

Power and Privileges – on Gender Discrimination and Poverty







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Foreword

The photography to illustrate poverty often features a woman. However, analysis and strategies aimed at eradicating poverty tend to focus on men.

This tendency is basically explained – as shown by this and several other studies – by the fact that presumably gender neutral interventions, in areas such as economic reforms and health, tend to take men as the norm and point of departure, and thus primarily benefit men.

This is a reflection of existing power structures. And power is established to retain advantages and privileges, if need be by exercising violence and using other sanctions, within families and in societies at large.

It is a matter of transparency to investigate and reveal power and discrimination and the costs born by women in terms of deaths, violence and lack of respect, which poor women often suffer - just because they, like half of "man kind", are women.

Gender discrimination also has a high economic cost for society at large, as it blocks prospect for individuals and groups to move out of poverty. Discrimination is a major obstacle for development and poverty eradication, and often an impediment to effective use of development resources.

The fact that power is a construction means that it can be altered. Another world is possible. An important point of departure for change is the Government Bill 2002/03: 122 on global development, which states the rights perspective, and the equal worth of every human being. The Bill also stresses the perspectives of the poor.

This study illustrates that we need to be aware of the fact that the perspective of a poor women often differ from the perspective of a poor man, as the expressions of female poverty and deprivation differ from those of men.

To initiate changes is a political choice, which can be expressed in policy-guided management and in allocation of resources. It is also a question of rethinking conventional wisdom.

Stockholm in February 2004

Gerd Johnsson-Latham

Dep director and leader of the project

"Gender based discrimination as a cause to poverty"

The texts are also available in Swedish. Both versions can be found at www.ud.se

Main conclusions

- ★ Female and male poverty – and deprivation in the broad sense – stems from issues of power, gender-specifically expressed in a number of ways which give girls and boys different sets of rights and privileges from birth. Resources are often unequally divided in families and differences between the conditions of life of women and men tend to be most pronounced in the poorest families.
- ★ Gender discrimination and equality are not technical issues – they are issues of power and values and whether or not everyone should have the same rights, be entitled to a decent life and be regarded as equal partners in development cooperation.
- ★ A great deal of knowledge about female and male poverty is available – not always in the form of hard economic data, but rather, for example, facts about legal and other discrimination regarding access to resources, decision-making, etc.
- ★ Government Bill 2002/03:122 on global development is based on a rights perspective, stressing the equal value of all people, and the perspective of the poor and highlights gender equality as a central objective. The Bill thereby creates the preconditions for a strengthened focus on seeking to give women and men equal conditions and attention and preventing gender discrimination – and for understanding how “the perspective of the poor” often need to be further qualified as the perspective of poor women and poor men often differ.
- ★ As the report shows, efforts that appear gender-neutral in poverty reduction strategies often have a bias in favour of men. This bias may entail a high cost for women and be a matter of life or death, ill health, suffering and an absence of economic development and continued poverty affecting all. The line taken on these costs is a political choice.
- ★ Broad work is needed to fight economic poverty, powerlessness, violence and oppression among women and men. The report outlines a 10-point strategy for long-term work, chiefly based on Government Bill 2002/03:122 “Shared responsibility: Sweden’s policy for global development”. The strategy rests on two pillars:
 - a clear approach and management that emphasises the equal value of women and men and that the costs of discrimination are unacceptable
 - “the art of social engineering” to translate the approach into practical measures, for which both more resources and knowledge are needed.

Background to the project

Sweden has long maintained a high international profile regarding gender equality in development cooperation. For example, Sweden contributed actively to the formulation of the Platform for Action and Declaration adopted by the fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and the special follow-up session in New York in 2000. Sweden has also been continuously proactive in drawing attention to, inter alia, issues relating to women's reproductive rights, violence against women, and the role of men. This work has been carried out in the different UN forums, the development banks, the EU, the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) and in bilateral development cooperation.

International gender equality efforts have been an essential part of the Government's overall gender equality policy as laid down inter alia in the Government's communication to the Swedish Riksdag 2002/2003:140.

In Government Bill 2002/03:122 "Shared responsibility: Sweden's policy for global development" which was presented to the Riksdag in May 2003, the importance of measures to prevent discrimination of women is clearly stressed. The overall objective of the Bill is to contribute to a just and global development, from a rights and poverty perspective. Gender equality is emphasised as the key to securing women's and girls' financial, social, cultural, political and civil rights and their right to control over their own bodies, reproduction and sexuality. The Bill also emphasises gender equality as one of eight main focuses of continued efforts to realise, among other things, the following objectives:

- ★ to make visible and prevent gender discrimination as a cause of poverty
- ★ to guarantee women and men the same rights
- ★ to counter perceptions of women's inferiority
- ★ to view both women and men as actors
- ★ to secure women's participation in all areas
- ★ to mainstream gender in development cooperation priorities
- ★ to apply the knowledge and methods available today
- ★ to continue to develop methods and instruments of analysis.

Aim, interim studies
and definitions of basic
concepts

The project "Gender Discrimination as a Cause of Poverty" commenced at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for Global Development in 2002 following a government decision. Gerd Johnsson-Latham is project leader.

The aim of the project was to clarify three main issues:

- 1. to sum up what we know about gender, female poverty, its expression, extent and causes.**
- 2. to show to what extent knowledge of female poverty is applied in analyses and strategies to reduce poverty and whether or not gender power is elucidated, and what the costs are when heed is not paid to this knowledge.**
- 3. to present proposals for more effective methods both to improve women's conditions and to fight poverty generally.**

The project was also to show how a gender power perspective improves the effectiveness of efforts to reduce poverty and promote democracy and human rights. Furthermore, an overall aim was to prevent development assistance from contributing to increased discrimination on grounds of gender.

The end product was to be a publication in Swedish and English and seminars that sum up and analyse knowledge and experience. The study should contribute reflections and tools to both the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, for a clearer gender power perspective in analyses and proposals relating to the fight against poverty. This applies to both overall policy and reform work in the UN, the development banks, the EU and in bilateral contexts and also to more specific efforts on, for example, country strategies, HIV/AIDS, reproductive rights, human trafficking, etc. The study should also be seen as a contribution to the ongoing international discussion on expressions of poverty.

The project report is presented in early 2004. It sheds light on the cost of gender discrimination in terms of lives, suffering and money. It states that, as the World Bank and others have shown, what are regarded as gender-neutral efforts tend to benefit men – which impedes chances of securing a rights perspective and the perspective of the poor in development cooperation. The report establishes that taking a stand regarding this bias and the associated costs is a political choice.

The report also stresses that discrimination of women is a basic cause of several of the major problems the world community is wrestling with today. Tackling discrimination and creating equal opportunities for women and men is, for example, a precondition for:

- ★ preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS which is based, inter alia, on notions of men's "rights" in relation to women and girls,
- ★ combating human trafficking and sexual slavery, primarily among young women,
- ★ promoting democratic decision-making which includes both women's and men's priorities regarding distribution of resources, the rule of law, etc,

- ★ preventing male violence against women and girls – and violence against men and boys; a major obstacle to development and a considerable cost, both for individuals and for society as a whole,
- ★ promoting women’s reproductive rights, that is to say women’s right to decide over their own bodies – a precondition for empowerment,
- ★ promoting peaceful resolution of conflicts, by analysing the links between poor men’s unemployment, notions of masculinity and the use of violence.

The focus of the project lies both on Swedish experiences and on knowledge and observations in a broader international perspective, in North and South. The product should therefore be seen as a contribution to the international discussion on what is known as global “goods”; assets such as knowledge which can help fight global challenges, of which gender discrimination is one.

Project work has been based on a selection and analysis of existing texts of relevance to the project (which may be seen from the lists of reference literature), and on a number of new studies. The new studies carried out are to be found in a separate compilation of appendices to the main report and are as follows (and have been written by the project leader unless otherwise indicated):

- ★ "Ecce homo": a gender reading of the World Bank study "Voices of the Poor".
- ★ "Understanding Female and Male Poverty": Concerning how estimates of female and male poverty stem from a notion of what poverty is, and to what extent attention is given to causes such as, for example, gender discrimination.
- ★ "Poverty without Poor" – about how the focus is more often on poverty rather than on knowledge of who the poor are – and why they are poor, by Eva Nauckhoff, senior advisor, Sida.
- ★ "Dominant Masculinity – an Obstacle to Development?".
- ★ "Gender in PRSPs": an analysis of gender power in three poverty strategies (PRSPs for Bolivia, Vietnam and Zambia), by Stefan de Vylder, economist.
- ★ "Gender and Health": about the gender power perspective in current health strategies, by Katarina Lindahl, Secretary General, National Association for Sexuality Education.

The project has been carried out in close cooperation with reference persons at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida and the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications Division for Gender Equality as well as OECD-DAC’s network for gender/gender power issues which includes both bilateral and multilateral donors. In addition, the project has carried on continuous contacts with researchers, mainly at the Institute for Development Studies, IDS, in Sussex – and representatives of civil society, both in Sweden and on the international arena.

A list of acknowledgements is given on page 72. Special thanks should be conveyed

to colleagues in the Government Offices and Sida as well as representatives of civil society in Sweden and to three international representatives for their support and good advice in the course of the project: Director Karen Mason of the World Bank, professor Naila Kabeer, IDS, Sussex (UK) and professor Sylvia Chant, London School of Economics.

The interim studies and approaches of this project already attracted considerable interest both internationally and domestically when they were presented, inter alia, to researchers at the Institute of Development Studies in Sussex, to a seminar arranged by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in cooperation with, among others, the Italian Foreign Ministry in Modena in May 2002, at the World Bank Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics (ABCDE) in Oslo in June 2002, at seminars at the United Nations in New York in January 2003, at meetings of the World Bank in January and November 2003, and talks in Cape Town, for example at the African Gender Institute of the University of Cape Town and at meetings in Lusaka with both public agencies and civil society in March 2003, as well as at seminars in June 2003 in Hässelby and at the International Book and Library Fair in Göteborg in 2003. The project was also presented to a special meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs gender equality group in April 2003.

Reactions in the course of work on the report show that it captures and synthesises central topical questions and is at the forefront of thinking in this area.

Definitions of basic concepts

Gender power: The concept of gender power is used in the report to emphasise that the differences between expressions of male and female poverty concern and stem from the relative power – or lack of power – associated with the sex.

Gender does not mean that it is the biological sex that gives people a specific position in families and societies. *Gender is rather a man-made construction, generally apportioning more power to men, which benefits above all some men.* The fact that women all over the world have been given the role of performing most work in the home and doing so without pay, is, for example, a gender power construction. This "code of procedure" is not biologically given nor based on physical sexual attributes but is the result of the distribution of power in societies – in the form of gender power or gender structures. This so called "reproductive" role assigned to women has decisive consequences for their dependence, power, vulnerability, financial security, etc. in relation to men, in the family, in the group/clan and in society generally.

A fundamental aspect of the gender power order is that, in addition to the poverty they share with men, women have less legal protection and are denied property and other resources as well as voice and opportunities to influence their own lives.

The aim of the gender power perspective is to make visible the different roles, conditions and rights of women and men which are caused by the fabricated assigned roles (described above) and which stem from prevailing historical power relations.

The gender power perspective is an instrument of analysis showing the causes of women's lack of power. Understanding the causes of powerlessness and discussing power is a precondition for work on "empowerment" which is often emphasised as being of fundamental importance in fighting poverty.

Gender equality: Unlike the gender power perspective, gender equality is a goal specifying the elimination of the differences in rights between women and men. Most countries in the world support this goal both by virtue of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, by ratifying the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and by adopting the Platform for Action of the UN Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. This goal coincides with the rights perspective stressing the equal value and rights of all people.

The "needs and interests" of women and men: "Women's needs and interests" are mentioned in many descriptions of poverty and deprivation. On the other hand, *"men's interests and needs" are seldom described, sometimes because men's interests are assumed prima facie to represent the family's or everyone's interests.* However, in reality what are described as "women's needs" are often tantamount to the family's needs, and decisive for the welfare of poor people.

Problematising women – but not men – and seeing men as the primary actors stems from a predominant theory of knowledge, or epistemology. As researchers such as Hirdman, Minnich, etc. have emphasised, this gives men a preferential right of interpretation and distinguishes women from men – at the same time making women's (but not men's) "difference" a problem. The epistemology and the problematisation of women explains why, for example, there is more talk of women as victims than of men as perpetrators, and why disgrace in connection with rape is often laid on the victim.

Mainstreaming: Gender mainstreaming is a strategy, not a goal in itself. It aims at integrating gender into the main stream of all issues. "Gender mainstreaming" means that a gender, or a gender-power perspective must permeate all work. Thus, during the negotiations in Beijing in 1995, Sweden saw to it that the Platform for Action adopted contains throughout calls for gender mainstreaming. In the Beijing text, this is specified as meaning that before decisions are made, a gender analysis must be carried out on the assumed consequences of an initiative for women and men. This may, for example, mean that a planned health initiative should be analysed for the envisaged effects on women's and men's health and take into consideration reproductive rights, domestic violence, etc. Another example might be road construction that should be planned also taking into consideration women's need of transport when they fetch firewood and water for the family's needs.

A gender power perspective and mainstreaming often mean a focus on women – however, attention to men and men's action and interests is also needed, for example in fighting human trafficking and HIV/AIDS, and in choices between different ways of creating economic development so that it benefits all.

Gender discrimination: Gender discrimination means that a person on grounds of sex does not enjoy the same rights as someone of the opposite sex. This discrimination may be expressed in different ways, from discrimination de jure through law texts to expressed and implicit stereotypes, norms and codes which de facto limit the individual's freedom and which distribute resources asymmetrically.

Discrimination may, for example, occur in:

- ★ legislation that denies women a right to own and inherit land,
- ★ law enforcement that does not guarantee women's constitutional rights and does not bring to justice and punish men who commit violence against women,
- ★ norms that exclude women from decision-making forums, that define men as the principal actors and breadwinners and deny women reproductive rights,
- ★ budget appropriations and other distribution of resources (personnel, training, research, and epistemology) that disregard/discriminate against activities and social sectors where women predominate,
- ★ dialogues, partnerships and agenda setting in which men primarily take part and men's interests are equated with the interests of everyone.

Culture and custom: Culture and custom characterise all people and communities, that is to say both cooperation partners in the South and donors such as multilateral organisations, inter alia the World Bank and the UN development programmes. Cultures and customs tend to favour or be unfair to certain approaches and groups (although this is mostly seen in the cultures of others). Kabeer/Subrahmanian are, for example, of the view that the prevailing culture in western donor organisations, which have long been predominantly made up of white middle class men often brought up by housewives, has often seen poor women as housewives and disregarded poor women as breadwinners.¹

"Respect" for culture is sometimes cited as a reason for not tackling gender discrimination and violence against women. This argument is not, however, put forward with regard to gender-neutral harmful customs such as slavery. Nor is respect for cultures raised in discussions on economic policy where often fairly "universal" economic re-

1 Kabeer, N. and Subrahmanian, R., in "Institutions, Relations and Outcomes" (1990).

form programmes are recommended, even though they may encroach upon countries' history and culture.²

As several researchers have indicated, throughout the world, cultures and customs tend to dominate all arenas, that is to say patterns are the same in the family/group, in the marketplace, in working life, in public administration, in the media, etc.³ A gender power analysis could show whose interests govern that which is defined as "culture" and customs – and how these interests benefit or obstruct chances of promoting a rights perspective and the perspective of poor women and poor men.

At the UN Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, agreement was reached (paragraph 9 in the Platform for Action) that *no state may refer to national custom as an excuse for not guaranteeing all individuals human rights and fundamental freedoms*. Hence, no partner in development cooperation – in North or South – can refer to culture and custom as a reason for not preventing discrimination of women – on the contrary all states are obliged to guarantee human rights to all.

Poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon: Poverty is increasingly defined today as multidimensional, above all in OECD-DAC's 2002 poverty policy in which the following aspects are emphasised: economic (income, work, etc), human (health, education), political (power, rights, vote), socio-cultural (status, dignity) and regarding protection/physical integrity (against insecurity, risks and vulnerability). Government Bill 2002/03: 122 also points out that poverty is expressed in different ways for different groups such as women and men or the young and old, and that governments, public agencies and organisations need strategies to tackle poverty in its many dimensions.

One way of underscoring the many expressions of poverty is to speak of poor people's lack of legal protection and powerlessness, or deprivation to show that people have been deprived of their rights and power, on grounds of sex, race or age. The concept should be seen in relation to women's and men's socially constructed roles which give or deny individuals various sets of rights, in the family and at all other levels of society – as in contacts with the donor community. A clear expression of this powerlessness and lack of legal protection is the domestic violence to which primarily women and girls are subjected. This violence stems from notions of superior and subordinate

2 One "culture" or tradition in poverty reduction efforts is e.g. to seldom focus on rich people and groups and to a limited extent on the greater divides between the rich and the poor. This has been deplored by e.g. UNIFEM and by gender researchers such as Molyneux, de la Rochas et al, who consider that much of today's fight against poverty amounts to getting the poor to help themselves instead of attempting to distribute resources more equally between the rich and poor. (See *inter alia*, the IDS seminar on "Gender Myths" in July 2003: www.ids@ac.uk.)

3 Kabeer, N. in "Reversed Realities" (1994).

roles in families and communities and leads to abortions of girl foetuses, the genital mutilation of girls, and men sexually assaulting girls and women in peace and war and spreading HIV, etc.

The answer you get
depends on the question.
What we know about
female and male poverty:
expression, extent
and causes

This section points to the available knowledge on how expressions of female and male poverty and deprivation differ, and also their extent and causes. The text shows that knowledge is shaped on the basis of how we choose to define poverty and deprivation and lack of legal protection in the broader sense. The discussion is pursued based on a rights perspective and the perspective of the poor. The aim is to elucidate existing knowledge so as to be better able to tackle female and male poverty in all their different expressions: in monetary terms, in terms of violence, abuse, exclusion, and lack of respect and human rights.

Expressions of poverty

Recently, a debate has been carried on about how the number of poor in the world is calculated – and the predominant measuring methods have been increasingly questioned. The debate shows, inter alia, that our image of poverty depends on what we include in the concept, and whether we focus in practice on economically measurable aspects or on a broader spectrum that also includes violence, influence and respect. Our image and understanding of poverty also largely depends on the extent to which we pay attention to gender as the determining factor for allocation of resources, power and influence.

These choices are decisive for how we build up knowledge, draw up measures and strategies – and distribute resources.

A common image of female and male poverty, as presented in World Bank and UN documents and among NGOs, tends to confirm the following:

- ★ Women make up a large proportion of the world's poor despite the fact that poor women are economically very active – but often in jobs that provide little or no income.
- ★ Poor women in the South control or own a very limited share of the earth's land assets, financial resources, technology, etc. also in relation to poor men.
- ★ Women and girls are often subjected to sex-related violence, against which legal measures are seldom taken by society's institutions.
- ★ Women take part to a limited degree in decision-making at all levels, in families, at village level and in parliament and the business sector.

As the World Bank emphasises, differences between the sexes tend to be greatest in the poorest families.⁴ Many studies and researchers such as Amartya Sen and Naila Kabeer show that the family is seldom the unit for equal distribution of resources that is often assumed by economists. Women and girls receive less food, money, education, etc. Studies in both Latin America and Asia show examples where poor men do not give all their income to the family to be divided equally but keep between one-third and two-thirds of their income for themselves and their personal purchases.⁵ The unequal

4 See "Engendering Development: A World Bank Policy Report" (2002).

5 See Chant's report.(Reference literature)

distribution of resources and power in families and societies also means that the women of a family may be poor even when their husbands and sons are not.

We can see patterns but often lack hard facts since predominant actors such as the World Bank, the UN and even NGOs devote only limited attention to studying how decisive a person's gender is for his or her access to resources and influence.

Discussions about poverty have also long avoided the issues raised, *inter alia*, in the Sida study "The Conceptualisation of Poverty"⁶ which calls attention to the fact that *definitions of poverty depend on whose perspective is presented* – and whether or not sex is stressed – and points out that taking a standpoint on whose perspective is presented is a political choice.

The World Bank's major survey "Voices of the Poor", carried out around the turn of the Millennium is a valuable contribution to an understanding of who the poor are and how poverty expresses itself. The survey covers 60 000 poor people in 50 countries of the South and East all over the world - except for the richer OECD group. The over 1 000 pages of the main report give a detailed picture of expressions of poverty and indicate several gender-specific differences. In spite of this, such information consistently disappears in the synopses and sections containing proposals as researchers and officials choose to exclude such data in their summaries.⁷ This leads to "Voices of the Poor" summing up expression of poverty as follows:

- ★ hunger
- ★ disease (including HIV/AIDS and alcoholism)
- ★ lack of income
- ★ lack of land and other property
- ★ violence
- ★ insecurity, isolation (physical, mental, social)
- ★ exclusion vis-à-vis decision-making functions

The synopsis clearly shows that a *recognition of the many dimensions of poverty does not automatically lead to attention to the importance of a poor person's gender for access to resources and influence.*⁸

6 See Peck and Tobisson.

7 This form of "evaporation" of gender aspects in analyses is very common in studies of, *inter alia*, poverty, a fact to which attention has been brought in several studies, by Chant, among others.

8 Hernando de Soto initiated a discussion that received a great deal of attention on the land and other resources that poor people use without having full ownership rights. de Soto's reasoning would benefit from adding gender power aspects in order to deepen our understanding of the conditions of poor people.

Otherwise, like other studies undertaken by the UN, development banks, researchers etc, "Voices of the Poor" could show the following more complete and transparent picture of the living conditions of poor women and men:

Expressions of poverty	How women and men respectively are affected
Hunger	Particularly affects poor women who are often the last to eat in the family.
Disease (incl. HIV, alcoholism)	Women's reproductive health is neglected. Women provide health care for everyone in the family – and themselves. Men's health care is allowed to cost more. Men's own actions increase risks (HIV, alcoholism).
Lack of income	Few women have/control their own income. Women's incomes are often at most half those of men.
No land/property	Few poor women own land/property. Property is taken from widows by the husband's relatives.
Violence	Many poor women are victims of domestic violence. Poor criminal men are extremely vulnerable.
Insecurity	Particularly for widow's.
Isolation (physical, mental, social)	Considerable for women, particularly disabled women.
Exclusion from decision-making	Women excluded because of their sex.
No access to water, electricity, roads	Women's workload increases (fetching water, fuel, etc.).
"time-poverty"	Women often have less leisure time which limits political involvement, etc.

The subjective descriptions of poverty produced in "Voices of the Poor" came to mean an increasingly clear recognition of poverty as being multidimensional. This approach was clearly reflected in the "World Development Report 2000/01" whose theme was poverty. The World Bank has continued efforts to describe and measure aspects of poverty pertaining to powerlessness and vulnerability. In this context, attention has been given to the gender power aspect and several studies carried out describing how gender is decisive for a person's access to power and influence.⁹

9 World Bank rep. 2035 "Integrating Gender in World Bank Assistance", 2001.

Questions of multidimensionality and gender power consistently characterise OECD-DAC's Guidelines on Poverty Reduction. Such views are also central in the Swedish Government Bill 2002/03:122 on global development and Sida's "Perspectives on Poverty".¹⁰

As can be seen in the study, however, much remains to be done before the picture of multidimensional poverty with attention given to gender power has made a breakthrough in general policy and operative development cooperation efforts.

Two schools as sources of knowledge

Knowledge about female and male poverty is chiefly to be found in the discourses of two different schools of thought which have long been fairly separate. They have now drawn closer to one another in pace with the inclusion in the discussion on poverty of structural issues of power, violence, "voice" and participation – which always have been at the centre of the gender discourse.

The poverty discourse, which has set the tone and had very rich resources, has been defined by the donor community through, inter alia, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as several research bodies and large sections of civil society. An economic approach predominates in these schools and cultures, particularly in the World Bank whose formal, politically agreed mandate focuses on economic development.¹¹

The poverty discourse seldom pays attention to gender and, when it does, it is most often by discussing women's "vulnerability" – but without examining the causes of this "vulnerability", for example discrimination. Men are primarily seen as actors and bread-winners (even if this is seldom spelled out) since the focus is on income, salaries and goods and services sold. Unpaid work, which is mainly performed by women, is invisible and is referred to marginally in analyses and strategies, despite the fact that women's long working days provide welfare for families and are a precondition for other family members' paid work. Consequently, the focus is also on men's work and the market when it is a matter of identifying growth potential in economies. On the other hand, attention is seldom given to the opportunities for improved efficiency and productivity that

10 In the autumn of 2003 the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) presented the report "Child Poverty in the Developing World" which attempts to make a quantitative assessment of the number of poor children by estimating how many children live under what is defined as the poverty line with regard to health, housing, nutrition, etc. Objections may be raised to the method but even so it is a laudable attempt to measure poverty in its many dimensions.

11 The mandate is man-made and can, of course, be interpreted generally, as has been done by the head of the World Bank, James Wolfensson, and in future be broadened to draw attention to "deprivation" in the broad sense of the term if there is political will to do so.

could be taken by introducing technology etc. to facilitate women's work and bring about time saving in unpaid work in order to increase growth and reduce poverty.

The invisibility of women as a resource is also evident in national and international economic statistics. The UN's "World Statistics" thus gives the impression that women's activity rate is only about 40 per cent compared with men. The fact that, unlike poor men, poor women often have no leisure time rather suggests the reverse.

The other source of knowledge about female and male poverty is "the gender discourse". It describes women's poverty and conditions in terms of both material and non-material poverty. The gender discourse often seeks to identify the causes of poverty and gives attention to the framework in the form of laws, informal norms and sex stereotypes which limit poor women's chances in relation to poor men, in essential issues such as ownership, resources and decision-making.¹²

The gender discourse is represented in the multilateral architecture by very small groups and organisations, chiefly the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and UNIFEM both of which have extremely limited resources and voice in the overall normative and operative debate on development issues.¹³

The gender discourse stems from a different "dialogue structure" from that of the poverty discourse. The latter is based throughout on the existence of a superior donor rich in resources and a weaker recipient. The gender discourse on the other hand stems from a recognition of the fact that the problems are more or less the same the world over since gender discrimination occurs in all countries. This may create the preconditions for a more equal dialogue with less of a top-down approach in the relationship between the partner countries.

Using both discourses will give good opportunities for tackling both female and male poverty. Both discourses are necessary instruments in a multidimensional approach to poverty combining a rights perspective – which stresses the equal value of all people – with the perspective of the poor. The traditional poverty discourse which has had considerably more resources for analysis, research and data collection may be enriched by the gender discourse. Bridges between both schools of thought may increase women's

12 Researchers Kabeer and Subrahmanian speak, inter alia, of how the gender discourse moves the focus from "merit to justice", that is to say, that women shall not "merit" attention in that it can be proved that it is economically profitable to invest in women – but because they have a right to be given attention on the same terms as men.

13 In spite of the attempts made, above all since the Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, to mainstream gender power issues, gender has become invisible on the agenda in many quarters and resources and experts have been withdrawn. In civil society, the year 2005 is now mentioned as the year that can symbolise 10 years' retrogression – that is to say "*Beijing minus ten*" – in relation to what was achieved in Beijing in 1995 – and also during the UN conferences in the 1990s in Vienna, Cairo and Copenhagen when women's rights were at the centre of discussions.

participation in decision-making forums, counter the violence against women and men which has become a serious obstacle to development in many places, and strengthen women's and whole societies' chances of economic and social development.

The extent of poverty: what we know about the number of poor people – and how many poor women there are

In reports on global poverty, the figure 1.2 billion occurs as an “authorised” and accepted estimate of the number of poor in the world. However, this figure has been increasingly questioned and it has emerged that it only gives an ostensibly exact picture of the possibility of establishing the number of poor people.

The figure is based on more or less pronounced assumptions. One is that extreme poverty may be defined as an average income of less than 1 USD a day, or the goods that can be bought for the equivalent amount in local currency in a country. Another assumption is that the family's combined income and resources are divided equally in the family. A third assumption is that only resources that have a price tag can be measured – but not all unpaid work which also represents a large part of the welfare of poor people. Lastly: a fourth assumption is that non-monetary aspects of powerlessness and lack of legal protection cannot be counted in, for example, violence and exclusion.

While, in spite of all assumptions, the figure 1.2 billion poor is accepted, this is not the case regarding estimates of the number of poor women in the world. The reason is that no attempts are made – nor have any attempts ever been made – to show whether the majority of the world's poor are women. No studies have been made, for example, showing that women make up 70 per cent of the world's 1.2 billion poor – which is specified in several UN documents.¹⁴ The simple reason for this is that no statistics by gender have been produced to the effect that 70 per cent of the world's (assumed) 1.2 billion poor – that is to say 840 million – are women.

However, nor are there any figures or surveys that indicate the opposite: that women (possibly women and girls, that is to say females) do *not* make up as large a group as two-thirds of all the world's poor.¹⁵

As we will see below, the possibility of establishing the number of poor and the

14 The figure of 70 per cent was launched in a Human Development Report (HDR) in 1995, before the Beijing Conference of the same year and is repeated in the Beijing Platform for Action and thus appears as a well-established fact in the debate.

15 Against the background of indications that women constitute the large majority of the world's poor, and of the great number of analyses made of poverty, inter alia, by the World Bank, one would think that there would be many studies aimed at analysing the extent of and reasons for women's poverty. This is hardly the case, however.

number of poor women depends more on whether estimated income per capita is to be the only variable or whether more factors such as health, power, violence etc. are taken into account.

Women's poverty is often given in terms of health, education, political participation, etc. – but in this context there is no exact figure such as 1 USD/day as the poverty cut-off line. A certain level of health or education cannot be used to define a person as poor since bad health also affects rich people and since an uneducated person may be rich. What we know about women's poverty is what has been studied, and regarding education we know something about, for example, the number of school years for girls. But we know less about how school attendance is affected by girls' deficient reproductive health, that is to say lack of access to contraceptives and advice, abortions, etc. which force many teenage girls to break off their education.

We also know very little about the quality of education and whether or not it reinforces prevailing gender stereotypes or provides functional literacy that makes women and girls aware of the rights that they do have, and helps them to break out of poverty.

Data on women's health, income, and schooling are seldom put in relation to the corresponding data for men and are therefore less informative. In spite of this, there may be reason to try to specify a number of variables/indicators – from income to power-related data – in an attempt to shed light on female poverty in relation to male poverty. The column to the right shows to what extent data *may* exist that could indicate that women are poorer or more deprived than men in different areas:

Indicators	Conditions are probably poorer for women
income	yes (if not average wage data)
life expectancy	no (women often live longer)
health, including reproductive health	yes
education	yes
access to resources such as land and credit	yes
decision-making	yes
legal rights to custody of children	yes
exposure to unprovoked violence	yes
respect, dignity	yes

A picture of poverty based on the above table could make visible the many dimensions of female and male poverty. *A broad spectrum of indicators of deprivation as above might possibly also show that in fact women make up a majority of the world's poor – and that the proportion of females may be as great as 70 per cent – or about two-thirds.*

Should this be the case, there is reason to consider how this should lead to some new strategies and approaches in the overall fight against poverty.

Violence against women and exclusion as central aspects of deprivation

The importance of broadening the discussion from poverty to deprivation in a broader sense is also apparent from the increased awareness all over the world of the extent of violence against women, chiefly domestic violence.

Amnesty International launches for instance a campaign 2004-2005 to combat *violence against women, which Amnesty acknowledge as the single biggest violation of human security worldwide.*

Violence against unarmed civilian women and young girls is accentuated during wars and may constitute violations of the laws of war and, under the Platform for Action of the UN Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 can be equated with crimes against humanity.

In 2002, the former UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Radshika Comooraswamy, presented the report "Cultural practices within the family that are harmful to women" (www.un.org). The report establishes that violence in families is of a structural nature and stems from notions of men's superiority and women's inferiority. Violence is part of men's efforts to uphold privileges. Several examples are given in the report of violence and threats of violence to manifest men's power over women, in families and groups – and in society generally: abortions of girl foetuses, genital mutilation, rape, forced marriages, teenage pregnancies, honour killings, violence against widows, etc.

Attention was drawn to questions concerning violence against women – where women may also be the perpetrators – at two international seminars in Stockholm in the autumn of 2003 hosted by Swedish ministers: one on genital mutilation and one on so-called honour murders. At the seminar on honour murders, the UN's new Special Rapporteur, Yakin Erturk, stressed that honour murders and other structural violence against women should be seen as expressions of "patriarchal structures' exercise of power over women" which is based on the assumption that people are not of equal value, that men are superior and therefore are entitled to exercise power over women and use violence against women. Thus, fighting the idea that women and girls are of less value than men and boys is of central importance in all efforts to put a stop to violence against women. It was established at the seminar that this view and approach is needed in order to tackle the excessive violence that is the basis for human trafficking, much of the spread of HIV/AIDS and the denial of women's reproductive and sexual rights.

In a speech at a seminar for Social Democratic women in Sweden in November 2003, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Laila Freivalds, stressed the importance of giving attention to and countering the violence women are exposed to in armed conflicts and to involve women in all parts of conflict management and reconstruction. She emphasised that security policy is often associated with men although it is a policy aiming to build *security for people, irrespective of sex.* Women must therefore take part in all parts of prevention, peace support and protection of unarmed civilians during

conflicts. In the reconstruction work following armed conflicts, the legal system, for example, must give attention to and take measures against violence to women and work to ensure that, on the same terms as men, women get back property lost during conflicts and exercise influence over the often considerable resources the international community makes available. An essential point of departure is UN Security Council Resolution 1325 from 2000, and the reports and proposals for measures presented in the Council with reference to the report.¹⁶

As Anna Lindh stressed in a debate in the Swedish Riksdag in April 2002, it is natural for Sweden to play a leading role in international contexts in raising the issue of gender equality in conflict management – since Sweden has long played an active role both in the matter of gender equality and regarding conflict management. And in recent years, Sweden has taken action in several arenas to strengthen follow-up of Security Council Resolution 1325. The Government has continued to drive the issue in the UN, the EU, and at the national level in Sweden – and has also discussed efforts within the framework of development cooperation, inter alia in Sida's conflict management efforts and in work on codes of conduct for Swedish personnel serving abroad. So far, however, it has proved difficult to move from general requests to giving attention to women and issues of gender power in individual cases, such as, for example, in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq, while work in Rwanda shows that when the country's leadership (in this case president Kagame) is committed to the gender issue, it has an impact.

Women's organisations such as the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation have been proactive and attracted international attention, both through their approach, working through local women's organisations, and by publishing pamphlets, and in 2003 a new handbook, about ways in which attention can be given to women in conflict management. The Swedish male network on men's violence against women has also attracted considerable attention, not least in the former Soviet Union, with its method of highlighting and discussing what lies behind men's violence against women (e-mail: dialog.kelemen@emaila.nu).

Swedish researchers such as Dr Anna Höglund are at the forefront in these discussions as a result of their focus not on women and peace but on gender and war, where men and patterns of masculinity are noted as decisive for conflict prevention work and conflict management.¹⁷ Among other things, Dr Höglund points out, as Virginia Wolf has emphasised, that war often begins when men feel violated and deprived of their liberty and resort to weapons to restore what they call their honour. Women, on the other hand, seldom gain increased liberty and respect through armed combat – but are often subjec-

16 Here Finland's former Minister of Defence, Elisabeth Rehn, deserves special mention because of the UNIFEM report in which she has participated and on which she has actively spread information since the autumn of 2002.

17 Dissertation "Kön och Krig" (Gender and War), Faculty of Theology, Uppsala University.

ted to violations during and after conflicts, both by the enemy and their own people. All in all, Sweden has much experience and "competitive advantage" regarding women, gender and war which it would be valuable to more systematically compile in the manner proposed by the then Deputy Prime Minister Margareta Winberg in March 2003 to contribute to the current discourse on preventive diplomacy.¹⁸

Power and dominant (hegemonic) masculinity

How poverty and powerlessness relate to questions of men and masculinity is part of existing knowledge about female and male poverty. For decades Sweden has been proactive at the international level in drawing attention to men and power issues in discussions of gender equality. Thus, the focus has not primarily been on women as victims but rather on the systems that have made women – and many men – vulnerable. In research such systems are termed *dominant or hegemonic patriarchies which accommodate and favour certain men*. At the same time this limits scope for others, for example in that women are considered innately vulnerable and in need of men's superiority and protection.

Recently researcher have addressed attention the question of how *certain men's roles and male culture may constitute an obstacle to development*. They have shown how male preferential right of interpretation has resulted in men or rather dominant forms of masculinity being permitted to decide what development is and to set the agenda. Several researchers in men's studies have shown how *power and violence are not ends in themselves but important means of preserving privileges – for elites, which primarily consist of men*. However, it is stressed that, of course, elites do not comprise all men, and that it is not necessarily a question of biological sex since both women and men may be included in elites, if they do not openly question the applicable norms.

The power structures and privileges they defend are considered by several researchers to explain why the focus in economic policy is on men's paid work, while opportunities for growth by making unpaid work more efficient are not given attention. This may explain why so little attention is given to male violence – in spite of the very considerable costs this violence entails: *in the USA alone, the cost of police action, medical care, loss of income and production, etc, as a result of male violence is approximately 3 per cent of GDP*. In South American societies it can amount to as much as 8 per cent of GDP, a fact to which attention was drawn by Francois Bourguignon at the World Bank ABCDE Conference in Washington in 1999.¹⁹

18 See Prime Minister's Office Press Release, 8 March 2003.

19 Referred to by de Vylder in "The Costs of Male Violence" (2002). Another example of how power is used to uphold privileges is the patriarchal structure of many countries which often sets the tone and which actively opposes women's reproductive rights, which would enable women to increase their independence vis-à-vis men.

Post-colonial researchers in the South have further pointed out that women's subordination and discrimination on grounds of sex and ethnicity is explained by the fact that dominant masculinity ultimately rests on violence and threats of violence, and in several groups violence "constitutes" masculinity, particularly in groups where men have lost their former role as breadwinner and thereby head of the family. Researchers at the African Gender Institute in Cape Town, for example, have found that dominant masculinity is most manifest in military structures and that it also characterises civil administrations based historically on military structures of obedience. According to the researchers, those who adapt to the systems are subject to a "colonisation of minds" but can in return make their way up the hierarchy.

In a Swedish report on the distribution of power in the early 1990s, the Swedish historian Yvonne Hirdman wrote about the "male primate" or the male preferential right of interpretation which governs people's thought and action. Hirdman and Professor Maud Eduards have continued to focus on matters concerning "manliness" and "masculinity" in order to identify explanations for women's "vulnerability" and women's conditions.

The Platform for Action from the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995, pointed to an asymmetrical distribution of power, based on notions, among both women and men – of men's superiority and women's inferiority.²⁰

In line with the reasoning on power and a rights perspective in the new Swedish development cooperation Bill, it is essential to make it known that notions of men's superiority, gender-related privileges and of men's rights may create a hidden agenda contrary to the fundamental ideas of the equal value of all people underlying Sweden's new policy for global development.

Gender geography

Just as poverty manifests itself in different ways and has different causes all over the world, the same applies to female poverty. Researcher Naila Kabeer writes about a "geography of gender" and shows how different power structures and roles for women and men set different frameworks for women's living conditions and their chances of breaking out of poverty.²¹

Kabeer points out in particular how patriarchal structures determine women's

20 Even John Stuart Mill pointed out that both women and men tend to regard the power of the male gender as natural. He wrote "But was there ever any domination which did not appear natural to those who possessed it ... Women are so far in a position different from all other subject classes, that their masters require something more than actual service. Men do not want solely the obedience of women, they want their affection".

21 See Naila Kabeer's "Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals", a study commissioned by the Commonwealth Secretariat, London 2003.

chances of obtaining paid work and an income of their own. In the same way, a geography of gender could be drawn up concerning how patriarchal structures set the framework for women's sexual and reproductive rights and the scale of socially accepted violence against women.

Kabeer writes about what she calls extreme forms of patriarchy, in the family, clan and economic structures. In these, property is passed on from men to men, the bride moves into her husband's family, brides are bought, men guard what they define as the family honour, women are kept in hiding, and priority is given to sons. In regions of the Middle East and West Asia where structures of this nature predominate, very few poor women are in gainful employment and, if they are, it is mainly in agriculture.

On the other hand, in India the impoverishment of poor people in many places has led to clans and families increasingly accepting that poor women take paid jobs to contribute more to their families. The most common work for these women is as servants in households, in the service sector and the manufacturing industry, sometimes through subcontracting in homes. Incomes are low and working conditions often poor but this work can still give many women better conditions and a stronger position in the household and group which, *inter alia*, increases their chances of opposing domestic violence.

In South East Asia, many women are in a freer position, can sometimes inherit property and take decisions with their husbands on how household resources are to be divided.

In sub-Saharan Africa conditions vary between and within regions. However, in several places women are regarded as subordinate to their husbands and the men in their clan, and are sometimes viewed as minors and even as the property of men. Polygamy is common in certain areas. In a number of areas, colonial production patterns where men work, *inter alia*, in mines has meant that families have been split up because men have been separated from women and children. In several regions the family is not an economic unit. Women's and men's finances are separate. Neither men nor women own the most important resource in most cases – land – which is controlled by the clan where primarily men rule.²² They also have less access to credit and education – and poorer access to wholesale purchasing organisations which are often dominated by men. As in the patriarchal regions women are mainly concentrated in the agricultural sector. However, a large group of poor women in sub-Saharan Africa work both in their homes and in some form of paid work. One example is the informal sector where women sell goods or services, another is work at different stages of cultivation and export of fruit and vegetables. In Latin America, the conditions of poor women vary greatly depending on ethnicity.

22 Kabeer refers to studies from, *inter alia*, Kenya which show that women often have much less soil to cultivate than men (about 0.7 ha compared with men's 2.6 ha).

The very poorest are most often Indian women who are sometimes employed in domestic work for a low wage, working long hours and risking degrading treatment. From an international perspective, Latin America has a high proportion of poor women in work, albeit low paid, inter alia in the manufacturing industry and different service sectors. In the Caribbean, many women and children live in households led by women. Women's position in the region is stronger than that of many other poor women around the world. Here, women in general enjoy reproductive rights, access to health care, inter alia in connection with pregnancies, relatively good education and, unlike in many other regions, do not become social outcasts if they leave their husbands, for example following domestic abuse.

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the proportion of poor women and men has seen a marked increase and the conditions of the very poorest drastically deteriorated in the 1990s, particularly for elderly people who no longer receive their pensions. Single poor women are not socially rejected as in many other regions but often live in dire poverty, as do men whose average life expectancy has declined dramatically in the 1990s.

All in all, Kabeer establishes that constructed gender roles where women primarily perform unpaid work in the home limit women's opportunities for free choices at all levels, including the possibility of earning an income but also their right to their own bodies and to a bargaining position in and outside the family, enabling them to gain respect and a hearing for their views.

All over the world a large group of women, which is growing in many places, live in households led by women and where women are the breadwinners.²³ The overall trend is for poor women to take practically any job available to keep themselves, their children and elderly relatives. However, more and more men are unemployed which sometimes leads them into drug abuse and criminality, which in its turn worsens conditions for poor people. The traditional role of men as head of the family is increasingly questioned where men are no longer the main breadwinner in the family – and this results in an increase in men's violence against women in many places.

23 The increase in the number of households in which women are the breadwinners has also been noticed by such sociologists and globalisation researchers as Manuel Castells, who see this as a protest against patriarchal structures. In "The Power of Identity" Castells points to the way in which the patriarchy is more threatened now than it has ever been in history, and is thus fighting for survival, by, for example, denying women reproductive health rights. In the poverty discourse, households led by women are often considered particularly deprived and vulnerable. However, in the gender discourse it is stressed that women and children may be even poorer in households led by men. All in all, the welfare of these children may be better in financially poorer households led by women, if they escape from violence and threats of violence.

Furthermore, the global trend is for the very poorest women to be found in jobs where they risk *degrading treatment*, for example in domestic work and prostitution, while the poorest men are often forced to take *hazardous work*, for example in the building sector.

In the informal sector where a large proportion of the very poorest seek a living, poor women often work at the very lowest levels since they lack capital or education that could increase their income and reduce risks.

Gender stereotypical ideas also constrain women's work choices and income. Ka-beer et al further show how women's work often varies in times of economic crisis and acts as a buffer when governments need to reduce public expenditure – and responsibility for care of the elderly and children is transferred back to the family, that is to say most often to women.

As the researcher Diane Elson, among others, points out, women often have poorer chances than men of benefiting from offers of privatisation since they have less access to resources and security and are less established than men in financial networks, at all levels of society.

Concluding comments

Male poverty may chiefly be attributed to economic factors and sometimes to ethnic discrimination – which also affects women. To this may be added for women discrimination on grounds of gender, often linked to their primary reproductive role which greatly limits their access to resources, rights and influence.

Poverty strategies which primarily focus on fighting poverty in monetary terms may be effective for men – but are only partly directed against symptoms and causes that concern women's vulnerability. Hence we also need measures in the legal area to overcome women's vulnerability. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) will therefore be a necessary instrument in tackling poverty and deprivation in all their aspects.

The two perspectives emphasised in Government Bill 2002/03:122, a combination of the rights perspective and the perspective of the poor provide the tools for tackling poverty in its many dimensions. Although we do not know exactly whether women make up the majority of the world's poor, a broad spectrum of indicators suggest that this is so. We must decide whether there is reason to change course somewhat in efforts to fight poverty in a new phase where both a rights perspective and the perspective of poor women and men shall serve as guidance, so as to be better able to achieve the goal of halving poverty in the world by 2015.

A hidden agenda?
And on the extent to
which knowledge about
women's and men's
poverty is addressed in
poverty reduction
efforts – and on the costs
of ignoring it

The previous section has shown the extent to which consideration of the gender power perspective is taken in descriptions of poverty – and how this has consequences for the formulation of strategies combating poverty. The section also shows how a rights perspective, stressing the equal value of all people – combined with a poverty perspective – gives us instruments for shedding light on and dealing with the often gender-related expressions of poverty, lack of power and feeling of powerlessness.

This section gives some central examples of the degree to which existing knowledge about the extent of, and reasons for poverty among women and men respectively has been made use of in development cooperation. The section also shows the bias – i.e. distortion – that often favours men – and its costs primarily for women – in terms of lives, suffering and the loss of efficiency.

The section also shows that an awareness of bias and costs makes it possible to present alternative measures directed both at women and men, seeing both as subjects and actors.

Here the focus is on three main areas that have been the object of new studies in the project:

- ★ general poverty reduction strategies
- ★ sector strategies: health
- ★ the Millennium Development Goals

General poverty reduction strategies – and related budget support

As can be seen in the separate studies of this project undertaken by Nauckhoff and de Vylder, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) largely deal with poverty in very general terms, without commenting on gender, ethnicity or age. The focus is often more on poverty in terms of macroeconomic assumptions and estimates than on attempts to increase our knowledge about who poor people are, and on the factors causing and intensifying poverty in different groups. As a result, poor people are presented as genderless averages. This is confirmed in a number of other studies of poverty reduction strategies, including reports from the World Bank and studies undertaken by researchers like Kabeer and Whitehead. These observations are also well in line with those of Diane Elson, Debbie Buddlender, Winnie Byanyima and others, who have studied, and applied in practice, gender budgeting for many years.²⁴

It is interesting and somewhat surprising, as Nauckhoff points out, that the alternative PRSPs produced by civil society also deal with poor people without focusing on the crucial role of gender in determining poor people's access to resources and influence.

One of the main reasons for economic reform programmes such as PRSPs not taking gender into account is that they work with monetary constants and “tradeables”,

24 See “Gender Budget Initiatives” (reference literature).

i.e., goods and services that have an economic value. As de Vylder, points out, this approach leads to a number of consequences:

- 1. A clear, but unexpressed bias towards men, since account is taken of men's paid work but not the unpaid contribution of women which is also crucial for the welfare of the family.**
- 2. A lack of transparency and thus incomplete data on which to base decisions in poverty reduction work.**
- 3. Uneven distribution of analyses, measures and resource allocation, in favour of the monetary sector of the economy dominated by men.**
- 4. Loss of welfare, both for individual families and society in general, as a result of securing the privileges of a small minority.**

In his analysis, de Vylder gives an account of background facts, points to bias and costs linked with gender blindness and presents proposals for measures to rectify the situation.

Background facts on gender power and economics

Men are primarily affected by economic reform programmes in their roles as paid employees and producers, while women are affected mainly as consumers and producers of domestic services, i.e., in their work of taking care of children and elderly people, providing food and fetching water, etc.

Studies show generally that economic growth and the development of human resources are best achieved when individuals have the same opportunities to make choices, without being prevented by discrimination in any form.

The bias towards males in the PRSPs and other economic reform programmes

Conventional economic theory hardly ever focuses on gender discrimination and is generally gender-blind at the domestic level as well. If conditions for women and men are initially unequal – which is almost always the case with respect to access to resources, ability to re-allocate working hours, etc – it is highly probable that an adjustment programme that is assumed to be gender-neutral will have an inherent bias against women.

Economic reform programmes often mean changing the relation between the "price" of paid and unpaid work, to the advantage of paid work. The invisible work performed by women is not counted and the reproductive and caring burden normally shouldered by women diminishes in value compared with work in market production. One of the results of this is that the position of women in the household is weakened.²⁵

25 This is confirmed, by among others, Howard White and Jennifer Levy in the Sida study "The Impact of Adjustment Policies: Programme Aid and Reforms".

In the three PRSPs studied – Zambia, Bolivia and Vietnam – the workloads of women are not discussed and no reference is made to the need for developing activities that are related to women’s unpaid work in such fields as water, sanitation and energy, etc. Nor do the central government budgets and reform programmes of these countries contain appropriations involving production from unpaid work, which is primarily performed by women.

Where discussions on gender power occur, the focus is on women but then attention is not given to the disadvantages for men in terms of a gender-stereotyped labour market. From an economic perspective, society’s inability to make good use of each individual’s personal interests and relative assets means a loss for welfare.

In many sectors, such as the animal husbandry sector, there is often a distinct gender distribution. Men are often responsible for the larger animals while smaller animals such as goats, hens, ducks, etc. reared for the family’s own consumption or for sale at local markets are tended by women. Generally public agricultural policy attaches considerably less weight to smaller domestic animals than to the male-dominated rearing of larger cattle that are able to benefit from technical services, veterinary services, research, etc. Economic reform programmes tend to give priority to goods for trading and export, which strengthens the bias towards males, while smaller animals that are vital to the survival of the family and reducing poverty are ignored.²⁶

References to gender discrimination are common in the PRSPs studied, but none of the reports describe how power, responsibility and income are distributed at the household or community levels. Analyses of good governance and public institutions at various levels are also gender-blind, despite the widespread observation that women are underrepresented in political decision-making bodies. Thus, poverty diagnoses are strikingly gender-blind and few sex-disaggregated data on poverty are presented.²⁷

Women’s conditions are primarily focused upon in health and nutrition, and some proposals for improving women’s access to credit, education and health care are being discussed. Even in areas in which several gender power analyses have been undertaken in recent years, little attention has been given to the different roles of women and men in, for example, fetching water, collecting fuel, cooking, washing and sanitation.

26 According to Professor Agneta Stark, the failure to put more consistent effort into increasing the productivity of women’s work leads to a loss of welfare, by not taking advantage of all the opportunities available for increasing economic growth (address at Sida, 9 December 2003).

27 This also applies to issues relating to land rights, particularly emphasised in the PFA from Beijing. Attention has, however, been drawn to power over land by Sida, *inter alia*, in a pilot project in Kenya, aimed at promoting women’s rights, land protection, etc. See also OXFAM’s publication “Gender Perspectives on Property and Inheritance” (2001) on examples of policies and programmes aimed at increasing women’s access to land.

When the electrification of rural areas is discussed, emphasis is given to increasing the use of electricity within "productive" sectors of the economy, which are assumed to be gender-neutral even in areas that are in fact male-dominated. In the Zambia report, for example, mention is made of reducing electricity costs for the copper mines, while nothing is said about the use of electricity in cooking to save time for women.

All these strategies place emphasis on the monetary sector of the economy, whose development is consistently seen as a solution to the problem of poverty and where growth in terms of income and employment is easiest to measure. This approach ignores the importance of the reproductive and social sectors. An increase in paid female employment outside the home is therefore interpreted as an improvement, even if it means that women spend less time preparing nutritious food and giving children intellectual and emotional stimulation. Likewise, a development entailing men becoming more involved in activities relating to their homes and children may mean great progress in terms of gender equality and the welfare of the family – but may be registered as negative in national accounts.

Analyses often describe women as vulnerable – but fail to take into account male vulnerability and the fact that men often resort to stereotyped, destructive behaviour (crime and violence, drugs, alcohol, etc) in crises. de Vylder stresses that poverty analyses need to take into account men who have lost their jobs and have been redundant for long periods, young men without education and no prospects of obtaining work and who end up in criminality, demobilised soldiers, men in dangerous, exploitative employment or living far from their families.²⁸

de Vylder notes that in the last ten years, a number of researchers and pilot studies have focused on analysing central government budgets in terms of questions such as "Who uses public services and support? Is it men or women who get jobs in the public sector? What issues are most important for men and women respectively?" However, there is no trace of these questions in the strategy documents reviewed, despite occasional references to (small) budget appropriations earmarked for women.

Measures

A cohesive strategy to combat poverty requires measures to deal with the existing imbalance between the sexes in each sector – agriculture, forestry, transport, communication and industry.

Efforts must be made to address both economic and non-economic dimensions

28 Greater understanding of the connection between men's powerlessness and violence, criminality and recruitment to paramilitary forces may, in fact, be an important part of conflict prevention work and preventive diplomacy where Sweden has an international "competitive advantage" in terms of knowledge and experiences.

of female poverty and vulnerability and where relevant, male poverty and vulnerability. These should look at physical insecurity, stress and fatigue, sexual abuse, male violence against women, lack of influence in the community and social issues, etc. We need to encourage academic work and empirical studies of the relation between gender equality and poverty reduction, and to analyse the effects of economic reform programmes from a gender power perspective. In what way are relative prices affected (between paid and unpaid work, between cash crops and cultivation for domestic consumption, between export products and other products, etc) and what does this mean for women and men respectively? Are there formal and informal barriers to women's access to productive resources and opportunities to respond to improved incentives such as deregulation of prices and liberalisation of trade? Are there informal barriers to women's access to certain professions and participation in business networks? Are the reforms gender-neutral or do they lead to different impacts on men and women with regard to time allocation?

Gender-based analyses of central and local government budgets and of the distribution of foreign support need to be made.

- ★ Approach: Measures supporting women should be based on studies undertaken by such organisations as the World Bank, showing that it is often more profitable for society as a whole to educate girls than to educate boys. Several other goals also become easier to achieve when women are educated, such as improved child nutrition, better health and lower population growth.
- ★ Focus on men: Gender power analyses need to shed light on men and their roles, needs and responsibilities, including their paternal responsibilities. The PRSPs often point out that households headed by women are particularly vulnerable, despite studies showing that these households are not over-represented in poverty statistics. Might not single fathers perhaps be an even more vulnerable group?
- ★ Participation, dialogue, partnership: It is vital to increase women's participation in drafting poverty strategies and to improve consultation with women's groups and organisations in national dialogues on poverty reduction.
- ★ Data: We should improve the collection of sex-disaggregated data relevant for creating an understanding of the gender power dimension of poverty.
- ★ Research: Studies need to be undertaken of time allocation, the distribution of power in the household, the structure of households and the effect and extent of poverty with regard to different treatment of boys and girls (such as access to food, education, health care, leisure time and workload in the household). Partial neighbourhood studies are needed that are based on investigations of, for example, income and employment in the informal sector, time allocation for men and women, household expenditure patterns and the extent to which women and men make use of various social services.
- ★ Institutional issues: Institutional capacity to analyse and evaluate the effects of

public policy on both gender equality and poverty reduction in the institutions and bodies involved needs to be developed.

- ★ Legislation and the implementation of laws: Reviews need to be made of existing legislation and the application of legislation to reveal remaining barriers to securing women's rights in relation to those of men in all fields.

Health Strategies


Ill health among poor people is crucial for their ability to raise themselves out of poverty. Ill health is often both an effect of poverty and a cause of it. Naturally, it is largely a function of biology, but it is also a function of the balance of power between women and men. The importance of health is emphasised in the UN Millennium Goals, where as many as three of the eight goals are related to health: to reduce maternal mortality, infant mortality, and HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases.

Jeffery Sachs, Kofi Annan's special adviser for the Millennium Development Goals has said that the status of women is of vital importance for their health, and that women's lack of power in sexual relations contributes to increasing the spread of HIV/AIDS. Sachs maintains that the solutions to these problems are not only family planning, the right of women to decide on abortion, education – but also to have more women in paid employment.

Katarina Lindahl, Secretary-General of the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSU) has analysed the extent to which health initiatives undertaken by the WHO, The United Nations Population Fund UNFPA, UNICEF and Sida generally take account of three areas that are central to women's health: reproductive and sexual health, HIV/AIDS and violence against women.

Katarina Lindahl's conclusions can be summarised as follows:

- 1. When women are denied reproductive rights, women's power over their own bodies and empowerment is undermined, which leads to ill health and is an obstacle to efforts to reduce poverty. Improving women's health is both vital for effectively combating poverty and as part of efforts to strengthen women's rights.**
- 2. When working with HIV/AIDS and reproductive rights, account must be taken of the issue of power, and for example, the fact that women and girls have very little power to refuse unwanted sex. Empowering women in relation to men is thus an important aspect of work to improve health, and to combat violence and HIV.**
- 3. Young people's knowledge of, and access to birth control is both a right, and a necessity to reduce mortality from unsafe abortions, teenage pregnancies and HIV/AIDS.**
- 4. Forceful international action is needed both in multilateral forums such as**



the UN and World Bank, and in Sida's work in order to secure the sexual and reproductive rights of all people, counter violence and the spread of HIV/AIDS. Only then can ill health be combated and the Millennium Goals achieved.

Background facts

Although sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) were stressed in international health strategies in the years following the UN conferences of Cairo and Beijing in 1994 and 1995, they have been more and more marginalised in recent years. Instead, weight is given to what are termed broad public health issues or lifestyle issues such as malnutrition, alcohol, tobacco, traffic accidents and drugs – without including a discussion of the gender power perspective. Sida's annual reports of 2001 and 2002 also contain descriptions that are genderless, and there are few analyses of SRHR applying to both men and women. Violence is only taken up in relation to men's use of alcohol. The gender aspect is, however, pointed to in relation to health service issues, where it is stressed that such groups as young people and the disabled must have access to service. Sida's health policy also emphasises that an important task of the health sector is to provide sexual and reproductive health services, and it supports and defends SRHR.

There is a good deal of data in health policies on the differences between men and women and the situation of young people, but this is often sparsely reported and available information is seldom sufficiently integrated to affect the organisation and implementation of health initiatives. One exception is UNFPA, the UN Fund on Population Activities and to a considerable extent also Unicef, who more or less throughout points to the different conditions for females and males, and how these conditions are rooted in power-structures.

Violence – often unprovoked domestic violence – is an obstacle to women's physical and mental health. According to the WHO, this type of violence is globally as common a cause of death and disability as is cancer for women of reproductive age. It is also a more common cause of ill health than traffic accidents and malaria combined. For women in the South, reproductive ill health causes one-fifth of all diseases – and in Africa, the corresponding figure is as high as 40 per cent.

At least half a million women die every year in connection with pregnancy. At least 78 000 per year die after an unsafe, often illegal, abortion. Lindahl points out that women dying of unsafe and illegal abortions do not die of disease or accidents. *Women die because they are denied power over their own lives and access to the medical knowledge available.*

Violence and the threat of violence is a means of maintaining power. The unequal balance of power between the genders is expressed as violence against women and plays an important role in the spread of HIV/AIDS. Violence and the threat of violence follow women throughout their lives. Women are the victims of violence in their families, at home and in their local communities. Married women run the greatest risk of vio-

lence in their homes, and the perpetrators are usually their husbands or other relatives, marking through violence women's place in the existing constructed hierarchy. Financial independence is no guarantee against violence (since violence occurs in all social classes). It may however enable women in some societies to leave a violent relationship – but they then risk losing right of custody of their children.

In war and conflicts, violence against women increases, not just that of enemy forces but also of the forces of their own side. Rape is a weapon in war that is often targeted at men, to violate their integrity by raping "their" women.

Violence against girls and women takes different forms and can be both individual and structural. Violence threatens and degrades women and limits their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Every year, for example, approximately two million girls risk genital mutilation. In addition to causing them suffering otherwise, this increases their susceptibility to HIV.

The obvious question of what violence should be allowed to cost in terms of life, suffering and money is seldom posed – despite the fact that the WHO has defined violence as an obstacle to development and despite violence being a major underlying cause of one of the most serious scourges of our times, a threat to development itself: the spread of HIV.

Studies and experience show that many women and young girls, refrain from bringing up a discussion on safe sex because of the threat of violence. They see small chances of getting their way and do not require their partners to use condoms.

Lindahl maintains that for many years, Sweden has profiled itself as a country that takes SRHR issues seriously. *This has taken place*, both at policy level and in programmes and projects. *It has been seen as essentially important and support has been given to all those struggling uphill with these issues.* "Now, however, there is a clear risk that Sweden, which has developed work on SRHR and gender, is seen as discarding this approach in practical development cooperation." Lindahl expresses concern that priorities are to be changed, and that other public health issues, such as alcohol, tobacco and traffic injuries will be focused upon instead. "If broader 'lifestyle issues' take precedence and SRHR issues are not stressed as important, there is a risk that these issues will disappear from the agenda." Thus the power dimension decisive for a persons ability to "chose" lifestyle may be lost.³⁰

Bias against women and the costs associated with this bias

The message throughout preventive work on SRHR is that the target group is young women and men and that they must change their behaviour. What is often forgotten is that those who have least power are young women. They are expected to learn to say no to

30 In 2003, however, Minister Jan O. Karlsson, took a number of initiatives in the UN to mark the importance that Sweden attaches to SRHR issues.

sex. But due to asymmetrical power between women and men they often have extremely few opportunities to make decisions that are respected in these (and other) issues.

Despite insight into the importance of a gender perspective since the 1990s, that perspective has seldom been integrated into practical action. And despite declarations and conference decisions, there is still a lack of forceful political leadership internationally or nationally that takes these issues seriously.³⁰

The gender perspective in the reports analysed has often only resulted in a statement to the effect that the situation is most serious for women, while men, and measures directed at men, are seldom focused upon. Gender-neutral strategies that ignore the different social and economic roles of women and men risk being less effective, since they do not take account of the reasons for, for example, violence against women and the spread of HIV.

Stephen Lewis, the UN special envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, stresses the following:

“In a pretty fundamental way, the biggest challenge is gender. ... women are truly the most vulnerable in this pandemic (HIV/AIDS)... until there is a much greater degree of gender equality, women will always constitute the greatest number of new infections. ... You simply cannot have millions of women effectively sexually subjugated, forced into sex which is risky without condoms. ... [T]here has rarely been a disease which is so rooted in the inequality between the sexes. Therefore, gender is at the heart of the pandemic and until governments and the world understand that, it will be very difficult to overcome it.”

Measures

To achieve the gender equality necessary for women to acquire power over their own lives and health, they need power over their own financial situations and power to make decisions about the conditions under which they live. A lack of reproductive rights undermines the power of women over their own bodies and empowerment, leads to higher social costs and obstructs efforts to reduce poverty. Guaranteeing the health of women is vital, both for effectively combating poverty and as part of the effort to strengthen women's rights.

Measures to boost the power and self-confidence of young women are thus more effective than appeals urging them to say no. This message should be targeted at adult men and include questions about gender equality and mutual respect.

Since experience shows that sexuality is often burdened with guilt, and young people do not dare to ask adults, abstinence rarely works, and the silence on SRHR often results in unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. This is why young people's knowledge about, and access to birth control is not just a right, but is also a crucial condition for reducing mortality caused by unsafe abortions, teenage pregnancies and HIV/AIDS.

What is needed is better information, and guidelines and evaluations of program-

mes with and without the gender perspective. A coordinated attempt is needed for gender to be mainstreamed into health and preventive efforts instead of its being regarded as an additional or secondary activity. Resources are also needed to coordinate different programmes for fighting poverty, preventing HIV/AIDS and strengthening SRHR.

Failure to do this will have negative consequences for health work and limit our chances to stop HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, violence, etc, with serious results for individuals, families and society at large. A new approach is needed that systematically, in every policy document, programme and project, sheds light on the conditions of power, and focuses both on women and men. Politicians at all levels in the North and South must be mobilised to support the deliberate and consistent integration of policies on SRHR and young people. Active efforts must be made to draw up global recommendations on access to birth control, to contain the spread of HIV and reduce mortality in connection with pregnancy and abortion. It is important to promote global access to SRHR, education and the empowerment of women, as a precondition for reducing poverty and to energetically pursue the issue of SRHR in the United Nations and implementation of the decisions of the UN world conferences in Beijing and Cairo.

Lindahl also advocates anti-violence campaigns and education in schools, the media etc., setting up sex-disaggregated data, cooperation between governments and NGOs, both for policy and implementation work particularly that involving controversial issues. In addition, she proposes more stringent legislation, preventive action against violence and efforts to give people real influence over the planning and implementation of projects and initiatives.

A global anti-poverty agenda: The UN Millennium Development Goals.

In addition to the above gender analysis of national anti-poverty strategies and health policies, brief comments are given below on the extent to which attention is given to gender in the goals set by the international community for the global fight against poverty as expressed in the Millennium Development Goals.

Comprising eight goals and 48 indicators, the UN Millennium Development Goals can be said to be the internationally most accepted and far-reaching strategy or road-map for poverty reduction existing today.³¹ The Goals refer to the broader and more comprehensive Millennium Declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly in the

31 The Millennium Development Goals and the indicators may be defined as an extremely multifaceted index for measuring poverty. Like other indexes these measure only quantitative aspects of development. These indicators could be described as belonging to a first generation – while a second and perhaps third generation ("2 and 3G") are required to measure quality and aspects of poverty such as vulnerability, power relations and participation.

autumn of 1999. The general goal is to halve poverty in the world by 2015. In this work eight interim goals have been identified by the UNDP, one of which is directed at the donor community. The other seven interim goals include both economic and social dimensions of poverty (per capita income in the first, different aspects of education, health and gender equality in the others).

The goals may be seen as a general framework for broad poverty reduction initiatives. Although gender is not high-lighted, the goals enables us to place greater focus on the conditions of women, since several of the goals implicitly require that attention be drawn to women and girls and to remedying their situation. However, the goals have been criticised by researchers and women's organisations for not focusing on the conditions of women sufficiently explicitly. One of the main criticisms has also been that the goals have not reflected the more power-related determinants of women's conditions that were identified as being central at the world conferences of the 1990s: land rights, domestic violence and reproductive and sexual rights. Instead, the focus has been laid on a fairly uncontroversial aspect of gender inequality: girls education. The approach to gender equality has thus been not to address power-structures and discrimination but to treat the problem as a question of girls inferiority which can be made up for by giving girls education. Thus, the approach chosen seem to reflect a school of thought where women and girls – but not power-structures – are regarded as the problem.

One of the architects behind the work on the Millennium Development Goals in the UNDP (Jan Vandermoortele) has explained that agreement on the Millennium Goals could only be achieved at the price of removing from the agenda the issue, controversial for the USA and others, of reproductive health (abortion, sexual education, etc).³² Thus a political choice was made, in favour of “consensus and harmonisation”, which here (and unfortunately often in other contexts) is to the disadvantage of women's reproductive rights and other central issues related to power, discrimination and lack of involvement.

When discussing the Millennium Development Goals, both the World Bank and other actors – including researchers and representatives of international civil society – have stressed the necessity of a gender power perspective in achieving all the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the general goal of halving poverty by the year 2015. The United Nations Development Fund for Women also stresses this in “Progress on the World's Women 2002”.

Several of the national reports presented on the progress of the Millennium Development Goals up to now have contained interesting data in addition to the 48 indica-

32 In connection with discussions with the project leader on a visit to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2002.

tors established by the UNDP – only three of which require gender-specific information. Egypt, Albania, Nepal and others have however commented from a gender power perspective on the data they have submitted and reported on how inadequate access to birth control is an obstacle in the fight against maternal and child mortality. They also point to the fact that a major obstacle to the gender equality goal and several of the health goals is that *men have a position of power economically and socially that leads to sexual “rights” – and that denies girls and women the right to birth control and abortion – the cost of which is high in terms of women’s life and health.* This type of reporting could be more clearly encouraged.

Furthermore, when reporting on the Millennium Development Goals, there is reason for Sweden, among others, to show, clearly and systematically, what has been done to achieve the interim goals relating to gender equality – and to interpret this in broad terms so that reporting does not just deal with girls’ education but all aspects of women’s and girls’ poverty and lack of power.

At a meeting on gender equality and the Millennium Development Goals arranged by the World Bank jointly with the UN in Washington in November 2003, it was proposed that indicators be identified for following up the Millennium Development Goals that clearly take up reproductive rights, men’s responsibility and other aspects of gender power.

Suggestions:

Given the need to measure progress in terms of fulfillment of the MDG’s, it appears crucial to try to organise and conclude the long discussions which, from time to time, have taken place in various forums, such as the UN and the OECD-DAC, with the aim of establishing indicators which would assess female poverty and make it possible to compare female and male poverty and deprivation.

Based on the comments made in this report, it might be possible to renew the discussions on indicators to assess female vs male poverty and deprivation along the lines below:

- 1. Income level (which should acknowledge that resources might not be divided equally within a household)**
- 2. Maternal mortality**
- 3. Access to reproductive health and service**
- 4. Education, including functional education and “legal literacy”**
- 5. Legal rights to land and other resources**
- 6. Vulnerability to violence, both structural/traditional such as genital mutilation and domestic violence and in armed conflicts**
- 7. Access to credit**
- 8. (Self-) respect, dignity, access to important networks**

- 9. Time for own activities and for, e.g., democratic decision-making
- 10. Quota for how women and men respectively contribute unpaid work to the family's means of support

Donors like Sweden should also encourage on-going efforts by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to present further proposals for ways in which the Fund could take part in efforts to achieve both the MDG's and the overall goal of greater gender equality.³³

Concluding comments

As the above examples show, the avoidance of focus on gender, ethnicity and age etc. is at heart a political choice – in the same way as a clear focus on these issues in combating poverty is a choice. Making visible these choices, the biases in favour of men and the costs that are thus borne by women and girls are a question of transparency and drawing attention to possible hidden agendas, i.e. not challenging existing power structures. It is extremely important that gender power issues are brought out into the open since if they are not, it will contribute to maintenance of gender-based, unequal access to resources and power. Naturally, in this context donors also bear responsibility for ensuring that partnerships do not lead to positive discrimination of men.

33 See the IMF presentation at the November 2003 World Bank-UNDP conference on the Millennium Development Goals and Gender Equality in Washington in its paper "Can the IMF contribute to the promotion of the MDGs relating to gender equality?" (Peter S. Heller and Erik Lueth).

Change is possible!
A coherent strategy

A rights perspective, the perspective of the poor and initiatives to combat discrimination based on gender and the costs linked with such discrimination require a coordinated approach covering a number of different levels, subjects and actors. This type of approach continues to be important so as not to undermine the achievements made when the pioneering action plans from the UN conferences in Vienna, Cairo and Beijing in 1993, 1994 and 1994 were adopted. These confirmed the reproductive rights of women, women's right to inheritance of land, the obligation of states to combat violence against women and to uphold respect for human rights, without invoking cultural traditions.

A cohesive strategy for proactive work for gender equality and poverty reduction generally is outlined below. The plan is based on the work initiated in 2003 by the steering group for gender equality mainstreaming in the Government Offices, which has made possible a concentrated effort towards a more consistent gender equality programme, in terms, inter alia, of ministerial action plans. This action programme can be seen as a contribution to Sida's review of current policy for gender equality in development cooperation.

The strategy rests on two pillars:

- ★ signals from management on the approach to gender discrimination and poverty reduction reflected in this study
- ★ “technical advice” on where, when and how a gender power perspective should be focused upon.

Both pillars are necessary for implementing the strategy – and for the technical pillar, additional resources and knowledge are required.

A ten-point programme for a coordinated strategy, to be initiated in 2004 and implemented over a 3–5 year period.

1. Development for all: reflecting gender explicitly in all efforts to reduce poverty

Disseminate the main message of this study, primarily within the Swedish administration – but also internationally – on the right of all to be included in partnerships for development and thus the importance of reducing the costs of discrimination on grounds of sex, in terms of lives, suffering and lack of economic development. Build on the Government Development Bill and the commitments of the UN world conferences from the 1990s, including those of Cairo and Beijing, which consistently focus on the rights of the individual – regardless of sex.

Reflect gender power issues in all poverty reduction efforts, including further work on putting the development Bill into practice. Emphasise gender power issues in key policy speeches, main policy statements, and major multilateral reports to the UN such as reports on the extent to which the Millennium Development Goals (including

the gender equality goal) have been achieved. Work together with the World Bank and bilateral partners to draw attention to gender throughout *all* work on poverty strategies and the budgetary support that is linked to these. Introduce gender into discussions on development cooperation's "efficiency" in the UN and OECD-DAC. *Do not prioritise "consensus" and "coherence" if these mean that women's rights are set aside.*

Address and involve women on the same terms as men in dialogues and partnerships. Give priority to programmes that strengthen women's empowerment, through support to women's organisations and women researchers in order to take part in work on, for example, poverty strategies.

Responsible bodies: the political leadership in the Ministry, the Department for Global Development, primarily the policy planning group (POP), in collaboration with Sida and the Division for Gender Equality of the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications.

2. General analysis and evaluation should encompass

Develop analyses of the costs of discrimination through, for example, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Expert Group on Development Issues and undertake accounting/auditing of initiatives from a gender power perspective. Work here, for example, with UNIFEM and the World Bank, to present proposals for the organisation, inter alia, of reconstruction after armed conflicts and budget support which on the same terms should involve and benefit women and men respectively.³⁴

Responsible bodies: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for Global Development (GU), primarily the steering and coordination group (SOS).

3. Management focus: From gender as "optional" to consistent initiatives and management

Refer to the formal commitments made to guarantee the equal value of women and men, including legally binding UN Conventions like CEDAW and the political undertakings at the UN World Conferences in Cairo and Beijing in 1994 and 1995.

In line with the proposals of Sida's evaluation of gender mainstreaming, clearly strengthen leadership, allocation of resources, objectives and focus on conflicting objectives. Develop knowledge, skills and analysis capacity, by introducing, for example, help-desk functions. Stress responsibility/accountability: regular reports, management response, etc.

Develop management skills, to put policy into practice. Identify objectives and means,

³⁴ Equivalent studies can be made with regard to natural resources such as water, and to sanitation, issues that were raised in the action programme from the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002.

activities, results, effects, success factors, impact chains, etc. Analyse the institutional arrangements, resources, reward systems, etc, in different administrations that tend to be "enabling or disabling" for gender equality.

Take up gender power issues in all planning instruments. Make an assessment of the resources needed for different initiatives and allocate personnel, training and other resources.

Responsible bodies: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for Global Development (POP and SOS) .

4. Focus on rights of both women and men to promote rule of law and a rights perspective

Focus on women's rights to resources such as land as well as freedom of violence and access to decision-making as crucial aspects of rule of law and a rights perspective in development cooperation.

Draw attention to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the handbook on CEDAW³⁵ as important tools in the country dialogues.

Focus on reproductive rights as one aspect of working with human rights. Include anti-violence campaigns and legal literacy for women in every country programme, in both bilateral and multilateral forums.

Responsible bodies: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for Global Development and the Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law.

5. Draw attention to men and masculinities

Increase attention to men and masculinity in gender equality work. Show the effects in development cooperation of a predominant masculinity which gives certain men preferential right of interpretation and the "right" to privileges in the form of power, resources and use of violence, for example – at the expense of scope for women, other men and children. Take account of the way in which donor structures may be part of the problem in, for example, reconstruction initiatives in Iraq – where Iraqi women claim that they are unseen by donors, and less involved in building up society and "partnerships" now than they were even during Saddam's reign of terror.³⁶

Responsible bodies: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for Global Development and Sida.

35 Tomasevski, Katarina, "CEDAW- A Handbook", joint publication by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida, second edition, 2000.

36 However, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is a good example of the way in which a multilateral actor can clearly see women as agents of change (such as in the "Rural Poverty Report, 2001").

6. Multifocus: collaborate with multilateral partners for better gender analysis and action

Cooperate strategically according to this 10-point programme with some major multilateral actors: the World Bank, UNIFEM/UNDP, UNFPA and possibly IFAD, to name a few.

Influence and cooperate with the World Bank, particularly on further studies on how initiatives should be organised to define and do something about multidimensional poverty and general deprivation, using both economic and legal instruments. In this context, take into account, inter alia, women's land rights and violence against women, and general power issues, based on the broad perspective discussed at the UN world conferences of Beijing and Cairo.

Responsible bodies: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for Global Development and Sida.

7. Sector focus: identity strategic sectors for gender mainstreaming

Draw up two pilot strategies based on in-depth-studies presented here: on economic reform programmes and on health support, and show how gender power perspective should underpin work in each area.

Based on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and Swedish experience and studies, outline also how Sweden could contribute to greater understanding of a gender power perspective in work with conflict prevention and reconstruction. Here, show particularly how women and men should be treated on equal terms with regard to the allocation of resources and influence. Build, inter alia, on Anna Höglund's dissertation "Kön och krig" (Gender and War), the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation handbook "Tänk om", (2003) and work in 2003 between several agencies outlining a code of conduct for Swedish personnel serving abroad.

Responsible bodies: The Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Department for Global Development and the Department for Global Security), the Ministry of Defence and Sida.

8. Country focus: systems for integrating gender

Develop jointly with regional departments and the Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law – and together with the unit for analysis of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs – greater knowledge about the geography of gender power in line with the review given in the study, referring to Kabeer and "Voices of the Poor" as the basis for strategic initiatives. Focus on individual countries such as, for example, Zambia, in order to discuss with those involved in Lusaka the possibility of undertaking a cohesive, gender-mainstreamed country strategy bilaterally and possibly in connection with support for a PRSP particularly draw attention to initiatives that facilitate and rationalise women's work. (See example in annex, page 71) .

Responsible bodies: Department for Global Development, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, working jointly with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs analysis unit and regional

departments at the Ministry and Sida.

9. Focus of the dialogue: to involve women on equal terms with men

Develop a strategy, based on a rights perspective and gender equality, to strengthen democracy and participation by developing mechanisms and objectives for consistently involving women as actors taking a full part in dialogues and at all stages of partnerships. Analyse in all efforts to encourage "dialogue", "partnerships" and "participation" to what extent both women and men are likely to be involved. Outline models for ways in which participation of both women and men can be encouraged in country strategies.

Responsible bodies: The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, SOS and regional departments and SIDA.

10. Skills development within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Organise seminars on this study to discuss how its conclusions should affect different processes and issues. Discuss forms for further development of analysis capacity, preferably involving a greater number of departments at the ministry (the Department for Global Development, the International Trade Policy Department, the Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law and the regional departments) together with the new analysis unit at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Expert Group on Development Issues. Establish and support networks so that Sweden can be active in this field, through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida, NGOs, the universities, etc.

Responsible bodies: the political leadership and the Department for Global Development.

Special initiatives in 2004 and 2005:

Publicise the new study nationally and internationally (in several languages).

See the study in relation to the UN celebration of the 25th anniversary in 2004 of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (which Sweden was the first country to ratify). Emphasise too that the action programmes from Cairo in 1994 and Beijing in 1995 must be revitalised for the international community to be able to refer to "Cairo and Beijing plus 10 years" and not *minus 10* years – that is to say 10 wasted years – in work on women's rights.

Draw attention to the Cairo and Beijing plans, by, for example, Sweden organising an international seminar between 2004-2005 aimed at outlining a programme of measures for how to put the plans into practice nationally, with the support of international donors, to promote both gender equality and the fight against poverty in the broad sense.

Annexes: web-sites,
reading tips, in depth
studies, reference
persons, acronyms.

This final part of the study contains reading tips and web-sites used as sources for this study, in-depth-studies as well as a list of acronyms and list of reference persons.

I Web-sites:

www.developmentgateway.org
www.genderatwork.com
www.ids.ac.uk/bridge
www.itkt.com (Kvinna till kvinna)
www.publications.thecommonwealth.org
www.regeringskansliet.se (where this report is available)
www.sida.se
www.uct.ac.za/org/agi/ (African Gender Institute)
www.un.org
www.unifem.org
www.womenwatch.com
www.worldbank.org/gender

Reading tips:

a) What we know about female and male poverty:

- ★ Castells, Manuel, "The Power of Identity", Oxford (UK), 1997.
- ★ Chant, Sylvia, "New Contributions to the Analysis of Poverty", London, 2003.
- ★ Coomaraswamy, Radhika, "Cultural Practices in the Family that are Violent towards Women", ECOSOC-rapport E/CN.4/2002/83, 2002.
- ★ Johnsson-Latham, Gerd, "Understanding female and male poverty", MFA, Stockholm, 2003.
- ★ Johnsson-Latham, Gerd, "Ecce Homo: a Gender Reading of Voices of the Poor", MFA, Stockholm, 2002.
- ★ Kabeer, Naila, "Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals", London, 2002.
- ★ Kabeer, Naila, "Reversed Realities", London, reprint 2001.
- ★ OECD-DAC, "Guidelines: Poverty Reduction", Paris, 2001.
- ★ Ministry for Foreign Affairs, "Shared Responsibility", Sweden's Policy for Global Development", Govt Bill 2002/03:122, Stockholm, 2003.
- ★ Ministry for Foreign Affairs, "UN World Conferences in the 1990s", 1997.
- ★ Nauckhoff, Eva, "Poverty without Poor", Study commissioned by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs under the "Gender Discrimination as a Cause of Poverty" project, Stockholm 2003.
- ★ Sida, "Perspectives on Poverty", Stockholm 2002.
- ★ Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) "Gender Country

Profiles" (a series of studies).

- ★ Tomasevski, Katarina "CEDAW – a Handbook, The UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women", MFA, Stockholm 2000.
- ★ United Nations: "The Political Declaration and the Platform of Action", Beijing, 1995 and Outcome Document", New York 2000".
- ★ UN secretariat, "The Worlds Women: trends and statistics," New York, 2000 and 2002.
- ★ World Bank, "Engendering Development", Washington 2000.
- ★ World Bank, World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty",
- ★ World Bank, "Voices of the Poor", ed. Deepa Narayan, Washington 2000.

b) How we use the knowledge on female and male poverty:

- ★ de Vylder, Stefan "Genus i fattigdomsstrategier" (Gender in Poverty Strategies), Study commissioned by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs under the "Gender Discrimination as a Cause of Poverty" project, Stockholm, 2003.
- ★ Geisler, Gisela, "WID/Gender Units and the Experience of Gender Mainstreaming in Multilateral Organisations", Chr. Michelsen Institute, Oslo, Norway, Evaluation Report, Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, No. 1, 1999.
- ★ Johnsson-Latham, Gerd, "Gender mainstreaming in Development co-operation – a Manual", Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Stockholm, 1998.
- ★ Johnsson-Latham, Gerd, "Jämställdhet för bättre fattigdomsbekämpning" (Gender equality as a means for more efficient poverty reduction), GLOBKOM, Stockholm, 2002.
- ★ Lindahl, Katarina, "Genus i hälsostrategier" (Gender in Health Strategies), Study commissioned by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs under the "Gender Discrimination as a Cause of Poverty" project, Stockholm, 2003.
- ★ Mikkelsen, Britha, et al, "Mainstreaming Gender Equality: Sida's Support for the Promotion of Gender Equality in Partner Countries", Sida – Evaluation Report 02/01, 2002.
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II In depth studies of female and male poverty

A. The World's Women

The UN publication "The World's Women" issued every other year is an excellent source of knowledge about women's conditions. It comprises, among other things, data on demography, housing, marriage, parenthood, health, education, employment (in both the formal and informal sectors), maternity leave, human rights and participation in decision-making forums. With its extensive data and analytical texts, which enable qualitative assessments, the publication may be used, inter alia, as a tool for measuring compliance with the goals set in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action.

Some information from the book:

- ★ In places where women have low status, the gender balance which otherwise prevails all over the world is changed; in China, India and Pakistan about 90 girls are born per 100 boys.
- ★ Two-thirds of all women in Africa become pregnant before the age of 20. Girls married off when they are young, more often than others marry an older man. Women over 20 most often marry a man of the same age.
- ★ An increasing number of women live in households led by women or alone – Japan is the exception. All women live longer than ever and the proportion of elderly women is increasing in all regions except southern Africa (where HIV/AIDS claims large numbers of victims, mainly women).
- ★ A small proportion of the world's poorest women has access to health care during their pregnancies: every second in South Asia, one in three in Africa – while 95 per cent of all women in the Caribbean receive this service.
- ★ Two-thirds of the 800 million illiterate people in the world are women. The education gap between the sexes is lessening – but gender discrimination and sex stereotypes prevent women from fully benefiting from their education when it comes to choice of profession, income and financial independence.
- ★ Of women's total working hours, only about one-fifth is paid. Of men's total working hours, two-thirds are paid.
- ★ Practically everywhere the proportion of gainfully employed women has increased. The lowest proportion of gainfully employed women is in North Africa and West Asia (about one-third).

B. "Voices of the Poor" on female and male poverty

The World Bank study "Voices of the Poor" contains several gender-specific observations about poverty, powerlessness and lack of legal protection:

1. Overall issues of people's equal value and rights

- ★ many poor women are regarded as (and regard themselves as) second class

beings, particularly when they are "bought" (as property) through arranged marriages.

- ★ differences between the sexes and ideas of superiority and inferiority tend to be reproduced by unequal power structures at all levels and in all instances.
- ★ the "helpers" are often more part of the problem than of the solution since they tend to reproduce unequal power relations and solutions.
- ★ the institutions to which poor people are referred are often the clan, family and village elder, who are characterised by male values and repeat patterns of women and girls' inferiority. *A poor man may find it easier to be proved right in a conflict with a richer man than a poor woman in a conflict with a man, for example a husband who abuses her or the husband's relatives who force her, a widow, from her property.*
- ★ men define poverty as a lack of self-respect. However, subordinate women do not make such demands but define poverty as a lack of food for their children.

2. Examples of differences between the sexes regarding resources and influence

- ★ in addition to material poverty, many poor women suffer domestic violence.
- ★ women are often excluded on grounds of sex from decision-making at all levels, even in the family and community based organisations.
- ★ a growing problem for poor women – and men – is the increasing unemployment, alcoholism, drug abuse and criminality of men.
- ★ women's networks are strong and focus on social relations – but men's networks are even stronger since they focus on economic resources.

3. To be taken into account when measures are planned

- ★ the majority of poor people complain of condescending attitudes on the part, for example, of health care personnel, bank officials – but poor, badly dressed women are particularly degraded.
- ★ the police who are to protect all citizens seldom assist and protect the poor. On the contrary, many policemen subject women who have sought protection following rape to new abuse.
- ★ an important part of work to improve the conditions of life for poor women involves reducing men's violence in and outside the home.
- ★ an increasing number of women should receive more education and greater knowledge of their rights.

III A significant proportion of our knowledge about the conditions of poor women – as well as what should be done – is to be found locally among NGOs, researchers and lobby groups of the countries of the South.

A few examples:

South Africa: Research and teaching at the University of Cape Town, on gender power structures and the "decolonisation of minds", on violence, land, etc., and inter alia, Professor Amima Mamas "Challenging Subjects: Gender, Power and Identity in African Contexts".

Regionally in southern Africa: Lawyer groups exist that support women's rights to land by trying cases in courts and working as lobby groups that take part in government consultations with civil society. The Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) organisation, for example, presents proposals in "Women and Justice: Myth and Reality in Zambia" with one of its aims being to incorporate the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women into Zambia's constitution.

Nationally in Zambia: The Zambia National Women's Lobby writes in its publication "Election Monitoring Report" about the importance of increased electoral participation among women. The report discusses ways in which even more women could become politically active, if political party working methods were adapted not just to the conditions of men but also to the conditions of women, particularly with regard to their workload at home.

The Zambia Association for Research and Development, ZARD, for example, describes in detail the conditions of poor Zambian women in its paper "Beyond Inequalities", which could serve as input to work on country strategies, PRSPs, etc. The paper states that *the government invests chiefly in education where there has already been relatively extensive progress – instead of in more sensitive areas relating to power, land and reproductive rights.*

ZARD's publication "WTO – Which Way for Zambia?" points at the way in which changes in relative prices favouring cash crops tend to benefit men, how trade policies should draw attention to the poor working conditions of women working in, for example, plantations and the textile industry and how the abolition of tariffs leads to reduced state revenue and thus less income for e.g. schools and health care.

The publication "Women – Know Your Place: The Patriarchal Message in Zambian Popular Song" shows how the concept of "culture" can help to conserve existing power structures.

A: Text from OECD-DAC's guidelines on poverty (2002):

"Lack of gender equality affects all dimensions of poverty since poverty is not gender neutral. In different cultures there are often deeply rooted prejudices and discrimination against

women. ...Female poverty is more prevalent and typically more severe than men's poverty. Women and girls in poor households get less than their fair share of private consumption and public services. They suffer violence by men on a large scale. (p. 40).

Women play a central role in the livelihoods and basic human capabilities of poor households. By providing for their children, they reduce the risk of poverty in the next generation. But women in general have less access than men to assets that provide security and opportunity. Such constraints on women's productive potential reduce household incomes and aggregate economic growth. Lack of gender equality is therefore a major cause of female and overall poverty." (p.40).

The guidelines also stress that in "effective anti-poverty strategies, consideration needs to be given to existing gender relations, paying particular attention to women's time poverty caused by the double burden of paid work and their unpaid care activities. Governments need to recognise gender exclusion when shaping legal, institutional and political frameworks, for instance in allocations of public expenditureCareful monitoring and evaluation would give greater insight into the effectiveness of "gender budgets" (p.49).

B. A holistic view of both poverty and gender discrimination: Agreement from the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing as a roadmap

Probably still the most coherent and far-reaching description of the conditions of poor women and action to be taken is the Platform for Action (PFA) from the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. *The Platform for Action functions as the most established roadmap internationally for efforts to combat women's poverty and vulnerability. It is politically approved by governments all over the world and acts as a benchmark for all work on gender equality, both nationally and internationally. It can also be used as a "quality control" for what may be described as examples of gender mainstreaming. The Platform for Action concerns, inter alia, the following:*

- ★ the need to combat notions about men's superiority and women's inferiority,
- ★ the fact that human rights can never be set aside in the name of cultural traditions and customs,
- ★ the fact that women's reproductive and sexual rights are part of their human rights, and
- ★ that states are responsible for combating and punishing violence against women.

A general characteristic of the PFA from Beijing is that it does not compartmentalise different areas into health or educational affairs, for example, but seeks to show how women's health is a function of power relations between women and men – which are reflected in turn in asymmetrical economic relations, etc.

The PFA establishes the principle of mainstreaming and its significance: that, before decisions are taken, an assessment must be made of the anticipated impact on

men and women respectively of the planned measures. The PFA can also be used for benchmarking, i.e., for establishing goals, both quantitative and qualitative with regard, for example, to the twelve main areas focused on by the plan.

Education is one of these main areas. Here the PFA stresses the importance of lifelong learning, education free from gender stereotypes and functional learning that gives poor women and girls knowledge about the rights they have and tools to enable them, for example, to contact networks combating violence and sexual abuse.

A key paragraph, determining subsequent paragraphs, is paragraph 9, which establishes that no government has the right to invoke historical, religious or cultural traditions as a reason for not upholding and guaranteeing human rights.

C. A pillar in the work of strengthening human rights: the Programme of Action from the 1994 UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo

At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo a forward-looking Programme of Action was adopted which in a decisive manner moved the focus from general population policy objectives to the rights of the individual. This decision provides an instrument for both governments and international actors such as NGOs to work for development cooperation based on a holistic view of people.

Reproductive health is defined in Chapter 7, Section 2 of the Cairo document as a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes. Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life, and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so". Chapter 7, Section 3 repeats the "basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so". It also emphasises that these decisions shall be made without the risk of "discrimination, coercion and violence".

D. Gender mainstreaming: help or hindrance?

A general strategy to inform all development cooperation with gender aspects is so-called gender mainstreaming. Sweden was one of the initiators of the strategy, which was first launched in the EU-group preparing for Beijing in 1995, and later in Beijing in negotiations on the PFA. The aim of the strategy is to seek to identify the advantages and disadvantages for women and men respectively before decisions are made.

Experience of the strategy has, however, been mixed and two examples are reported here:

- 1) Sida's evaluation, "Mainstreaming Gender Equality: Sida's Support for the Promotion of Gender Equality in Partner Countries" (2002) establishes that the mainstrea-

ming strategy has had an impact on country strategies, but that it needs to be developed at project level, that there is often a lack of analysis of the situation of women and men respectively, that the link between gender equality and other development cooperation goals needs to be strengthened and that positive results contributing to gender equality are reported to varying degrees in many of the projects. The evaluation also – worryingly enough – concludes that *gender issues were again given greater attention in country strategies immediately after Beijing than has been the case since 2000.*

The evaluation was based on three in-depth studies: Bangladesh, South Africa and Nicaragua, where both the entire country strategy and a number of programmes and projects have been selected for analysis. The results of the evaluation indicate both progress and difficulties with regard to the impact of gender equality, where it has proved more difficult to put it into practice than to discuss it in policies and action plans. The evaluation claims – despite the short time that has elapsed since the principles of mainstreaming were established – that mainstreaming has contributed to greater gender equality.

The evaluation emphasises the importance of continuing to apply the strategy and of gaining broader support for it in the organisation, but claims that it needs to be renewed and developed and linked to other development assistance goals. The great challenge is gender mainstreaming in programmes and projects. The evaluators state that *strengthening capacity and competence are key issues*, both nationally and out in the field. They also conclude that the issue of management is central and that the role of leadership is decisive for the work.

- 2) In November 2002, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged an international seminar on the gender mainstreaming strategy as a tool for gender equality in all development cooperation. The seminar was entitled "Gender mainstreaming: A dead end?" Taking part in the meeting were representatives from both multilateral organisations and the Nordic countries. The conclusions of the meeting can be summarised as follows:

- ★ Gender mainstreaming is an excellent principle – but unclear, and may impede work on drawing attention to gender – i.e., the way in which the socially constructed roles of women and men in the home, working life and decision-making are decisive for the organisation and priorities of development cooperation.
- ★ So-called gender mainstreaming has often meant that neither gender, nor women have been focused upon – by referring to the fact that issues have already been "mainstreamed". *What is required is that someone actively mainstreams, which demands both knowledge and resources.* There should be some form of minimum requirement/quality control to merit an analysis or initiative to be defined as mainstreamed.

- ★ There is no contradiction between gender and initiatives focusing on women: what is often required is first a gender analysis and then a clear focus on women – to bring women into the mainstream. A gender analysis can also be followed by initiatives focusing on men, such as campaigns against violence against women and to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS.

E. A strategy for fighting human trafficking through Sweden’s international development cooperation:

The strategy for fighting human trafficking adopted by the Government in 2003 draws attention throughout to power issues as a cause of human trafficking.

”The oppression of women and children, within patriarchal family and social structures, in which women are subordinate to men, is one of the main reasons why they fall prey to traffickers...The Swedish Government’s strategy adopts a human rights perspective: it is based on the principle of equal rights for all and the belief that governments are responsible for ensuring – to the best of their ability – that these rights are respected, protected, promoted and enforced... In the case of Sweden, the main emphasis must be on long-term preventive measures such as the promotion and protection of human rights, countering discriminatory attitudes towards women and children...”

3) Strategies for gender mainstreaming

Check-list for work for MFA-staff acting as board members in the UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank and other multinational organisations

Questions to be taken up when proposals for initiatives and subsequent evaluations are carried out:

1. Organisation and aim

Whose problems and priorities are to be addressed?

How is attention given to the asymmetrical power balance between women’s and men’s land rights, income opportunities, violence against women and reproductive rights?

2. Processes: Planning and participation

Have both women and men participated on reasonably equal terms in planning the initiative? Can these processes be regarded as ”enabling” or ”disabling” for women?

3. Distribution of resources (material, human, social)

What would accounting/an audit/an evaluation show regarding how the available resources are used to benefit women and men respectively?

Are both women and men included as breadwinners, farmers, workers, etc?

B. Outline of possible indicators that may be used in measuring both female poverty and deprivation in broader terms:

1. Income level
2. Maternal mortality
3. Access to reproductive health and service
4. Education, including functional education and "legal literacy"
5. Legal rights to land and other resources
6. Vulnerability to violence, both structural/traditional such as genital mutilation and domestic violence and in armed conflicts
7. Access to credit
8. (Self-) respect, dignity, access to important networks
9. Time for own activities and for, e.g., democratic decision-making
10. Quota for how women and men respectively contribute unpaid work to the family's means of support

C. A model for a country strategy/dialogue with a clear gender power perspective

All country strategies and bilateral dialogues should be based on the following:

1. Analyses of the country and cooperation should contain basic facts on women and men with regard to:
 - ★ legal rights (land-ownership, inheritance, the right to stand in political elections)
 - ★ economic conditions (paid/unpaid work, employment, ownership, etc)
 - ★ social conditions (domestic violence, education, participation in political foras, share in social services – including health and medical care/reproductive health)
2. Sections on experience of previous initiatives should contain assessments or more in-depth analysis of the extent to which women and men respectively have enjoyed the results of development cooperation in each sector of cooperation reported upon (such as: in the issue of administrative support: the way in which target groups have clearly included both women and men. Have gender analyses been used as a basis for planning?)
3. In deliberations on partnership and dialogue, gender should be stressed, and references should be made to formal commitments under, inter alia, Beijing, parliamentary decisions and the national action plans of the partner country with regard to equal conditions for women and men.
4. The section on future cooperation and strategic issues should state that one of the criteria for cooperation is that account should be fully taken of the rights, opportunities and duties of both women and men.
5. Gender aspects should also be included in the section on objectives and aims.
6. The text should make note of the way in which the selection of sectors, and organisation of initiatives have been informed by the expressed needs and interests of

both women and men.

7. Each country programme should thus contain the following:
 - ★ Women's empowerment – in dialogues and partnerships, through legal literacy
 - ★ Anti-violence initiatives, such as campaigns in the media, schools etc, against domestic violence
 - ★ Strengthening of the reproductive rights of women and teenage girls
 - ★ Stronger land rights for women
 - ★ General or specific examples of gender auditing/gender budgeting to see how resources put at the country's disposal in the country programme are shared between women and men respectively.

D. A gender perspective in conflict management and peace support

- a) *The mandate for peacekeeping operations and reconstruction work* must address the needs of both women and men, with respect, for example, to protection against violence and abuse (a pre-condition and part of the rule of law), access to property (land, housing, etc., lost during fighting), participation in work on constitutions and prior to elections, the treatment of demobilised women and men, education, credit, etc.
- b) *The composition of contingents sent to the field* must have skills in, for example, protection against violence and trauma management addressed to the needs of both women and men (see the above). In this work they will be assisted by authorities and the civil society (including women's organisations).
- c) *Contacts with dialogue partners, etc in the conflict area:* Both women and men must be contacted by the UN and countries with which Sweden cooperates in reconstruction so that in allocating limited resources the interests and priorities of all groups may be made visible and transparency ensured. The international community should seek to employ women locally, at all levels, in reconstruction, etc.

E. A gender perspective when working with children

Save the Children Sweden has drawn up a detailed strategy for how attention should be given to gender power aspects when working with children. The strategy stresses the importance of identifying the differences in the situations of boys and girls with regard to:

- ★ access to resources
- ★ "status" or position in the family and community
- ★ the assistance they receive from others
- ★ the rights that they do, in fact, have.

The report stresses that these and other aspects relating to differences in girls' and boys' conditions must be taken account of when planning initiatives.

F. Ten suggestions on how to place gender power issues on the agenda

Certain key factors are important in mainstreaming gender, i.e., integrating these issues into work in all areas:

- ★ **Recall the formal commitments that have been made:** Gender equality can never be a matter of freedom to choose. Under fundamental UN Conventions such as CEDAW and the Platform for Action from the 1995 UN conference in Beijing, countries – both Sweden and our partner countries – have made legal and political commitments not to discriminate against women.
- ★ **Show that gender equality leads to greater efficiency and to better use of resources:** It is not possible to combat poverty or to promote democracy, human rights, cooperation and sustainable development if both women and men – on equal terms – are not regarded as equal actors and recipients. Thus: Gender equality is both an objective in itself and a means of creating efficiency.
- ★ **Gender equality means non-discrimination and respect for the law:** Gender equality means that no-one is discriminated against because of his/her sex. It does not mean that women and men must undertake the same tasks. However, it does mean that, irrespective of what they do, they should have the same rights, opportunities and obligations, and be able to influence what is on the agenda in all areas, and at all levels.
- ★ **Gender changes analyses and measures:** Inclusion of a gender perspective and striving for gender equality entails changes and re-structuring of processes and approaches, both among decision-makers, when setting up political agendas and allocating resources.
- ★ **Mainstreaming requires active leadership, responsibility and follow-up:** Mainstreaming of the gender perspective, aimed at achieving gender equality requires strong support from leadership at the top – and all the way down to the level at which measures are implemented.
- ★ **Mainstreaming needs practically oriented, clear examples:** Explain concepts like gender and mainstreaming. Provide simple, concrete handbooks with examples of how the gender perspective sheds light on the different roles of women and men in agriculture, in a sector programme for health care, a road project, etc. Get your colleagues to help you. Issue and explain these handbooks at seminars and meetings. Mainstreaming requires knowledge, education and awareness.
- ★ **Identify the entrances to key processes:** When initiating a new key political process in an organisation, show the following in your analysis and proposals for measures: gender discrimination, information about the differing roles and influence of women and men, with regard, for example, to their access to credit, influence, impact on local decisions and ability to take part in reform and privatisation programmes.
- ★ **Link with everyday work:** Show how account should be taken of gender in the daily work of planning programmes for countries, writing speeches, policy and project assessments, budget allocations, evaluations, etc.

- ★ **Partnerships and building networks:** Integrate the gender power perspective in all dialogues on partnership. Create internal and external networks, document all activities, and publicise good practices.
- ★ **Demand reporting:** Ensure that reporting is required by top-level management in the form of some type of impact analysis on gender. Focus on gender issues in the organisation's ordinary action plans and ensure that reports on progress and obstacles are presented to management.

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Acronyms

CEDAW – the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women.

DAC – Development Assistance Committee

EGDI – Expert Group on Development issues

GAD – Gender and Development

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

PFA – Platform for Action from the fourth UN World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995.

PRS – Poverty Reduction Strategy

PRSP – Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

RFSU – Swedish Association for Sexuality Education

Sida – Swedish International Development Agency

SRHR – Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme







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