asked staff about the kind and effectiveness of their gender training, in the majority of cases staff had taken courses on their own – in other jobs or as part of their formal education – and few reported having attended SDC training on this issue. There does not seem to be any system for tracking whether staff have received appropriate training in gender equality mainstreaming or other key topics. Moreover, staff told us they decided what kind of training or professional development they wanted, based on their own interests at least as much as on the organisation's needs. Thus someone who is appointed as Gender Focal Point may have received no SDC-relevant training in gender equality and development. Their time commitment is very constrained (usually only 10%, and sometimes this is 10% of a part-time position), and it is often unclear what the responsibility of the GFP is. For example, is it up to the NPO to ask for assistance in gender analysis in project design, or is it up to the GFP to offer? One of the reasons for the lack of attention to gender analysis in project design may be a lack of clear role expectations. All GFP staff who were interviewed noted how constrained they were for time: the Latin America GFP said she put her energy into organizing one annual activity for the region: that was the limit of her involvement. In all three case study countries, however, hiring in consulting expertise seemed to be a well-accepted solution. The difficulty is that often the knowledge and overview gained remains with the consultant, rather than with the COOF. In addition, the performance appraisal system (MAP) does not systematically assess how well staff are performing in their gender mainstreaming work. In a number of examples we were given, the system seems to be used more for developing an annual work to-do list than for results-based work-planning. On the positive side, a favourable attitude to gender equality as well as a balance between men and women staff is seen to be a positive attribute for getting a job in SDC.

There is little concern at the organisational level with systematically tracking results or documenting learning. The Management Information System on gender is unreliable because it is filled in by different types of staff (administrative staff at HQ, desk coordinators) who do not use consistent standards to code projects.<sup>13</sup> Although each project approval document should

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<sup>13</sup> In addition to looking at the coding of projects in the case study countries, the evaluators looked at sample coding of projects.

demonstrate that a gender analysis has been done, there is no consistent monitoring, and no consequences for its omission. As a result, there is no reliable information on how much SDC is investing in gender equality, and whether that is more, less or comparable to the investment of other donors. Efforts to gather information about outcomes or to track level of effort are being made (see the programme results section) but are being made by champions at the country, or at most, the regional level. The Gender Desk has developed a checklist (currently voluntary) to try to improve information available. The Desk's checklist provides five qualitative indicators that can be used to score a proposal using the DAC gender marker 'principal'/'significant'/'none'. However, using the checklist and the gender marker will require a management decision to make it compulsory, as well as training and monitoring so that staff doing the scoring can apply it consistently.

The evaluators were asked to comment, and invited suggestions from a range of people interviewed, about whether SDC's investment in gender equality was sufficient. No definitive response is possible, because there is no good data on the current level of investment. We were told by COOF staff that money was available for technical backstopping, evaluation, and learning on gender equality as needed. We were also told that if contributing to gender equality in a project meant increased costs, these could be accommodated because of SDC's fiscal flexibility. At the same time, there is pressure from the Swiss Government to reduce the size of staff in all departments. Despite these information shortcomings, it is possible to make the following observations:

- As noted above, the Gender Desk is not strongly linked into an organisational strategy and priority development process. As a result, they have invested in trying to improve tracking and monitoring systems (through the gender check-list) and in gender budgeting. The women's advancement and equal opportunities advisor seems to be better linked into organisational information and priority-setting systems at a formal level.
- SDC has a system of 'gender focal points' both in departments at headquarters and in the COOFs. While there are a significant number of people with this designated responsibility, the time allocation for each – 10% of their workload, whether they are full-time or part-time – is very limited and their gender equality knowledge and experience are not consistent. The division of labour among them is not so clear – some, as in the Humanitarian Department, are developing toolkits, others, like in the Latin America Department, are convening annual review and planning sessions.
- Most attention of the Gender Desk has been given to O and E Departments and to representational work at bodies like the DAC and the UN's Commission on the Status of Women. There has been less evidence of their impact in the other areas of the F Department, particularly areas that are viewed as scientific or technical, or in M Department or the Humanitarian Department.

### **3.4 Strategic intent**

While there is evidence that the attention to gender equality in SDC is growing and deepening (see the programme results section (3.4) below), the overall finding is that 'gender is optional' in SDC. There is little supervision to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed in projects: it occurs because a staff person or a partner feels gender equality is important or relevant. This is due largely to a number of interlinked tensions that have an effect on gender equality:

- Thematic/guideline fatigue. Gender is widely perceived as just one of a continual stream of thematic requirements, guidelines and priorities. New issues – youth, access to information, corruption, climate change, generate policy discussions and guidelines which are meant to

be implemented without anything being removed from the plate. Some of this is driven by opportunities, some by increased capacity in F Department. As one informant told us, “If you are in headquarters working on patent rights, the natural outcome is a policy paper and guidelines.” Without a rigorous and disciplined effort by senior management to maintain strategic coherence, issues proliferate. The result is that gender equality, along with other formal and informal cross-cutting themes, is devalued and in essence becomes an optional choice. As one senior informant noted, “When you have 50 priorities you have none, especially for a donor the size of SDC.” In this context, it is understandable, that the gender toolkit, which was the springboard (along with coaching) to assist staff has not itself become a major resource for programmers.

- **Decentralized autonomy:** Within SDC, on-the-ground contextual sensitivity and flexibility is valued and widely championed as being SDC’s comparative advantage over larger, more bureaucratic donors. This view is reinforced by the findings of successive independent evaluations. The prevailing mindset is to see decentralised autonomy and global strategic coherence as in conflict with each other, rather than trying to optimize both. When this tension exists between headquarters and a particular COOF, it can translate into arguments over details rather than dealing with substantive issues: “If the chemistry breaks down then this can reduce to a discussion over what kind of tires should go on landcruisers.” (HQ senior manager). Linked to this is the practice of defending the fences of one’s own ‘kingdom’, whether that be a division, a department, or a unit. Several people described to us meetings where interventions were not discussed or debated, but where people stated their own positions, and the conclusion, by default, became the sum of all the interventions. These tensions occur frequently enough to be reported recurrently in interviews, and were seen as detrimental to strategic coherence and direction. As a result, implementing the gender policy depends on leadership of a department, a division or a COOF. Two countervailing factors favouring coherence and collaboration are the professionalism of the staff and the system of rotation that builds bridges and understanding across COOF-HQ and Departmental divides.
- SDC cannot be described as a learning organisation that is motivated by a curiosity about results. In a learning organisation, there is an articulated conceptual framework: a formulation of the elements, relationships and systems involved in creating a desired change (see for example Figure 2.2 for an example of a gender-related conceptual framework). The importance of an explicit conceptual framework is that it transparently encourages collection of evidence to prove or disprove why the desired change is occurring or not occurring – and whether the conceptual framework is adequate or not. It enables all parties to explore the complex relations, systems and interests that prevent or enhance the likelihood of change. It also encourages collaboration, since no single actor or agent alone can create significant or sustainable change. Examples of implicit conceptual frameworks in SDC are the Latin America programme’s hypothesis that empowerment is linked to poverty reduction, or the Ukraine’s efforts to link implementation of improved mother/child health services at the local level to national efforts to improve health care services through a combination of pilot projects, policy dialogue and donor coordination. Because there is no explicit over-arching conceptual framework at the organizational, the country, or the sectoral level, programming choices become opportunistic decisions (rather than evidence-driven) by particular individuals or teams, and can seldom be sustained when people transfer. For gender equality, this reinforces a personal interpretation of what is possible or desirable.

## 4 Conclusions and Areas for Recommendation

### 4.1 Conclusions

The ability to mainstream gender through the implementation of all three aspects of its gender mainstreaming policy is gaining ground in SDC. In general, there is a favourable climate for ensuring that women and men achieve equality inside the organization and in its development work, because of a progressive policy and positive staff attitudes. This is particularly true for women's advancement/equal opportunities in SDC, both at headquarters and in the COOFs. However, ensuring that gender equality is addressed in all aspects of programming can best be described as 'optional' in the organisation. The evaluators found significant evidence of programming that improved women's position and condition in the case study countries, but this was not systematic, and generally came about because evaluations indicated lost potential for benefiting women and men, and, less frequently, because it was planned from the outset. The evaluators note that several countries and regions (e.g. Latin America, the Ukraine, and Mozambique) have initiated steps to monitor and improve gender equality in programming more systematically. This is due to a number of interrelated factors, some technical and some that relate to the culture and work practice of the organisation. These latter factors we are calling 'institutional'. The technical factors are easier to address than the institutional, but are limited in their potential. Institutional change is more challenging, but also potentially more rewarding for improving SDC's gender equality outcomes. SDC has evidence that it can make institutional shifts – several are in progress: outcomes-based programming, greater programmatic focus, women's advancement and equal opportunities.

### 4.2 Areas for Recommendations

The Core Learning Partnership for this evaluation will meet April 23-24 to develop the recommendations based on this evaluation. To facilitate the discussions during the Synthesis Workshop, the evaluation team has identified the areas below as potential areas for consideration by the CLP when it elaborates the recommendations for SDC. The CLP may propose that other or additional issues be addressed.

#### Technical System Reform

- **There is no systematic tracking or monitoring of whether/how the policy requiring gender analysis of all projects/programmes is being done. Similarly, there is no reliable information on the number and value of gender specific projects. The evaluation reviews a number of ad-hoc efforts in this area. Should this be more systematically done, and if so how and by whom?**
- **There is weak oversight and direction by the senior management board of gender as a transversal theme, of the gender analysis and gender specific programming, compared to their oversight and leadership of women's advancement/equal opportunities. How can the former be strengthened?**
- **The current investment in gender mainstreaming in SDC is heavily weighted toward coaching/support compared to monitoring/learning. At the same time, there is a very low level of effort by a number of people across the organization (10% for GFPs is the norm). Is**

this the optimal organization of SDC's human resources, and if not, how should it be changed, given the constraints on staffing?

- How can SDC ensure greater accountability for gender mainstreaming in its planning and performance evaluation systems (for the programme and for the staff)?
- The Humanitarian Department needs to increase the number of staff (permanent and in the Humanitarian Corps with capacity to ensure gender-equitable design of humanitarian responses. What measures can it take, learning from SDC's women's advancement/equal opportunities and from the experience of other humanitarian organisations?

### **Institutional Reform**

- Is it useful to invest in becoming a learning organisation as one means to add value to its gender mainstreaming work? There is already some work underway on this in SDC, and the trend toward outcome monitoring (as opposed to input/activity measurement) supports this. Meaningful change requires attention to alliance-building and collaboration both inside and outside the organisation (networks, structures, processes). Recent attention to knowledge management can also support a shift toward becoming a learning organization. What actions does the core learning partnership wish to propose to promote this shift?
- In the review of women's advancement/equal opportunities (due before 2010) it is worthwhile exploring the perspectives that different groups of women and men have of the organization, in order to address some of the disjuncture in perception of the organisation and its strengths and weaknesses that were expressed in the focus groups and the interviews (see section 3.2 above). How could this best be done, in way that will generate constructive discussion and recommendations?
- How can this CLP assist SDC to develop a process to enhance the strategic coherence of the organisation? Such a process would help to identify processes and behaviour to build both COOF autonomy and strategic coherence at the organisational level.. It would also articulate a conceptual framework to guide programme design and outcome indicators. Such a process would include periodic reviews to ensure new learning was integrated without compromising the coherence of the strategy. Who would develop such a process? Who would lead it? What would ensure buy-in by staff, by partners and peers, by the Swiss Government and the Swiss public? How can gender equality be an integral dimension of such a process?

### **4.3 Agreement at Completion**

In an effort to ensure the recommendations were well-targeted, ambitious and achievable, this independent evaluation engaged the Core Learning Partnership in determining whether and how the findings of the evaluation, as reflected in the evaluation team's 'Areas for Recommendations' could be developed as practical and meaningful recommendations. To this end, the CLP met for 1-1/2 days and reviewed the findings as set out in the draft synthesis report. They agreed with the findings, and asked for several minor changes which were subsequently made.

The CLP examined the areas for recommendation and ranked them in terms of their importance and their difficulty. None were eliminated, and small groups were tasked with developing recommendations. Due to time constraints, the recommendations could not be finalized during the workshop, and the evaluation team was asked to polish the draft recommendations, which were circulated and approved. These recommendations, found below, are presented for review and approval by COSTRA.

The recommendations relate to the day-to-day practice of SDC staff, to the planning systems, strategies and accountability at the intermediate level, and to the overall leadership and systematic follow-through of management. Implementation at only one level is unlikely to result in overall improvements, since they are inextricably linked.

### **At the Organisational Level**

1. Strengthen the role of the senior management board (COSTRA) in leading and overseeing the implementation of the Gender Equality policy. This can be done in a number of ways (staff support to COSTRA for this role; designating a lead person for this role within COSTRA, regular review of Gender Equality progress by COSTRA, etc.).
2. Require the use of the Gender Checklist (which has been developed in conjunction with the OECD DAC) in the preparation of every credit proposal. The checklist will provide useful and meaningful information (for SAP input) to report SDC's contribution to gender equality, and is also a useful conceptual tool to guide programme officers and partners in applying SDC's gender equality policy. Since the Gender Checklist is an outcome-oriented tool, its use could be supported by the 'result-oriented steering working group' that has a related mandate. The Gender Desk will review and report annually to Senior Management on the information generated by use of the Gender Checklist throughout SDC.
3. Ensure that the renewed Women's Advancement/Equal Opportunity policy (2010-2015) builds on the findings of the focus groups conducted for this evaluation.
4. Ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy is reflected in service staff rules of Cooperation Offices.
5. Start a process of independent certification for SDC to support progress on its Equal Opportunities goals.

### **At the Programme Level**

6. Ensure that the programming instruments of all departments (country cooperation strategies, institutional strategies, yearly programs, mid-term strategies) include Gender Equality objectives at the output/results level and at the COOF (country office) performance level. Annual reporting on Gender Equality outcomes shall be done at the Department level (similar to the current annual Latin America ASTRAL process). The departmental reports will be available within SDC and for partners, and will be reviewed by COSTRA. The goals and indicators will be accompanied by appropriate budget allocations.
7. Ensure that the E-Department considers the appointment of a regional gender equality programme manager (responsible for ensuring gender mainstreaming and gender-specific programming) in one or two regions for implementation in 2009. The usefulness of this pilot position should be evaluated after three years.
8. Ensure that the Gender Desk prioritizes working with relevant departments to develop and include tailor-made modules on gender equality issues in existing meeting and training opportunities for different levels of staff (induction for all new staff – both Swiss and national, junior programme officers, management training, annual regional gatherings, humanitarian training, etc.) The purpose of these modules will be to improve the quality and consistency of gender equality work (mainstreaming and gender-specific programming) throughout the organisation. The modules will be oriented to professional development, learning and best practice. All departments shall give priority to including this module in existing training and meeting opportunities.

### **Within Departments**

9. Increase the number of women in the Humanitarian Corps, and report annually on the numbers of women and men applying, recruited and deployed until parity is reached. Use the successful experience of the Women's Advancement programme within SDC as a model within COOFs and at headquarters. (Humanitarian Aid)
10. Recruit and appoint more individuals with social development/gender equality capacity for vacancies in the Humanitarian Department, with a goal of including one person with such skills in every major emergency deployment. (Humanitarian Aid)
11. Integrate staff with Gender Equality skills and training in SDC Humanitarian Response and Reconstruction programmes, through targeted recruitment and specialized training. (Humanitarian Aid)
12. Ensure that Terms of Reference for independent evaluations include questions on how the issue under evaluation addresses the cross-cutting themes of gender equality and governance. (E+C)
13. Ensure that recommendations from independent evaluations include attention to their implications for gender equality goals. (E+C)
14. Ensure that the Gender Desk actively promotes sharing of best practices and application of new and existing tools for Gender Equality. (Gender Desk)

## **Annex A. Project Case Study Summaries**

### **1. Ukraine Country Case Study Summary**

This evaluation was conducted in a country context that presents a number of significant challenges to gender equality mainstreaming. At the societal level in Ukraine, there is a lack of gender awareness within the culture and consciousness of the population as a whole. Women also lack access to the financial and other forms of capital (including psychological resources) that would enhance their capacities to challenge such stereotypes. Within government there is “gender blindness” amongst senior decision-makers, most of whom are men, towards gender equality issues in government policies and programmes. Policy approaches to women are, by default, protective rather than promotional. There is a lack of political will to design and fund programmes that tackle gender equality beyond family welfare issues. Government is not effectively held to account for its gender blindness and/or gender stereotyping as civil society lobbying from women’s organizations and other NGOs interested in gender equality is fairly weak.

The Government of Ukraine (GoU) is not dependent on the donor community for significant budget support. Overseas development Assistance (ODA) in Ukraine comprises only 2% of the national GDP of US\$80 billion. The GoU is therefore not subject to conditionality type relationships with multilateral agencies and is not bound by the ideological preferences of bilateral donors. The GoU does, however, have a strong demand for technical assistance that can assist the country in moving towards European standards of public policy design and delivery.

The overall goal of the Swiss cooperation for 2007-2010 is described as:

Switzerland supports Ukraine in its move towards a democratic society, ensuring equal access of people to decision making processes, social justice, rule of law and to the benefits of the market economy.

### **Evaluation findings**

In Ukraine, the COOF developed its cooperation strategy (2007-2010) during a period in which governance, at that time a transversal issue alongside HIV/AIDs, was the main driver of in-country discussions. In a climate of turf competition amongst donors, SDC has found specialist “niches” in Ukraine where it can add value, using a sub-national demonstration effect in order to maximise impact with limited resources. The result is that gender equality is not a highly visible COOF strategic objective and is not systematically addressed by the COOF at policy level.

The Country Director has been instrumental in addressing organisational dimensions of the gender equality. Appointing himself gender focal point, he commissioned the newly formed Gender Consultative Committee (described below) to conduct a gender audit of the office. The audit found progressive organisational dimensions and culture in the COOF, a finding supported by this evaluation mission’s own questionnaire survey. The audit recommended measures for strengthening gender equality in the organisation, and these findings were subsequently translated into a COOF organisational/ HR document detailing staff entitlements, including trainings, consultative assistance and monitoring. The formalisation of this document has been held up somewhat and Country Director acknowledges that this needs to be finalised and implemented.

While at a strategic level, the COOF is weak on a gendered theory of change, it has done much to build gender equality into the annual planning process and into the design and implementation of its project portfolio. This has been achieved primarily by introducing a process of “gender certification”, backed by a local Gender Consultative Committee (GCC) which has a dual role of advising/coaching and appraising. The GCC was formed and is described as an “(independent) advisory and co-ordination body for the successful gender mainstreaming in the Swiss

Cooperation Programme". The GCC is tasked with (i) conducting organisational audits of the COOF and implementing agencies; and (ii) auditing the COOF country programme and project portfolio.

## Emerging issues

Much of the discussion in the evaluation raises issues that can be addressed through the evolving role of the GCC and this is what makes the learning element of this evaluation so exciting and potentially fruitful. With the advent of the GCC as an instrument for gender equality mainstreaming, there is a tremendous opportunity for the COOF to effectively integrate gender equality as a coherent approach in its country programme, while strengthening the design, delivery and monitoring and evaluation of individual projects.

There is also a clear area for improvement, again with the GCC as the vehicle for change, in moving gender mainstreaming efforts from retroactive or remedial project activities upstream into planning platforms and project documents. The documentation process is where gender becomes "invisibilised" in the first instance, even when there are good things happening on the ground. The starting point for this documentation is the country policy documents.

The role and significance of the gender focal point (GFP) as a concept and as an actor continues to be important in the COOF thinking. The GFP has become an almost standard feature of PIUs and of course within the COOF itself. It is important that the COOF ensure that GFPs have the tools, the time, resources and political positioning to be influential in this role.

Finally, the issue of what to measure has come out of this evaluation very clearly. It looks as if projects focus insufficiently on outcomes, relying on external evaluations to consider outcomes. This is an important issue with respect to promoting gender equality because the link between project outputs and project outcomes is where changes in gender equality can be observed and measured. It also forces project managers to test their assumptions about the transmission from inputs to outcomes rather than staying in the comfort zone of measuring inputs and outputs

## Conclusions and recommendations

With these issues in mind, the evaluation has generated a number of areas for consideration to improve gender equality mainstreaming in the Ukraine COOF. These include:

- Providing a stronger strategic steer on gender equality mainstreaming in SDC Ukraine programme
- Making more effective use of the GCC in its coaching role: (i) providing upstream advice on the identification and design of projects from the planning platform stage; (ii) helping to strengthen the capacities of project implementing partners' gender focal points; and (iii) integrating gender equality more effectively into project implementation
- Simplifying and strengthening the GCC's monitoring and evaluation role and instruments (while retaining the gender certification process)
- Linked to the above, strengthening project reporting systems, including greater emphasis on project outputs and outcomes, and with integrated quantitative and qualitative gender reporting

## Agreement at Completion Point<sup>14</sup>

The Coof largely agreed with the conclusions of the evaluation team. The logframe exercise and subsequent discussion during the synthesis workshop generated a working set of recommendations<sup>15</sup> for a way forward. These included:

- Holding discussions within the Coof and between the Coof and SDC HQ on a document that presents guidelines for gender mainstreaming in Ukraine in order to fill the “gap of the missing middle”.
- Reviewing project design and appraisal arrangements and guidelines from the planning platform stage onwards in which gender analysis is written and which responds to the change model above. Discussion should take into account the gender equality appraisal matrix developed by SDC HQ and link this to the gender audit in order to identify common indicators for gender mainstreaming in project documents (prodocs) and Credit Proposals. These indicators should be further linked to the HRBA indicators in order to create an integrated package of indicators that are clear to implementing partners. In ongoing projects, gender focal points should play a watch dog function to guarantee gender mainstreaming, while in new projects or project phases they should be involved, or at least consulted, in the planning phase.
- Reviewing guidelines, institutional and resourcing arrangements for an evolving GCC. This is work in process, and the audit guidelines will be published together with TORs and guidelines for the GCC by July 2008. GCC TORs will be reviewed in this regard, but in a pragmatic way. GCC members should be available – being aware of potential conflict of interests – for consultancies to projects and trainings within the programme also. But GCC will have to be “re-thought” in a way to make it affordable also for Coof.
- Reviewing the job descriptions and time/resource allocations for gender focal points in Coof and project partner offices. A job description for focal points is in elaboration and will be available on March 14 for discussion in the next GCC meeting. The focal points will then have a two day training in April, including some planning work (to set concrete milestones for the next 1,5 years which will build the basis for further detailed GEM project planning).
- Review programme and project monitoring and evaluation instruments, systems and guidelines to integrate the gender model of change with specified gender equality outcomes. Monitoring instruments are not yet unified in Coof and have different functions in different projects and on different levels. The Coof proposes discussing these during a) a planning in April and b) the (possible) week in June with a consultant (see Footnote 14 above).

The workshop concluded with a positive commitment from all stakeholders to take these recommendations forward.

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<sup>14</sup> T he Agreement at Completion documents the Coof stand on the evaluation and its intentions for future actions. It was elaborated during a 2-day Synthesis Workshop facilitated by the evaluation team and the HQ E+C officer and which included Coof staff, a HQ gender officer and implementing partners.

<sup>15</sup> Coof proposes to hire a consultant for one week in June in order to define these guidelines and at the same time deal with the selection/elaboration and approval of the GEM monitoring indicators (to fill the gaps of missing middle and for the projects as well; with accent on the outcome monitoring).

## **2. Mozambique Country Case Study Summary**

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world. It suffered a devastating civil war in 1992 which decimated much of its infrastructure. Mozambique continues to face significant obstacles including natural disasters which underscore its continued vulnerability to threats of food insecurity. The country still struggles with a rapidly worsening HIV/AIDS epidemic which disproportionately harms women and girls, both directly and indirectly.

Mozambique is heavily donor dependent. Between 1997 and 2003, Mozambique achieved astonishing rates of growth driven primarily by the investment in physical capital, private sector growth and the infusion of donor aid. Since 1999, the government has implemented a comprehensive program to address poverty (PRSP-PARPA) investing in social and economic infrastructure aimed at extending access to public services, reducing welfare inequities, and supporting livelihoods. But still these services are often too far away to be reached by poor families especially women and girls. In March 2006, the government approved the National Gender Policy and Strategy (PGEI) and in December 2007, the government approved the National Plan for the Advancement of Women. For the most part, the government and donors attention to women's rights and gender equality issues has tended to concentrate in the areas of health and education; progressive legislation in a context of extremely weak implementation and lack of government accountability and transparency, and gender mainstreaming in development programs.

Beginning in 1997, Mozambique embarked on a decentralization strategy which in 2003 was extended to rural areas. Women's participation in district level planning fora is low because these are public spaces are far away from where women live and work and women have little voice to influence resource allocation decisions at this level.

### **Evaluation findings**

Switzerland is a longstanding donor in Mozambique. In 2007 its funding contribution was USD 29.5 million which represented 2% of overall donor aid to Mozambique. SDC is seen to have particular strengths in the areas of economic development management, water, health and governance. It has a reputation for hiring knowledgeable professionals and to be effective in policy dialogue but Switzerland does not have a high profile in gender equality issues but has taken solid steps particularly in the last two years to integrate gender equality considerations in its country program.

The Cooperation Strategy as a whole and its programs and projects have the potential to benefit women along with men but only some of them are planned on the basis of gender-disaggregated data and a smaller number have gender-specific targets and indicators to monitor progress. In 2006 SDC headquarters organized a staff workshop on gender and HIV/Aids mainstreaming which the COOF considered helpful and which led to a greater focus on gender issues within the COOF's annual program planning and review process. The COOF developed minimum standards on gender (and HIV/Aids) to be reached by 2011 which includes a commitment to elaborate a gender/HIV-AIDS mainstreaming objective for each domain and an outcome indicator on gender mainstreaming at the level of the cooperation strategy.

There is considerable variation in understanding among staff on what constitutes gender analysis ranging from gender parity issues at the institutional level to an understanding that gender is central to development effectiveness. But a key middle piece is hidden – that is, that unequal power relations shape women's access to resources and services and their ability to voice their priorities and therefore that development interventions must specifically address these barriers and track progress in changing them.

SDC's Gender Policy requires at a minimum that all Swiss funded programs conduct a gender analysis as part of project planning. This does not happen systematically. SDC does not require its partners to do a gender analysis in program or project preparation. Projects often come to SDC fully planned for funding. If a gender analysis is done, it has more to do with the contractor's own gender policy requirements than that of SDC. This issue is not systematically tracked in projects but does constitute part of the overall picture in many cases. SDC does not currently fund women-specific or focused NGOs in its programs although it did so in the past. Moreover, the Swiss cooperation in Mozambique combines SDC and SECO funding under one umbrella. Budget support comes out of SECO funding which does not come with such policy or program requirements. However, as part of the COOFs agreement on benchmarks or minimal standards on gender and HIV/AIDS, the COOF has agreed to ensure that its partners have a gender focal point with a clear role; adopt at least one outcome indicator for gender/HIV/AIDS mainstreaming and report on that regularly; and that gender/HIV/AIDS analyses be routinely integrated into all SDC and SECO supported projects and programs.<sup>16</sup>

The COOF has adopted a workplace policy on gender and HIV/AIDS as of January 2007 and has agreed to support its partners in adopting the same. However, it has delegated minimal resources for gender mainstreaming activities in projects - "a budget line of 0.5% for gender and HIV/AIDS mainstreaming activities or to implement their workplace policy." Thus, in the overall cooperation strategy and in program and project planning and monitoring, while the COOF pays attention to gender mainstreaming, the resources allocated to this are far from adequate.<sup>17</sup> The COOF needs to systematically track gender issues in its overall portfolio and in the main domains, strengthen some key aspects of gender mainstreaming (primarily in the focus and expected outcomes of programs) to generate positive development outcomes for women alongside men.

## Emerging Issues & Conclusions

Tremendous potential exists to deepen Switzerland's work in Mozambique in the three domain areas of economic development specifically poverty analysis, health, as well as governance through a greater focus on development outcomes with gender equality considerations at the center. For example, the COOF has the expertise to seriously address gender considerations as a key determinant in poverty analysis and in beneficiary assessment. In health, the connection between the macro policy and micro outcome level provides an important opportunity to deepen the focus on quality of care with a clear gender perspective and to address gender-differentiated gaps in access and service delivery. In the area of governance, targeting resources to investigating access barriers for women in local level governance activities and developing a broad based discussion with project partners and women's organizations that work on this issue to develop solutions will strengthen the impact of this program enormously.

However, for the COOF to systematically address these issues and make them part of its dialogue with government and other donors, it will take some doing in an already overburdened and overstretched working context. Articulating gender equality outcomes at the level of strategy to guide the work in the program domains, adequately tracking their own work through regular planning and monitoring processes, building clear ways of generating the data required to make the case for gender-differentiated strategies, program targets, activities, and monitoring – all will

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<sup>16</sup> This is drawn from "Implementation of SDC/SOSA's Benchmarks/Minimal Standards on Gender and HIV/Aids as defined in May 2006" adopted in Management Meeting 13.8.07. SDC, Mozambique.

<sup>17</sup> Donors who have allocated 10% for gender mainstreaming and gender-focused projects (not including HIV/AIDS) have found this to be insufficient.

require time which is in short supply commitment which is growing, and expertise and resources which can be tapped. Finally, to be useful, this work will require building allies in the donor community, among NGOs, including competent women's organizations, and government to create the space for seriously addressing gender-differentiated development outcomes and their determinants.

## Agreement at Completion Point<sup>18</sup>

The Evaluation Team presented its findings and conclusions to the Mozambique COOF during a Synthesis Workshop held in Maputo on February 27-28, 2008. The COOF staff presented their comments and reactions and challenged many of the study findings. They also presented new information on their work in gender mainstreaming. The Evaluation Team agreed to revise the report in light of the COOF's comments and the new information. On the second day of the workshop, the Evaluation Team presented three draft recommendations for discussion. These were discussed and agreed to in principle by the Ambassador and senior COOF staff. These recommendations are presented below:

- 1. Health:** The evaluation team recommends that the COOF allocate adequate resources to the systematic investigation of access barriers (both formal and informal) for poor rural women in community health programs and to the quality of services targeted to women. The Team recommends that the COOF use this information with project partners to improve the quality and reach of services to women and also in its policy dialogue with the government particularly in the context of the Health Sector SWAP.
- 2. Gender Mainstreaming:** The evaluation team recommends that the COOF continue its review of gender planning in its core domains and projects for at least 2-3 years to track progress and assess challenges in the achievement of programmatic outcomes that benefit women. This review should be integrated into the regular reviews undertaken by the COOF in individual performance assessment and strategic reviews across the program portfolio. This work will be aided by the COOF's articulation of gender-specific strategic objectives in each of its core domains.
- 3. Local Governance Monitoring:** The team recommends that the local governance monitoring work should systematically address gender differences (in access, voice, participation and influence in addressing women-specific needs and priorities). The team recommends that the COOF build a capacity within its partners in this program to investigate problems and develop and implement solutions so as to achieve positive programmatic outcomes for women as well as men.

## Coof Management Response:

The 3 domains of the new Cooperation Strategy 2007 – 11 are all highly relevant for the promotion of gender equality as the evaluation acknowledges. Moreover, within each domain specific portfolio choices further enhance the gender relevance of Swiss cooperation. The focus on a health observatory in our community based health and outreach services partnership with the World Bank, the innovative demand side strengthening of local governance monitoring or the support of the poverty analysis capacity in the Ministry of Planning and Development are examples.

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<sup>18</sup> The Agreement at Completion documents the Coof stand on the evaluation and its intentions for future actions. It was elaborated during a 2-day Synthesis Workshop facilitated by the evaluation team and the HQ E+C officer and included Coof staff.

The evaluation consequently and rightly identifies a tremendous potential for the promotion of gender equality in the cooperation strategy and program. The Coof management is fully committed to working towards the exploitation of this potential to the greatest extent possible. The strategic framework and the necessary management systems and tools have been put in place. To give just two examples: The monitoring instrument of the Cooperation Strategy requires each domain to specify one gender objective in each Annual Plan and gender analysis is compulsory for new project proposals.

The Coof management entirely adheres to the recommendations of the evaluation, as these reflect in somewhat more concrete manners its own general intentions. As regards the more far reaching demands of the evaluation in terms of devoting much more financial and human resources to gender, this is not foreseen. The Cooperation Strategy incorporates gender as a transversal theme and not as a domain in its own right. As a transversal theme gender is being adequately addressed at all relevant levels be it the Cooperation Strategy, program conceptualization and implementation or in terms of leadership and management systems and processes.

### **3. Pakistan Country Case Study Summary**

#### **SDC Pakistan country context**

Pakistan is a geopolitically important but unstable country, and has one of the world's highest levels of gender inequality. This is a result of legal inequalities, as well as a conservative Islamic tradition that treats women as men's property and sequesters them to protect their virtue. In recent years, Pakistan has adopted the Convention to End Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and has mandated women's representation in political bodies at all levels. There are also efforts to ensure that public services (health, education, child protection) are more available to women. While some elite women occupy important positions in the public and private sectors in Pakistan, poor women, and especially poor rural women, are not aware of their rights. A virtuous woman in Pakistan is one who understands the limitations of her position in society and does not seek to challenge. Illiteracy and ignorance coupled with highly traditional mindsets contribute to women's precarious social position. The skewed power relations have been internalized by women themselves, as well as by men, and have been passed down across generations.

#### **Evaluation findings**

Gender equality is growing in importance in Pakistan's programme, but there are number of constraints. SDC programme staff have a varied understanding of what 'gender equality mainstreaming' means. Gender mainstreaming is seen as important, but as an 'add-on' to the regular work of COOF's 'business areas' (livelihoods, governance). SDC requires its partners to include gender equality considerations in programme proposals mainly in terms of gender parity in inputs and outputs. The evaluators found SDC is not yet proactively planning for gender differentiated results. In several of SDC's current projects, gender equality mainstreaming is a 'retro-fit', when evaluations reported that there had been little attention to gender equality. The COOF has long supported women's organisations in their efforts to educate and advocate for greater gender equality. This has included support for organisational renewal (in concert with other donors) of Shirkat Gha, one of the historic feminist collectives in Pakistan.

In general, the COOF has a positive culture supporting progressive views on gender parity and equality issues in the workplace. The absence of a gender focal point in the past few years meant that in project cycle management gender issues did not always get sufficient attention. Job performance appraisal (MAP) does not currently include a review of performance in terms of gender mainstreaming. The COOF's strategy and annual plan include an analysis of gender inequality, but do not propose goals and indicators for gender equality in the programme.

Some SDC Projects have mainstreamed gender equality results. Others are less successful. The important learning is that gender equality is not systematically mainstreamed when projects are not planned for outcomes in general, and gender equality outcomes in particular. If the partner organization is more gender aware, or if a particular NPO or person within a project is individually committed, it is more likely to happen. The challenge at hand is how to make gender mainstreaming an integral, systematic part of Project Design, Implementation, Reporting and Monitoring and Evaluation.

The humanitarian project that was examined had included gender equality in its strategy and in its implementation, because a senior gender/social advisor was hired from the beginning and diligently created and implemented gender-sensitive activities, because the humanitarian team realized that there could be an opportunity to contribute to gender equality given the disruption to traditional gender relations caused by the emergency, and because the government authority

managing the response was able to give effective leadership and coordination to gender equality through its gender advisors.

## Emerging Issues and Conclusions

This assessment indicates the need for COOF Pakistan to be more systematic in its approach towards gender equality mainstreaming by examining several areas:

Clarifying the intended gender equality contribution the programme and the business areas should address;

Shifting consideration of gender equality issues earlier in the project management cycle, to the design phase,

Internally (and externally if needed) reviewing every project to ensure that it includes a focus on gender equality results.

Ensuring that the project addresses outcomes, including gender equality outcomes, with appropriate indicators;

Ensuring that there is a common approach among staff to mainstreaming gender equality, and that responsibilities are clear and well integrated into regular work processes;

Ensuring there is adequate support for SDC staff to manage the integration of gender equality in their portfolio management. The humanitarian issues are dealt with in the synthesis report.

The debriefing held by the consultants with COOF staff at the end of the field work concluded that the synthesis workshop associated with this evaluation would address the following:

- Building a common understanding of gender and development, and the potential contribution of the Pakistan country programme to gender equality (aligned with the overall SDC policy);
- Improving how gender equality considerations are integrated into the regular work practices (PCM, annual planning cycle, performance evaluation [MAP] etc.) of the Pakistan COOF;
- Developing greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of various COOF staff in ensuring that gender equality and other cross-cutting issues are adequately addressed.

The Agreement at Completion Point below reflects the conclusions of the Pakistan synthesis workshop.

### **Agreement at Completion Point<sup>19</sup>**

SCOP agrees with the recommendations under “emerging issues” and during the synthesis workshop on 13-14 February has developed the “action plan” below on how to address them. In additions, the findings documented for the 6 case studies will be discussed with the respective partners at the next appropriate occasion (e.g. steering committee meetings etc.)

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<sup>19</sup> The Agreement at Completion documents the Coof stand on the evaluation and its intentions for future actions. It was elaborated during a 2-day Synthesis Workshop facilitated by the evaluation team and included Coof staff and a HQ gender officer.

## **ACTION PLAN:**

### 1) **Understanding the contribution of cooperation strategy to gender equality:**

The current cooperation strategy 2006-2010 does not formulate objectives for gender equality at the outcomes level.

#### Steps planned:

- Until the new cooperation strategy (post 2010) will be developed which will fully integrate gender equality objectives **one gender equality focus area per domain** was identified during the workshop:  
*Governance domain: Political empowerment of women*  
*Income domain: Economic empowerment of women*  
The two focus areas will be formally introduced during the MYR of the AP.  
Timeline: May 2008
- 1-2 indicators per focus area will be integrated into the **controlling tool** which is currently being developed to monitor the implementation of the cooperation strategy. Timeline: September 2008 (before AP preparations begin)
- The **ToRs for the MTR** of the cooperation strategy (scheduled in early 2009) will contain specific questions relating to gender equality.  
Timeline: December 2008

### 2) **Definition of roles, responsibilities and accountability within SCOP**

The assignment of the responsibility for gender mainstreaming to Management has left Programme Officers and the designated Focal Person confused about their role and responsibilities. This is also true for other thematic Focal Persons.

#### Steps planned:

- Elaboration of ToRs for the Gender Focal Persons (to serve as model for the other Focal Persons) complemented with corresponding "ToRs" for Management and Programme Officers  
Timeline: first draft during workshop; finalization March 2008 – formal introduction during MYR of AP.

### 3) **Better integration of gender mainstreaming in the PCM**

There is no systematic approach to ensure and improve gender mainstreaming in the PCM.

#### Steps planned:

- With the clarification of the roles and responsibilities and using the gender checklist the various entry points within the PCM were identified and responsibilities and indicators integrated into the ToRs for Management, Programme Officers and Focal Persons.  
Timeline: first draft during workshop; finalization March 2008 – formal introduction during MYR of AP.

SHA humanitarian activities are phasing out in 2008. Based on the experiences made, steps to ensure better integration of gender mainstreaming and the identification of responsibilities for gender equality mainstreaming will be taken up at HO.

## Annex B. Approach Paper and Methodological Instruments

### 4. Approach Paper

#### APPROACH PAPER FOR THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF SDC'S PERFORMANCE IN MAINSTREAMING GENDER

##### 1. Background

SDC is committed to the pursuit of gender equality. In 1993 SDC formulated and began implementing its first gender policy entitled 'Gender Balanced Development'. Since then SDC and its partners have undertaken a variety of initiatives to promote gender as a transversal issue in their development co-operation. These include:

- From 1997 to 2005, SDC conducted two training workshops each year (one in English and one in French): These workshops were open to SDC staff and partners. The aim was to introduce them to methodologies to incorporate a gender perspective in their work as a regular part of their practice. The training has been not only an important capacity-building activity but also a forum for discussion and sharing of experience, as well as an opportunity to explore practical strategies to further participants work with gender in their programmes and projects.
- In 1998 SDC did a review of gender experience up to that time, based on wide consultation and discussion with SDC staff.
- In 2003 a new '*SDC Policy on Gender Equality*' was launched. The policy was developed through a series of consultations with Gender Focal Points and other SDC staff, both in Headquarters (HQ) and in-country. The new policy sought to build on SDC's experiences of working with gender issues for more than a decade. The policy identifies five guiding principles for gender mainstreaming:
  - o the mandatory completion of a **gender analysis**, and its use in policy, programme and project formulation;
  - o **flexibility** in strategies for gender equality and social change in the face of resistant power relations;
  - o **multi-level** strategies linking international, national and local partners involved in multilateral, bilateral and humanitarian aid;
  - o **specific action** to address gender inequality, which can target women and/or men;
  - o **promoting equal opportunities** at SCD headquarters, in the field offices as well as in partner organisations.

- In 2003 SDC published and disseminated a 'Gender in Practice' Toolkit in five languages. Elaborated over 2 years in close consultation with SDC staff in HQ and in-country, it links the methodologies applied in the training to key procedures used in SDC, in particular Programme Cycle Management (PCM) and its different components. The "*Gender in Practice*" Toolkit identifies three dimensions of SDC gender strategy, presented in a triangular relationship to denote their inter-relationship:
  - o Gender as a transversal issue
  - o Specific actions to address gender inequality, which can target women and/or men.
  - o Equal opportunities within SDC as an organisation. In compliance with Swiss equality law (1981) and the Swiss Government's ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1997), SDC is committed to equal opportunities in Headquarters and in COOFs. SDC also works to promote equal opportunities in its partner organisations.
- In 2003, SDC held a workshop on '*Capitalization of Gender in SDC*' which sought to showcase and explore the knowledge and experience of working with gender as a transversal issue that SDC and its partners have accumulated between 1998 and 2003. The report of the workshop, with commentary and cases was published in 2004.
- In 2007, SDC organized another short capitalization of gender mainstreaming in programmes and projects of Swiss Cooperation Offices (COOFs) in the context of an intensive week on gender mainstreaming (including a workshop on Gender Responsive Budgeting).

Over this time, in addition to supporting a range of strategic initiatives externally, the Gender Desk has played a crucial supporting and catalytic role in the promotion of gender equality within SDC. Gender Desk staff consult formally and informally with colleagues in HQ and make inputs into documents of all kinds. They also travel regularly to the COOFs, visiting programmes, running workshops, consulting and being consulted on why and how to address gender issues. The Gender Desk currently has the equivalent of 1.6 staff positions. In 2001 during a restructuring of SDC, the Gender Desk was re-located to the Governance Division. In 2006 governance and gender were declared the two transversal issues in SDC, making this an interesting moment for the cross-learning from an evaluation of gender work in SDC.

## **2. Why an Evaluation Now - Rationale**

Given the long-standing emphasis in SDC on gender equality described above, a thorough examination of SDC's efforts towards mainstreaming gender equality in development is called for. The sheer volume of SDC activity on gender equality, both in headquarters and in-country, warrants a critical look at how effectively and relevantly this transversal issue is promoted in SDC as well as a consolidation of past experiences and a thorough reflection on how to proceed in the future.

Recently there has been a trend in the international donor community towards a more institutional and harmonised approach in the delivery of aid. The Millennium Development Goals and Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus on financing the MDGs (2002), the Marrakech Declaration on Results (2004), the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), to name just the key events, all call for aligning donor programmes to national priorities and for a harmonised approach, which may involve SWAPs and eventually budget aid. This will strengthen the central level of government in the partner countries – and take both aid and national policy and planning further from local women and men, girls and boys – at least if no special emphasis is placed on gender equality,

human rights and governance issues. Assuming that the trend towards an approach based on the Paris principles will continue, it will be highly useful for SDC to consolidate the organisation's experiences in gender equality in view of contributing to ensure that gender issues at national, regional and local levels are adequately covered in harmonised approaches. At yet another level, the findings of the evaluation can be expected to form an input for multilateral policy dialogue and humanitarian cooperation.

Through its recent Portfolio-Analysis, SDC aimed to sharpen the geographical and thematic focus of the organisation. It was decided that gender and governance will become the only two transversal issues in SDC, with implications for all ten thematic foci. This makes a stock taking in view of shaping the future of gender equality in SDC's operations a very timely undertaking.

### **3. Purpose, Objectives, Focus and Scope**

#### **3.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the evaluation is threefold:

- to render accountability by submitting SDC activities to independent assessment,
- to improve future SDC performance in mainstreaming gender equality through learning
- to contribute to knowledge about promoting gender equality in international cooperation.

#### **3.2 Objectives**

The evaluation is expected to provide findings, conclusions and recommendations on how SDC can improve the relevance and effectiveness of its gender equality measures as well as how to strengthen conceptual and strategic support for gender equality measures.

The objectives of this independent evaluation are

- to analyze the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the implementation of SDC's gender equality policy as outlined under 3.3 Focus and Scope;
- to analyze how SDC as an institution (i.e., through its systems, policies, processes, culture) implements its gender equality policy including the identification of factors which promote or undermine the implementation of the gender equality policy;
- to assess institutional learning within SDC with regard to gender equality;
- to assess the coherence and complementarities of SDC's other policies and priorities with its gender equality policy;
- to assess SDC's contribution in promoting gender equality in the context of donor harmonization and alignment with partner country priorities;
- to assess how SDC can best use its limited resources to further gender equality;
- for SDC staff in the Core Learning Partnerships in the Case Study Countries and at Headquarters to intensively reflect on the findings and conclusions of the evaluation team and to formulate recommendations themselves for improving SDC's performance promoting gender equality in development cooperation.

#### **3.3 Focus and Scope**

The evaluation will examine evidence in three interlinked areas: Gender equality results in SDC programmes, institutional dimensions and strategic intent. These three areas of focus are interdependent and influence the quality of the contribution SDC makes to gender equality.

1. **Programme Results:** Assessment of the contribution of SDC programs to gender equality: (relevance, effectiveness, impact [where possible] and sustainability) in three country case studies (Ukraine, Mozambique, Pakistan) and reflecting the different kinds of instruments and approaches SDC is using.
2. **Organisational Dimensions:** Assessment of SDC's systems, processes, procedures, relations, norms and culture with regard to how they assist or impede SDC's stated policy of contributing to gender equality. This dimension of the evaluation will look in particular at the role of the thematic backstopping, but also at other dimensions of how SDC works (incentives, procedures, norms, culture, etc.) through a combination of interviews, documentary analysis and focus groups.
3. **Strategic Intent:**<sup>20</sup> Assessment of SDC's strategic orientation of its gender equality efforts along 2 dimensions: effectiveness in contributing to gender equality and identifying an appropriate and well-defined niche for SDC to most effectively focus its limited resources.

SDC has identified three strategic choices for addressing gender equality: using pilot projects to create space; combining gender specific actions with gender mainstreamed actions and creating equal opportunity for women employees. This dimension of the evaluation will analyse which approaches or combinations of approaches are the most effective in contributing to gender equality and why. This will include an analysis of how SDC might best focus its limited resources to advance gender equality in the various types of programming and emerging paradigms in development cooperation in which it is engaged (e.g., bilateral cooperation, humanitarian cooperation, harmonised and aligned approaches, SWAPs, Budget Support, etc).

As far as it is feasible the issue of impact shall be addressed together with the analysis of relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. Efficiency questions should be addressed in the context of project evaluation and monitoring and will not be treated in-depth in this more overarching evaluation.

#### **4. Principles Guiding the Formulation of the Key Questions and the Methodology.**

This independent evaluation should be guided by the following 5 principles which should be reflected in the formulation of the key questions as well as in the evaluation approach and methodology:

##### **4.1 Contributing to knowledge**

A range of evaluations of gender mainstreaming in multilateral and bilateral aid agencies have been carried out in the last 5 years. In a paper prepared for SDC, Nadja Ottiger presents a summary of the key findings of these evaluations.<sup>21</sup> This paper indicates that 'policy evaporation' and lack of implementation is a common problem in all aid agencies. It also shows that limited attention has been focussed on two issues. The first is on the impact of interventions on local

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<sup>20</sup> Assessing strategic intent is an effort to analyze whether an organization has made optimal choices in setting its gender equality goals and policies and does not directly assess the effectiveness of the programmes and the institutional parameters that support programming.

<sup>21</sup> Capitalisation of Experience from Gender Evaluations and Research: A review prepared for the Swiss Development Co-operation, 2006.

women and men in all their diversity. The second is on the new aid modalities in development co-operation, which remain under-explored with respect to promoting gender equality and their effect on gender relations. It is the intention of this SDC independent evaluation to move beyond repeating the focus and format of previous evaluations and identifying well known problems and gaps to advancing knowledge about how to resolve identified problems and gaps.

#### **4.2 Understanding root causes and dynamics of policy evaporation**

This evaluation should contribute to a better understanding of the various dynamics that underlie 'policy evaporation' of gender mainstreaming in development co-operation. The intention is to explore the conditions in SDC under which gender mainstreaming works well or does not work well.

#### **4.3 Consultative, participatory and learning oriented**

This evaluation should involve relevant SDC and partner staff, as well as various women and men involved in and affected by the selected interventions. In addition, key activists, researchers and government officers knowledgeable about gender and equality issues at country and local levels, should be consulted on their perceptions of the main gender issues in their context, and where appropriate, the contribution of SDC. An important dimension of this principle is that the Core Learning Partnerships in the Case Study Country Offices and at HQs will develop the recommendations based on the evaluation's findings and conclusions. This aspect of the evaluation is based on the belief that insiders will best be able to formulate effective recommendations that can generate both change and ownership.

#### **4.4 Learning with regard to implementation of transversal issues**

SDC has declared Gender (along with Governance) as a transversal or cross-cutting issue. However, the implementation of "transversality" appears to be understood and implemented in different ways by different parts of SDC, with the corresponding implications for roles, responsibilities, compliance and accountability. This evaluation should contribute to improving the "mainstreaming" of transversal issues in SDC.

#### **4.5 Forward looking**

It is intended that this evaluation not only draws out lessons learnt from the SDC gender mainstreaming experience, but also defines priority areas and responsibilities for future work to consolidate gender equality in SDC development co-operation.

### **5. Key questions**

The E+C Division and the evaluators will mutually agree on a final set of key questions following the Approach Workshop. The key questions below are indicative of the questions the evaluation will address in each of the three focus areas.

#### **5.1 Programme Results**

5.1.1. Overarching question: What evidence is there of SDC's contribution to gender equality in its programming (i.e., country programmes and projects)? Assess SDC's contribution with regard to relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and, to the extent feasible, impact.

5.1.2. How has SDC addressed gender equality in its country programming?  
Was systematic gender analysis with sex-disaggregated data conducted prior to the development of regional strategies and the country programmes? Have sex-disaggregated data been collected to support the results of the gender analysis?

- Assess the quality of the gender analysis (e.g., relevance with regard to the local context and to partner country and civil society needs and priorities, participation of women, men, boys and girls, coverage of constraints / problems, etc.).
- Does the country program reflect the gender analysis (e.g., Are gender issues reflected in SDC's diagnosis of development issues at the country level and is SDC addressing structural and systemic constraints to gender equality)?
- How was gender equality addressed in SDC's dialogue with the partner country and with its partners in the country? What issues were raised with whom? What was conducive to such dialogue and / or what were the constraints?

How relevant and effective is the program mix (i.e., specific actions for gender equality, gender mainstreamed actions, pilot projects, etc.) and to what extent has gender equality been mainstreamed throughout the programme? What contributed to or what hindered mainstreaming?

5.1.3. How was gender equality addressed at all stages of the Project Cycle Management (PCM) process, from the choice of partners, situation analysis, the project design (including the credit proposal), through to programme/project implementation including institutional and management arrangements, monitoring and evaluation?

- Are there objectives and corresponding indicators for what to achieve with regard to gender equality in the country programme and in the projects? Assess the quality and appropriateness of the objectives and indicators. Is appropriate sex-disaggregated monitoring data available? Is monitoring data being used for steering? If not, why not.
- Has SDC raise gender equality issues with its implementing partners? If not, why not.

5.1.4. Assess the outcomes and to the extent possible the impacts of the examined programmes/projects on women and men (intended and unintended consequences) based on a sample of key informants and of women and men, girls and boys (as appropriate) affected by the programme/project.

- What kinds of women were reached (e.g., rich/poor, young/old, etc)?
- Is there evidence of "gender-blind" programming in the country program and if so, with what repercussions for gender equality?
- Have any programs had unintended consequences such as increasing the vulnerability of women or increasing the inequality between women and men? If so, analyse what happened and why.

5.1.5. Are there any links / synergies and / or conflicts in the country programme activities between gender equality goals and other goals of SDC's development cooperation? Is there evidence of coherence and coordination? If not, why not?

5.1.6. How has SDC addressed gender equality in its activities in the context of donor harmonisation and alignment with partner country priorities? For example, how has SDC addressed gender equality in its efforts to support the development of national action plans such as PRSs, in its dialog with partner governments and other donors, in Budget Support, in SWAPs and in other harmonised approaches? How has SDC addressed gender equality in its multilateral cooperation? Discuss also potentials, problems, lessons with the aim of contributing to knowledge about what works and what does not work in addressing gender equality in these contexts.

5.1.7. What percentage of SDC programming is gender specific or adequately gender mainstreamed?

5.1.8. To what extent are the findings and conclusions from the three case studies representative of SDC's activities overall?

## **5.2 Organisational Dimensions**

5.2.1. Overarching question: Which organisational factors within SDC promote or hinder mainstreaming gender equality and why?

This question is to be examined with regard to

- personnel issues such as staff incentives, rewards, career advancement, accountability mechanisms, delegation of responsibility, leadership culture, skills profiles for recruitment, training, etc;
- organisational issues such as the roles, responsibilities and accountability of the thematic desks (with particular focus on the Gender Desk), the country desks and the staff in the Country Offices (Swiss and local) and how these different entities interact with each other;
- structural issues such as how the multi-level nature of the relationships between HQs, SDC Country Offices, partners (multi- and bilateral, Swiss and local) and the target groups support or undermine efforts to mainstream gender equality. How are motivation, responsibility and accountability for gender equality articulated between SDC, its partners and the target groups and with what repercussions?

5.2.2. As part of the evaluation methodology, the evaluation team will develop further specific questions and corresponding indicators in order to provide answers to the overarching question above. For example:

- How are motivation, responsibility and accountability for gender equality articulated at different levels?
- What are the accountability processes in staff performance assessment for gender equality and does excellent performance lead to rewards?
- What percentage of SDC staff have been trained in gender analysis and what is their assessment of how applicable / relevant it is?
- How effective is SDC's information management system in tracking gender equality inputs and outcomes?

5.2.3. In the case study countries, how has SDC dealt with gender equality in the COOF (including assessment of roles, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms within the COOF)? Is a gender equality policy in place in the COOF? If not, why not? How does SDC address gender equality issues in its relations with implementing partners?

5.2.4. With regard to the Gender Desk: How have its strategies, its relations with its "client" SDC staff, its tools, its capacity building efforts and its resources contributed to promoting and mainstreaming gender equality? What is working and why, what is not working and why not?

5.2.5. Is the function of Gender Focal Point as practiced in SDC useful? Assess set-up, support, roles, responsibilities, etc.

5.2.6. Are the financial and staffing resources as well as the institutional support committed by SDC for mainstreaming gender commensurate with its commitment to gender equality and to the requirements for adequately mainstreaming gender?

### **5.3 Strategic Intent**

- 5.3.1. Assess SDC's mix of strategies for addressing gender equality and how this affects the quality of SDC's contribution. In SDC practice, have specific actions for gender equality complemented or have they replaced gender mainstreaming? Why and with what repercussions? How does SDC's policy of flexibility in approaches relate to the achievement of gender equality goals?
- 5.3.2. As a transversal theme, is gender equality given appropriate consideration among SDC policies and priorities at all levels of decision-making? What are the processes/systems that enable this to happen/prevent this from happening?
- 5.3.3. What are the opportunities and challenges emerging from the changing development cooperation paradigm (Paris Declaration, new aid modalities, etc.) for enhancing SDC's contribution to gender equality?
- 5.3.4. What has SDC's role been in the international effort to address gender issues? What are the areas in which SDC has particular strengths or advantages in addressing gender equality and why?

## **6. Expected Results**

### **6.1 At Output Level**

*By the evaluation team:*

- Approach and Synthesis Workshops at SDC HQs and in the COOFs of the Case Study Countries
- End of Mission Debriefings with Aide Memoire
- A fit to print Final Evaluators' Report in English consisting of
- Synthesis Evaluation Report not exceeding 40 pages plus annexes and including an executive summary
- Three Case Study Reports not exceeding 20 pages each plus annexes and including an executive summary
- A DAC Abstract according to DAC-Standards not exceeding 2 pages

*By SDC:*

- Review of the findings and conclusions, and development of recommendations based on the findings and conclusions.
- An Agreement at Completion Point containing the Stand of the Core Learning Partnership and of Senior Management regarding the recommendations
- Lessons drawn by the Core Learning Partnership
- Dissemination of the evaluation results

## **6.2 At Outcome Level**

The independent evaluation is expected to contribute

- to the sharpening of SDC's understanding of gender relations in development processes: What can gender equality measures help to achieve and what not? What measures and instruments are suited (or not suited) in which contexts?
- to improved planning and implementation of gender equality measures
- to better position and focus gender mainstreaming within SDC's portfolio and as a transversal theme.
- to a better understanding of the operationalisation of transversal issues in SDC.
- to knowledge generation and thematic support with regard to gender equality.

## **7. Process**

### **7.1 Methodology and Approach**

For a detailed timetable for the evaluation, including the dates of the country missions and the workshops with the Core Learning Partnership see Chapter 9. Main Steps.

In late summer 2006, the E+C Division selected Ukraine, Pakistan and Mozambique as the case study countries (E+C has the prerogative for selecting case study countries for the Independent Evaluations). The selection criteria were as follows:

- countries from each operational department in SDC (E, O, H),
- from regions or countries which have not recently been implicated in an Independent Evaluation,
- countries in which results from an Independent Evaluation have the potential to make a meaningful contribution for quality improvement.

There will not be a country case study from the Latin America Division (LAS). However, the evaluation team will examine the LAS program through document review and interviews with LAS staff at HQ.

In each of the three case study countries, the evaluation team (one international consultant and a local consultant) will conduct an overview of the SDC program and its gender dimensions. In addition, the evaluators will select – in consultation with SDC- and examine in greater depth two to three specific programmes / projects. In Pakistan, the evaluation will also focus on SDC's Humanitarian Program. The specific programmes / projects to be analysed in depth will be chosen to reflect the different kinds of programming instruments SDC is using (bilateral, harmonized programming, humanitarian, policy-focused etc.) and different kinds of approaches (specifically targeting women versus other types of interventions without specific targeting). In these programmes / projects, the evaluators will also assess the outcomes and to the extent possible the impacts on the affected women and men, boys and girls.

The evaluators will analyse relevant documents, conduct interviews with local partners, other donor and selected experts. They will develop and execute research protocols to assess programme / project outcomes and impacts on the women and men, boys and girls affected by the selected programmes / projects.

Through the study of relevant documents, interviews with selected staff at SDC HQs and triangulation with the LAS program, the evaluators will assess the extent to which the findings and conclusions from the case study countries are representative of SDC overall.

During their mission to SDC HQs, the evaluation team will conduct interviews as well as focus groups to examine the institutional and strategic dimensions that affect gender equality programming. The evaluators will also trace the chain of decision-making from strategy development to implementation to assess the nature of the interactions that determine decisions.

The evaluation process will be iterative with periodic engagement of the Core Learning Partners (see Chap. 8 for the constitution of the CLPs):

- Approach Workshops at SDC HQs and in each of the Case Study COOFs to
  - o introduce the Evaluation Team,
  - o develop a common understanding of the evaluation process, scope and focus,
  - o finalise the Approach Paper (improvement of the research design including key questions through stakeholder input).
- End of Mission Debriefings with Aide Memoire by the evaluation team at the end of the first missions to the Case Study Countries and at HQs to inform the stakeholders of emerging findings.
- Synthesis Workshops in the Case Study Countries and at SDC HQs to
  - o present the draft evaluation reports to the CLPs for feedback and validation,
  - o present the evaluation team's conclusions on SDC's practice regarding gender equality,
  - o generate recommendations for SDC by the CLP.

The final Synthesis Workshop at SDC HQs will bring together the HQ and COOF perspectives. COOFs are encouraged to send staff to this final workshop. Case Study Country Desk staff are expected to attend the workshops in their respective countries and one staff person from the Gender Desk is also expected to attend each of the Country Case Study Workshops. This will also help ensure the integration of HQ and COOF perspectives.

An innovative feature of this evaluation is that the Core Learning Partnerships both in the case study COOFs and at headquarters will be actively involved in generating the recommendations for SDC. Evaluation research shows that involvement of those responsible for implementation in generating recommendations leads to a higher rate of implementation. In the Synthesis Workshops, the evaluation team will present their conclusions. The Evaluation Team will be responsible for assisting the CLPs to develop recommendations by facilitating an effective process of consideration of possible actions. They will be responsible for the quality of the inputs and the process for generating recommendations.

The focus of the emerging recommendations will depend on the evaluation findings and conclusions. It is expected that they will cover the following areas:

- 1) What are the recommendations for increasing the relevance and effectiveness of SDC's support to gender equality processes in bilateral and humanitarian cooperation?
- 2) What are the recommendations for strengthening SDC gender equality programming through improved collaboration between operational units (COOFs) and other parts of SDC, particularly the thematic (backstopping) units?

- 3) What are the recommendations for SDC's role regarding gender equality in increasingly harmonised and aligned approaches as well as in policy dialog?
- 4) Using gender equality as an example of a transversal theme in SDC development cooperation, what are the recommendations regarding the institutional roles, responsibilities, compliance and accountability for addressing transversal issues in SDC?

The stand of the CLP regarding the recommendations will be noted in the Agreement at Completion Point at the end of the final Synthesis Workshop at HQs.

## **8. Organisational Set-up and Respective Roles**

- **Core Learning Partnerships (CLP)** will be constituted at SDC HQs and in the Case Study Countries. The CLP comments on the evaluation design and the key questions in the Approach Workshop. During the Synthesis Workshop, the CLP receives and validates the evaluation findings and conclusions and elaborates recommendations for SDC which will be noted in the Agreement at Completion Point.
- **Department-level Management** and the **Director General** of SDC comment in COSTRA on the Agreement at Completion Point (Senior Management Response).
- **Consultants** contracted by SDC's E+C Division elaborate an evaluation work plan and methodology, carry out the evaluation according to international evaluation standards, conduct debriefings at the end of missions as well as conduct the Approach and Synthesis Workshops, present a draft of their evaluation reports to the CLP, follow up on the CLP's feedback and the final formulation of recommendations as appropriate and submit the Evaluators' Final Report in publishable quality as well as an Evaluation Abstract according to DAC specifications.
- **Evaluation + Controlling Division (E+C Division)** commissions the independent evaluation, drafts the Approach Paper with the inputs from the Core Learning Partnerships and the Evaluation Team, drafts and administers the contracts with the international evaluation team, ensures that the evaluators receive appropriate logistical support and access to information and facilitates the overall process with respect to i) discussion of evaluation results, ii) elaboration of the Agreement at Completion Point and Lessons Learned, iii) publication and iv) dissemination.

### **8.1 Core Learning Partnerships**

#### **8.1.1. Core Learning Partnership at SDC Headquarters:**

Department for Bilateral Development Cooperation (E-Dept.):

Head of South Africa Division (SOSA): Paul Peter (PU)

Desk Mozambique: Andrea Studer (SAW)

Head of South Asia Division: Christoph Graf (GRC)

Pakistan Desk, E-Dept.: Chloé Milner (MIL)

Gender Focal Point Latin America Division: Ursula Läubli (LAU)

Department for Humanitarian Aid (H-Dept.):

Head of Asia / America Division, H-Dept.: Hans Peter Lenz (LHP)

Pakistan Desk, H-Dept.: Roland Schlachter (SCN), Stéphanie Guha

Gender Desk, H-Dept.: Nathalie Vesco (VSN)

Department for Cooperation with Eastern Europe and CIS (Community of Independent States) (O-Dept.):

Head of CIS Division: Urs Herren (HRR)  
Ukraine Desk: Andrea Flück (FLC)

Department for Thematic and Technical Resources (F-Dept.):

Gender Desk: Annemarie Sancar (SQA), Milena Mihajlovic (MJM)  
Head of Governance Division: René Holenstein (HTR)

Department for Development Policy and Multilateral Cooperation (M-Dept.):

Development Policy Division: Bernhard Wenger (WBN)

Management:

Desk for Advancement of Women/Equal Opportunities in SDC: Barbara Guntern (GNB)

### **8.1.2. Core Learning Partnership in the Case Study Country Offices:**

The CLPs in the Case Study Country Offices consist of all SDC Country Office Program, Finance and Administrative staff including the Country Office Director.

## **9. Main Steps and Timetable**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Summer 2006	Identification of Case Study Countries	E+C informs concerned COOFs and Desks
Fall 2006	Draft Approach Paper	Elaborated by E+C Division in consultation with Gender Desk
End 2006	Call for offers from short list	
Spring 2007	Selection of Evaluation Team	Selected by E+C Division from 3 offers which were submitted
End July 2007	Contract with Evaluation Team finalized	
Aug. 2007	Team Leader finalizes contracts with local consultants in consultation with Case Study COOFs	
Aug. 20-22, 2007	Evaluation Team meets for team building, develops workplan and refines methodology	
<b>Sept. 1, 2007</b>	Evaluation Team submits workplan to E+C	
Sept. 6, 2007	Approach Workshop at SDC HQs	Rieky Stuart and Aruna Rao HQ CLP E+C and Evaluation Team finalize Approach Paper integrating CLP input as appropriate
Sept. 5 + 7, 2007	Individual debriefings with SDC Senior Management on evaluation focus and scope Interviews with LAS and H-Dept.	Rieky Stuart and Aruna Rao
Oct. 29-Nov. 8, 2007	First Mission to Ukraine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approach Workshop at COOF (1 day retreat)</li> <li>- Field Mission to collect data</li> <li>- End of Mission Debriefing and Aide Memoire</li> </ul>	Jeremy Holland and local consultant.

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Nov. 26-Dec. 12, 2007	<p>First Mission to Mozambique</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approach Workshop at COOF (1 day retreat)</li> <li>- Field Mission to collect data</li> <li>- End of Mission Debriefing and Aide Memoire</li> </ul>	Aruna Rao and Isabel Casimiro
Nov. 19-23, 2007	<p>First Mission to SDC HQs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interviews and Focus Groups</li> </ul> <p>End of Mission Debriefing (Nov. 22, 2 hours) on emerging findings from HQ mission</p>	Rieky Stuart and Jeremy Holland
Nov. 26-Dec. 14, 2007	<p>First Mission to Pakistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approach Workshop at COOF (1 day retreat)</li> <li>- Field Mission to collect data</li> <li>- End of Mission Debriefing and Aide Memoire</li> </ul>	Reiky Stuart and Shehnaz Kapadia
<b>Jan. 7, 2008</b>	Draft Country Case Studies delivered to E+C	
Jan. 28 – Feb. 1, 2008	<p>Second Mission to Ukraine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Synthesis Workshop (2 day retreat Jan. 30-31) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Feedback and validation of Draft Ukraine Case Study Report</li> <li>o COOF CLP elaborates recommendations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Rieky Stuart, Jeremy Holland and local consultant
Feb. 11-15, 2008	<p>Second Mission to Pakistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Synthesis Workshop (2 day retreat Feb. 13-14) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Feedback and validation of Draft Pakistan Case Study Report</li> <li>o COOF CLP elaborates recommendations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Rieky Stuart and Shehnaz Kapadia
Feb. 25- 29, 2008	<p>Second Mission to Mozambique</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Synthesis Workshop (2 day retreat Feb. 27-28) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Feedback and validation of Draft Mozambique Case Study Report</li> <li>o COOF CLP elaborates recommendations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Rieky Stuart, Aruna Rao and Isabel Casimiro
Feb. 24-28 or March 3-7, 2008	<p>Second Mission to SDC Headquarters (duration tentative, depending on budget)</p> <p>Validation of case study country findings, cross-checking, interviews</p> <p>End of Mission Debriefing (3 hours)</p>	Rieky Stuart and Aruna Rao
<b>March 25 2008</b>	Evaluation Team delivers Draft Synthesis Report to E+C	
April 23-24, 2008	<p>Synthesis Workshop at SDC HQs (2 day retreat)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feedback and validation of Draft Synthesis Report</li> <li>- HQ CLP elaborates recommendations and Agreement at Completion Point</li> </ul>	Rieky Stuart and Aruna Rao
<b>April 30, 2007</b>	Evaluation Team delivers Final Evaluators' Report (Synthesis Report and Country Case Studies) to E+C	
May 2008	Presentation and Discussion in COSTRA (Senior Management Response)	E+C
July 2008	Evaluation Report finalised and disseminated	E+C

## 10. Consultant Selection and Time-Effort

The **evaluation team** should comprise both genders. The evaluators are expected to have the following evaluation and subject matter expertise and regional experience

- proven track record in mainstreaming gender equality in development,
- up-to-date knowledge on development cooperation including the more recent discourses on Aid Effectiveness (Paris Declaration), MDGs and PRSPs,
- strong analytical and editorial skills and ability to synthesize,
- professional evaluation experience.

The **international evaluators** are expected to have

- field experience in one of the three geographical areas (Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and CIS; more than one is considered an asset),
- ability to work well in English. Knowledge of either Russian, Portuguese or Urdu would be an advantage,
- ability in steering complex processes involving different cultural contexts.

The **local case study evaluators** are expected to have

- sound knowledge of gender mainstreaming processes, policy-making and planning, gender relations and political landscape in the country,
- sound knowledge of the international donor community and harmonisation in their country,
- willingness to contribute to a team effort and to cooperate with the international team leaders,
- not be close associates of SDC.

Based on these criteria, Gender at Work in Washington, D:C. was selected to conduct the evaluation. Gender at Work will contract the local consultants in the case study countries in consultation with SDC. Gender at Work will commit a total of 213 person days (125 days international consultants, 88 days local consultants) as noted in the budget to this evaluation.

## **B.2. Focus Group Questions**

### Outline for Focus Group Discussion

1. Introduction: Participants and facilitators introduce themselves. Present the concept of “Chatham House Rules” confidentiality. Remarks made in this session should not be attributed to individuals.
2. Purpose: The purpose of this session is to explore the organisational culture of SDC from your perspective. When an organisation formulates a policy on gender equality, or offers training to its staff on the new policy, this does not automatically mean that it is systematically implemented. Existing relations and ways of doing things and getting things done – the culture of the organisation - are often subconscious, and some of its dimensions may help or hinder progress on gender equality. (Compare to a country’s culture – it can be known only comparatively).
3. Methodology: We will look at SDC’s culture broadly, and only toward the end of the session relate how this culture may support or hinder progress on gender equality. Because organisational culture is deeply ingrained and not evident, we will use projective techniques to articulate how we perceive this culture.
4. Potential questions (not every question was asked in every session):
  - How would you describe an ‘ideal’ SDC programme officer? Manager?
  - Can you give examples of behaviour or attitudes that are generally admired in SDC?
  - Can you give examples of behaviour or attitudes that are discouraged in SDC?
  - Can you give examples of issues that SDC staff really care about and take action on? (explore how various parts of SDC respond.)
  - Can you give examples of behaviours that SDC staff really care about and take action on? (explore how various parts of SDC respond.)
  - Compare SDC to a body. Which of its systems are healthy, which are functioning less well? Which are super-sensitive?
5. Conclusion: What does our discussion tell you about SDC’s success or lack thereof on gender equality? Ask two questions – what does it tell you about what it’s been successful at? Where it has not been successful? Separate out gender parity issues within the organisation and GE work through policy dialogue and programs or else they will get conflated.

## **B.3. SDC Gender Equality Mainstreaming Interview Guide**

### **1. SDC Gender equality mainstreaming: Questions for SDC Staff**

We would like to ask you about your understanding of SDC policy on gender equality, gender issues in country, how you address these concerns in their policy dialogue and funding and what progress you are making in the country context on gender equality issues.

1. What is your understanding of SDC values, goals and objectives in the country context?
2. What is your understanding of SDC’s global gender policy?

3. How does the COOF build its knowledge on gender issues? Does the COOF allocate funds directly to build knowledge on gender issues, support women's organisations etc? Are there particular training or capacity building events built into your work programme?
4. What is your understanding of the gender issues in this country context and how did you acquire this knowledge? Is there a shared understanding of gender equality issues amongst COOF staff? How does this understanding translate into the design of the country strategy?
5. What is the relationship between gender equality goals and other COOF goals? How well are they integrated? What are the challenges to effective integration?
6. How is gender as a transversal theme implemented in practice through COOF strategic positioning, policy dialogue (including harmonisation considerations) and program/project prioritisation/implementation? How does it impact on budgetary allocations?
7. How do gender equality objectives impact on program/project identification, design and implementation including: issues prioritized within a given sector or sub-sector, design of projects, selection of project partners, gender-related requirements placed on project partners (e.g. do they have to conduct gender analysis?), and monitoring and reporting requirements?

## **2. SDC Gender equality mainstreaming: Questions for project implementation staff**

We would like to talk to you about gender equality objectives in your project, and the impact that gender equality objectives have on project design, budget allocations, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation and results.

1. What do you understand by gender equality in the context of your project?
2. How have gender equality or women-specific objectives been built into the design of the project?
3. Does SDC require you to do a gender analysis at the front end of a project design? Does SDC require you to report on gender disaggregated results? Does your own organisation require gender analysis and gender disaggregated reporting?
4. How are gender equality or women specific objectives reflected in the allocation of budgets to project activities?
5. How have gender equality objectives been built into the monitoring and evaluation of the project, including: (i) gender disaggregated data; and (ii) gender- or women-specific indicators (at input, output, outcome and impact levels)?
6. In what areas has the project impacted successfully on women or on gender equality and why?
7. In what areas has the project been less successful in impacting on women or on gender equality and why? What are the major challenges to achieving gender equality?

## **3. SDC Gender equality mainstreaming: Questions for project beneficiaries/primary stakeholders/target groups**

We would like to talk to you about your experience with this project, how it has impacted on your life, your capacities and opportunities, and on the community in which you live.

1. What is your relationship to the project?
2. What were your hopes/expectations at the beginning of the project?
3. Does the project meet the needs of your “community” (i.e. social group, livelihood group targeted by the project) and with your needs as individual?
4. What change has the project made in your life? For example, has it given you new skills, opportunities? Has it changed your relationship with men?
5. Do you know about the organisation implementing the project? Tell us about your impressions of the organisation?
6. What would you have changed in this project to make it better to make it benefit women more?

## B.4. Results of the Personnel Survey Conducted in Pakistan, Mozambique and Ukraine

Each question was rated on a scale from 1(low) to 5 (high). The average rating for all 10 respondents is noted in bold at the end of each question. Comments are in italics. **BLACK** – Pakistan, **RED** – Ukraine, **BLUE** – Mozambique

Question	Avge rate 1=Low 5=High		
<b>Women's and Men's Consciousness</b>	4.3	4.5	4.1
1. Women and men feel respected, confident and secure in their work environment	<b>4.3</b>	4.5	4.5
2. Staff are knowledgeable and committed to gender equality	<b>3.6</b>	5.0	3.2
3. Leadership is committed to gender equality	4.5	5.0	4.0
4. Staff and leadership have capacity for dialogue and conflict management, priority setting and building policy and program coherence	4.7	4.0	4.5
<b>Access to and Control over Resources</b>	<b>3.4</b>	4.0	3.0
5. Sufficient budget, time and human resources are devoted to actions to advance gender equality	3.5	4.0	2.9
6. Number of women in leadership positions	3.6	4.0	3.0
7. SDC Staff have sufficient training and capacity for advancing and achieving gender equality goals	3.2	4.0	3.1
8. Program/project staff have sufficient training and capacity for advancing and achieving gender equality goals	3.6	3.5	2.9
<b>Formal Rules, Policies</b>	<b>3.7</b>	4.0	2.5
9. SDC's country focused strategic goals include promoting gender equality within the organisation's mission and mandate	4.1	4.5	3.4
10. Gender equality has a high priority in program and project objectives	4.0	4.0	2.8
11. Gender analysis is built in early and consistently into policy dialogue and program and project work processes (including planning, implementation and evaluation)	3.4	3.0	2.9
12. Management and staff are accountable for implementing gender equality policies	4.0	4.5	3.3
13. SDC has policies for anti-harassment, work-family arrangements & fair employment	3.6	4.5	2.2
14. SDC staff know about SDC policies for anti-harassment, work-family arrangements & fair employment staff and use them	3.8	4.0	2.2
15. SDC has accountability mechanisms and processes that hold the organisation accountable to gender equality goals	3.0	4.0	2.2
<b>Internal culture and deep structure</b>	<b>3.9</b>	4.5	3.2
16. SDC organisational culture accepts and values women's leadership	4.5	4.5	3.2
17. Gender issues are owned across the organisation	4.0	4.5	3.2
18. SDC acceptance the need for work-family adjustments for international and national staff	3.9	4.5	2.7

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19. Women's issues are firmly on the SDC agenda	4.1	4.5	4.2
20. Agenda setting and power sharing is open to influence and change by both men and women in SDC	3.5	4.5	3.6
21. SDC has powerful advocates for women's empowerment and gender equality	3.5	4.0	3.0
22. SDC value systems prioritize knowledge and work geared to social inclusion and gender equality	3.9	4.5	3.0
23. SDC's organisational culture prevents sexual harassment and violence against women	4.5	5.0	2.6

## B.5. List of People Interviewed for the Synthesis Report

Adam Therese	Director	Department for Eastern Europe and Community of Independent States (CIS) O-Dept.
Benz Jürg	Deputy Head	Department for Thematic and Technical Resources F-Dept.
Bugnard Denis	West Balkans, former Country Director Pakistan	O-Dept.
Flück Andrea*	Desk Ukraine	O-Dept.
Flury Manuel	Head of Knowledge Management Division	F-Dept.
Fust Walter	General Director SDC	
Gautschi Remo	Deputy General Director SDC	
Graf Christoph*	Head, South Asia Division	Department for Bilateral Development Cooperation, E-Dept.
Grieder Christine	Formerly, Div. International Financial Institutions, IFI	M-Dept.
Guha Stéphanie*	Div. Asia and America / formerly in Pakistan	H-Dept.
Guntern Barbara*	Advancement of Women/Equal Opportunities	Management Support Div.
Herren Urs*	Head Div. CIS	O-Dept.
Holenstein René*	Head of Governance Division	F-Dept.
Läubli Ursula*	Gender Focal Point, Latin America Division	E-Dept.
Lugon-Moulin Anne	Dept. Head of Div. Governance	F-Dept.
Maître Adrian	Dept. Head E+C Div. – Formerly of Div. Latin America	Management Support E-Dept.
Mihajovic Milena*	Gender Desk, Governance Div.	F-Dept.
Milner Chloé*	Pakistan Desk, South Asia Div.	E-Dept.
Maurer Pierre	Div. Development Policy	M-Dept.
Peter Paul*	Outgoing Head of Div. Eastern and Southern Africa (SOSA D.)	E-Dept.
Sancar Annemarie*	Gender Desk, Div. Governance	F-Dept.
Schlachter Roland*	Div. Asia and America	H-Dept.
Siegfried Gerhard	Head of Evaluation + Controlling Div.	Management Support
Studer Andrea*	Mozambique Desk, SOSA Div.	E-Dept.
Suter Sybille	Director, Dept. Human	Management Support

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	Resources	
Tissafi Maya	Head. Div. Social Development/ from 1.6.08 Head SOSA Div.	F-Dept. E-Dept.
Vesco Nathalie*	Gender Focal Point, Africa Div.	H-Dept.
Vokral Edita	Deputy Director	E-Dept.
Wenger Bernhard*	Div. Development Policy	M-Dept.
Wilhelm Beate	Director	F-Dept.

Caren Levy	Director; Development Planning Unit	University College of London
Stalder Béatrice	Consultant advising on the Advancement of Women/Equal Opportunities in SDC	