

Mainstreaming Gender through Sector Wide Approaches in Education

SYNTHESIS REPORT

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A study carried out for DFID

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This study was prepared in a relatively short period for a piece of work of this scope (five months from start to production of the draft report). Despite the time constraint, the three country study and literature search was successfully concluded. A couple of reasons for this are worth highlighting:

- Firstly, in each country informants have been exceedingly generous with their time and with their knowledge. There was a remarkable degree of openness in providing information to the researchers, without which the study would not have had such a positive outcome. This applied equally to government, non-government, donor and civil society informants. Given that it was the DAC (via DFID) rather than the countries themselves which requested this study the level of collaboration was particularly appreciated by the team. We hope that the institutions involved will find the study helpful to them in their own efforts.
- Secondly, overall the level of support provided by DFID central and country departments in logistics and programme organisation at short notice and urgently required was remarkable.

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Andy Norton and Mo Sibbons led the process of putting together the synthesis report, with contributions from other team members. The teams for the country studies were as follows:

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- India: David Smawfield, Helen Poulsen.

Mick Foster of CAPE, ODI, contributed to the study design and provided commentary on the Ghana country report. Jane Northey of ODI provided excellent administrative support throughout the process.

Acronyms

BESIP	Basic Education Sector Investment Programme
CAPE	Centre for Aid and Public Expenditure
CSOs	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
DGEOs	District Education Education Officers
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
ESIP	Education Strategic Investment Programme
EU	European Union
fCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GAD	Gender and Development
GEU	Girl's Education Unit
GNP	Gross National Product
GOI	Government of India
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
ODI	Overseas Development Agency
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIP	Sector Investment Programme
SWAps	Sector Wide Approaches
UNICEF	United National Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WID	Women in Development
WP-GEN	Working Party on Gender Equality

Executive Summary

1. Introduction and Background

This study was commissioned by the UK Department for International Development to contribute to a broader study taking place within the Working Group of the OECD DAC on Gender Equality. Similar studies in health and agriculture have been undertaken by other donor agencies. The objective of this study is to examine the experience of gender mainstreaming in Sector Wide Approaches in education in order to identify lessons learned and good practices for promoting gender equality. The box below provides a working definition of a sector-wide approach.

A WORKING DEFINITION OF A SECTOR WIDE APPROACH (SWAp)

Governments define a macro-economic framework within which Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks determine the resources available for individual sectors

Governments lead a consultative process with stakeholders and investors, including development agencies to define:

- *an overall sector policy framework*
- *priorities, objectives and performance measures*
- *expenditure programmes*
- *institutional reform and capacity building*
- *jointly agreed management, reporting and accounting arrangements*

Major donors jointly support the process and the practice of the sector programme, preferably using common procedures.

Technical assistance is commissioned by governments rather than donor agencies

The study comprised three country case studies (Ghana, Uganda and India) and a literature review. In each of the country case studies a short field visit was carried out to interview key informants in government, the donor community and civil society. Due to restrictions of time and scale we were not able to extend the consultations to the level of community level actors (parents, children, teachers) – a limitation which should be born in mind when reading the conclusions.

This summary is divided into three sections. Firstly there is a summary description of the three country case studies. Then there are a series of general conclusions and observations. Finally we propose ten principle ‘lessons learned’ from the study and ten ‘challenges’ for the practice of SWAps if they are to become more effective vehicles for gender mainstreaming.

2. Country Case Studies

2.1 Uganda

General Outline

The government is committed to a SWAp, the Education Strategic Investment Programme (ESIP), which is fully supported by the international donors, the co-funding agencies. The development of the ESIP has been a government led process with the collaboration of the major donors. From the outset girls' education has been given a high priority. The Ugandan Universal Primary Education policy included the provision of free education to four children in each household, at least two of whom are to be girls. There is strong support for gender equality goals from the country's political leadership, and from the influential Ministry of Finance, which takes an unusually active role in social policy. The inclusion of elements of economic and social rights within Uganda's constitution helps to underpin efforts to mainstream gender equality in policies and programmes. Within the ESIP objectives gender is better articulated in relation to access than gender related quality issues. There is an assumption of gender neutrality in many of the priority objectives. Poverty and the strength of the patriarchal social constructs constrain responsiveness to government led change, although the UPE policy has produced dramatic results. Despite effective decentralisation of education development initiatives and some positive moves towards gender equality, women are not able to participate equally with men. This is particularly the case at school level with teaching and school management, but also with other policy-making, management, monitoring and implementation in the education sector and more broadly.

Uganda's policy framework shows a strong commitment to poverty reduction, backed up by an information system for monitoring the impact of policy which includes participatory qualitative studies as well as quantitative measures from household surveys. Relatively strong economic growth has been achieved in Uganda in the last ten years - a period which comprises a long, steady recovery from the years of conflict. A major current concern is that the poorest groups are not benefiting adequately from the growth process.

Donor support to gender equality

While donors seem to share a broad vision on gender equality, this is not yet articulated as a clear common commitment as is the case with universal primary education. This appears to be linked to a misconception among some donor personnel that 'gender is a Western agenda' and a perception that too assertive an approach will compromise Ministry ownership. This is frustrating to those many Ugandans at different levels in the system who are themselves committed to the gender equity goals. There is an understanding of the inseparable gender dimensions of sustainable development, and they are attempting to respond to the strong momentum coming from the grassroots of Ugandan society.

Sector or sub-sector?

The ESIP is a sector programme, although the focus has been and currently is on basic and primary education. The UPE strategy was instrumental in getting the government to focus on the introduction of a sector programme. Planned improvements to post-primary education will receive more priority at later stages in the ESIP when the increased demand filters through from the primary sub-sector.

2.2 Ghana

General outline

At the highest level of Government and within the National Development Planning Commission there is support for strategic planning and the development of sector programmes. However, there is lack of coherence in the education sector, with multiple articulations of programmes. Although attempts were made by donors to support the government in the development of a Basic Education Sector Improvement Project (BESIP) this has not enjoyed continued support from the government, or from the donor community (the development partners). Perhaps the nearest the government comes to a donor supported SWAp is the sub-sectoral programme of fCUBE – free compulsory universal basic education. There is at least widespread support for the fCUBE objectives of enhanced access, quality and equity – although the fCUBE documentation does not outline a coherent strategy for achievement of these. Donor coordination is weak, and there continue to be many different donor projects not all linked directly into the sector programme.

There is a good environment for the incorporation of gender equity considerations, with a long term government commitment to gender equity. Access and participation are the main focus of the gender activities, which tend to be specific activities rather than integrated into broader actions.

Poverty reduction has a lower profile in policy debate than in Uganda. Overall growth rates are modest (c. 4 % p.a.), and the poorest are seeing no improvement in their situation. There is little sign of improvement in relation to the major issue in poverty – the wide regional disparities, especially between the better endowed southern parts of the country and the northern sector which has high levels of deprivation by any measure.

Donor support to gender equality

As with the other two countries, there is some disunity in approach to gender mainstreaming. Many similar points were reiterated in the Ghanaian context: the misguided view that gender equity concerns are a Western feminist agenda; poor communication between gender specialists within donor bodies and their sector specific specialists; and the continuing focus on project work perpetuating the implementation of different strategies.

Sector or sub-sector?

There is a relatively strong sub-sectoral programme, the fCUBE, but, despite an outline of the content of a sector wide programme, no convincing and detailed programme for post basic has been articulated. Basic education covers 8 years, including as it does Junior Secondary grades. This is both an advantage (encouraging a perception of minimum education being of a longer time period) and a disadvantage (resources and funds appear to be concentrated on the higher grades to the detriment of the primary grades).

2.3 India

General outline

The federal government is leading the development of a sub-sector programme. The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) is a centrally sponsored scheme of the GOI; supported by international donors. It does not have national coverage, although 193 districts 15 states are now involved. Decentralisation is a key feature of the programme, with Districts being encouraged to develop their own strategies within certain centrally determined parameters. In a country of the size and diversity of India it is difficult to make generalisations. In the report on DPEP, gender is explored with reference to the complex interactions with poverty, caste, ethnicity and other cross-cutting issues. On every count, females are disadvantaged in Indian society, but the manifestation of this disadvantage varies dramatically. Gender equity is high on the government agenda at policy level, but is less obvious at school level. The attitudes of the different state's administrations vary towards support for and engagement with gender related activities. The start point for improving gender equity is exceedingly low. The disadvantages are so fundamental that gender equity activities tend to get rapidly diluted and ineffectual the closer they get to household level.

DPEP is not a self-consciously defined SWAp, although a comparison of the programme with the key characteristics of a SWAp draw a conclusion that it does bear many of these characteristics. One of the major challenges in terms of donor support to the programme is the fact that the government is sceptical about the value of formal policy dialogue with donors. Support for the education sector is largely being focussed at State level, with an implicit agreement that particular states have specific support from one or more donor.

Donor support to gender equality

There is no one donor voice on the most appropriate responses to gender equity in DPEP. The sub-division of support focussed on different states exacerbates a lack of uniformity. As well as these inter-donor differences, there are intra-donor communication problems. Sector-specific specialists do not necessarily have a clear understanding of gender mainstreaming and what this should mean for implementation in their area of specialism.

Sector or sub-sector?

DPEP is a primary education programme. Although there is now an increasing awareness of the need for concern about strengthening post-primary education and making linkages between DPDP and the next stages of education, this was not raised during the early DPEP strategy development phases.

3. Conclusions and Observations

3.1 Overall Observations

The SWAp context is uneven

Despite donor efforts to make the 'swap' concept more oriented to goals and processes rather than 'pre-conditions' there is still a lack of examples of country cases which conform to the generally accepted descriptions of a SWAp. Of our three country cases, only Uganda can be seen as being in the full sense a sector-wide approach. In India the programme is at sub-sector level (primary education) and the GoI does not recognise DPEP as a 'SWAp'. Furthermore, donors offer financial support at the State level, selecting their own focus states – thus to some extent avoiding the need to work on a co-ordinated approach. In Ghana there is

no consensus among the principle actors as to exactly what the policy framework is for the sector – with a number of different documents cited by different actors in different contexts. In the absence of a commonly agreed policy framework it is difficult to make out that this conforms to the basic description of a sector-wide approach.

3.2 Common points arising from the 3 case studies

Goals, targets and objectives

In each of the three cases the country subscribes to sector-wide goals of gender equality, but the ability for this to be translated into local initiatives which make progress towards this goal varies considerably. The documented commitment at central government level is often framed within an overall goal of achieving universal primary education – but includes specific targets for girls' enrolment and female literacy.

Focus on 'gendered access', more than 'gendered quality'

In each of the three country cases there is a tendency to focus on issues of gendered access to education – specifically on expanding female enrolments in basic education. Issues of gender differential in the quality of education and in achieving education outcomes receive much less profile. The links between supply side or quality issues such as curriculum, text books, pedagogy, and teachers training, gender equity and participation and achievement in schools are rarely overtly made and - these issues tend to be overlooked in the education programme strategies.

Disunity of approach in the support given for gender mainstreaming from the donor community

The donor 'voice' on advocating gender equality goals in SWAs is inconsistent. While there are many examples of sensitive and effective practice, some cases were found where representatives of key donor agencies were not committed to promoting a gender mainstreaming approach. Sector specialists do not necessarily have a clear understanding of gender mainstreaming and what this should mean for implementation in their area of specialisation. Specialists on economics and institutional change do not always understand the relevance of gender issues to their areas of concern. Frequently there are weaknesses of communication within agencies between cross-cutting departments with responsibility for promoting gender and sector specialists and mainstream managers. In interviews in the view was articulated by some donor staff in two of the three countries that gender concerns are a Western agenda which does not enjoy support from within recipient countries. This misapprehension appears to derive principally from a lack of appreciation of the gendered nature of power relations, and lack of familiarity with indigenous movements and constituencies for women's rights.

A focus on basic education is understandable – but weakens the potential for promoting gender equality

An understandable concentration on primary and basic education is common, but the acknowledgement of the importance of a coherent progress strategy into post-basic education could be strengthened even in sector (rather than sub-sector) programmes. An enhanced focus on increasing opportunities for girls in post-basic education would strengthen the incentive for households to take seriously primary education for all children. There are signs of policy evolving in this direction. Both Uganda and Ghana have introduced gender equality targets for the higher levels of education. Uganda is seeking to address the issue of gender in its strategic plan for the secondary sector – although there are genuine problems of constrained resources.

3.3 Differences of Experience

The three countries included in the study display a variation of context which make generalisation difficult, but do provide some useful pointers to possible ways forward. The main differences are:

Different understandings of gender issues

The gender constructs of the three countries not only different between the three, but within the countries in question. This reconfirms the need for a local focus on gender analysis and the development of localised strategies.

Differences in coherence and leadership in overall sector policy

Although the government commitment to the delivery of a coherent education system is clear, the degree of leadership and ownership displayed varies. Where strong leadership exists within government and within an education ministry a sector programme is more likely to show early signs of coherence and success. The implications of this for gender mainstreaming are that, without this coherence, gender equality objectives will be equally incoherent.

Differences in the form and history of commitment to gender goals

The experience of the three countries is quite different in historical commitment to and implementation of programmes for women's equality. In the Ghana case, despite the lack of strength in the SWAp, a strong programme addressing girls access to school, and to a lesser degree performance in school (with a focus on maths and science education for girls) exists. Gender targeted programmes pre-date the strategic planning process. In India, a tendency towards 'policy evaporation' in gender goals is observed (strong at the centre but weakening in local implementation) which seems to be a consequence of the lack of local level initiatives towards gender equality, and the intractable nature of gender disadvantage in many contexts. Uganda has a short history of active engagement towards gender equality compared to the other two cases, but the issue enjoys strong support from the current political leadership ably backed by an effective Ministry of Finance and Planning.

Differences in the context and approach to poverty reduction

The degree of poverty experienced varies considerably within and between the three countries. However, the way poverty impacts on women and men and what consequences this has for children's education are similar. Girls education tends to be the first to be affected where household costs are incurred for education; boys education is affected where economic opportunities exist, usually from the higher grades of primary. The responses to poverty of the three countries are different. One striking anomaly in Ghana is the considerable cost involved in attending school, despite the provision of a 'free' government service. In Uganda the UPE policy of ensuring that education is free for the first four children, at least two of whom are girls, has made a significant impact on enrolment, particularly for girls. India is difficult to generalise as each State pursues its own strategies.

Differences in the size, scale and complexity of national social, political and administrative structures

The federal structure of the Indian nation state causes particular complications. The Pakistan example included in the literature review confirms the difficulties that are encountered where Provinces or States have autonomy over certain aspects of education policy but not others. In both of these examples, the stark contrasts between different areas in the one country indicate that very different types of strategies are required. The pace of change that can be expected in these vastly varied contexts and how those changes are initiated will be different - and one national programme is unlikely to be able to deal with these differences without considerable

inbuilt flexibility. On the positive side – India’s federal structure and the high level of local decentralisation also makes space for creativity and innovation.

4. Lessons learned and challenges for the practice of SWAp in education

4.1 Ten principle ‘lessons learned’ from the study

- 1) Compared to a situation where donor agencies are pursuing support to an education sector through project interventions – the transition to an effective SWAp should enable an enhanced capacity to promote a gender mainstreaming approach through the sector. This is dependent on a number of other conditions – most notably the SWAp functioning with a minimum level of coherence. These conditions apply unevenly in the three case study countries – so the full potential of SWAp for promoting gender mainstreaming in country sector policy and implementation is not currently being realised.
- 2) For education SWAp to maximise their potential for promoting gender equality, a strong general policy of gender equality is required at the national level, with a supporting institutional framework, widely implemented and donor-backed. A SWAp cannot create the conditions necessary to drive change in the sector on its own. Strong political commitment within and beyond the sector – and incentives to deliver are essential. Recognition of the international human rights framework for gender and education in a country’s constitutional and policy frameworks helps to create the conditions for this.
- 3) It is important to recognise ‘mainstreaming’ as a process which needs to permeate the whole programme. In the absence of this the gender issue tends to be perceived as a simple issue of increasing girls’ enrolments – without attention to wider issues of gendered quality and outcomes, and structures of power and authority which impede the realisation of gender equality.
- 4) Carrying out a thorough overall diagnosis of the constraints to achieving gender equity within the sector early in the process of formulating the policy framework for the SWAp is potentially valuable for highlighting strategies and policy measures which can then be incorporated in plans and budgets. This is an area where, on the evidence of the case studies, practice could in future be strengthened.
- 5) Goals and targets are of key importance, clearly defined and locally specific – and properly resourced in both financial and technical terms. In education these should cover gendered dimensions of access, retention, attendance (participation) achievement and transition to post primary opportunities.
- 6) Systems of information – relating to the gender context, to inputs (e.g. budgets), outputs and outcomes need to be capable of generating gender disaggregated analysis. The Uganda case illustrates the potential value of incorporating qualitative and participatory components into a national poverty monitoring system for ensuring that issues of service quality and access emerge strongly at the level of the national policy debate.
- 7) It is important to recognise that ‘one size’ does not fit all – country and locally specific gender analysis is required as a basis for action. The policy of putting in place District Girls Education Officers in Ghana – and training them in Participatory Learning and Action methodologies – offers an encouraging example of the way that this might be institutionalised.
- 8) SWAp are at their strongest when they act as a vehicle to promote decentralisation of decision making and empower local structures to find contextual solutions to the complex challenges of promoting gender equality.
- 9) A fully rounded gender perspective is an important starting point, but a specific focus on girls’ education can be justified as a practical tool to guide implementation, and mobilise support within and outside the sector institutions.

- 10) Gender mainstreaming needs a supportive constituency within the national institutions involved in the SWAp process to be sustainable in the long run. Pressure for change needs to come from civil society, specialists in government agencies, political representatives, as well as donors.

4.2 Ten challenges for improving the impact of education SWAps on gender equality

1. *Moving the focus from gendered access to a gendered approach to quality and outcomes*

All of the three case studies showed evidence of admirable and serious commitment to improving the access of girls to basic education. In some cases this was seen as having been taken care of by the policy aspiration of universal access – but other notable efforts have also been made (for example the specification of household level entitlements for girls in the system of allocating four free places per household in Uganda).

In all three cases a major challenge is to build on the demonstrated commitment to ensuring equitable access, by focusing on measures to promote equitable quality of education between the genders.

Moving beyond issues of gendered access to gendered quality involves a heightened focus across all parts of the institutional and policy framework in the sector – including such areas as curriculum development, text book production, pre-service and in-service training. If access goals only are being addressed these are areas which might receive little attention from a gender perspective.

2. *Strengthening the transmission of commitment to gender equity in SWAps from central to local institutions*

The studies found that formal commitment to objectives relating to gender (whether in a GAD or WID framework) tended to be strong at the centre – but to be subject to ‘policy evaporation’ as policy and implementation moved from the central to the local. This highlights the weaknesses of a ‘top-down’ planning approach to gender mainstreaming.

3. *Using the SWAp process to create space for bottom-up pressure for enhancing gender equity*

In our three case studies the ‘SWAp’ process had worked primarily to strengthen approaches to mainstreaming gender equity through donor negotiation with national institutions. In the long run the focus for making institutions accountable for delivering better outcomes for education for all groups suffering social disadvantage needs to shift from donor agencies to domestic constituencies for change. This requires changes in donor strategies and thinking – including paying more attention to strengthening poverty and gender advocacy ‘voices’ in structures of sector governance – and improving public information flows. The development of gender disaggregated information systems (including approaches to gender budgeting) will be important.

4. *Improving the diagnosis of gender issues within the sector programme – and the application of the diagnosis to the development of policy measures to enhance gender equity*

The level to which an analysis of gender issues had preceded the development of the SWAp policy framework varied in the three cases. In many instances the sense that gender was about *access* issues only led to an assumption that a policy of Universal Basic Education was all that was necessary in this field. Opportunities were thus missed (for example in Uganda) to further strengthen the gender outcomes of the programme by designing a coherent approach to gender mainstreaming from the start of the SWAp.

Compared to a framework for partnership based on projects negotiated with individual donor agencies, the SWAp framework offers a greatly increased potential for linking the analysis of issues of gender disadvantage to mainstreamed policy change. Through the medium of the SWAp's programme of work linkages can be established between a diagnosis of key issues to be tackled, appropriate policy responses, and the budgetary and institutional changes which will be needed to ensure implementation follows on a national and system-wide scale. In order to implement such an ambitious agenda, however, it would be important that the diagnostic process took account of the gendered nature of power and authority within institutions and communities – to identify blockages and constraints which pertain to women's lack of voice and decision-making authority.

5. *Maintaining spaces for diversity of response to issues of promoting gender equity at the local level within the SWAp framework*

One of the common fears in relation to SWAps is that the space for local action which is appropriate in the variable contexts which exist at the micro level will diminish in the face of a unified programme of funding support from donors. All of our case studies provide evidence that this is not necessarily the case. With appropriate decentralisation the space for innovation and locally appropriate response can be maintained and even enhanced.

6. *Improving the capacity of SWAps to tackle constraints to gender equity which lie outside the institutions of the education sector (e.g. child domestic and productive responsibilities)*

The toughest challenges which face education SWAps in pursuing the mainstreaming of gender equity lie in addressing issues which are outside of the framework of institutions usually understood to comprise the sector. There are some examples of initiatives to address barriers to access which derive from the broader social and political environment (e.g. initiatives to escort girls to school in some parts of India). Increasingly as institutions in the education sector more effectively take gender into account these cross-cutting issues will be the most important challenges. A robust and effective poverty monitoring system, incorporating a qualitative component, can play a vital role in highlighting cross-sectoral policy issues. This is illustrated by the work carried out under the auspices of the Poverty Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in Uganda.

7. *Encouraging decentralised responsibility for analysis and policy development through capacity building at school and community level supported by responsive district administrations*

The decentralisation of authority is critical for allowing local level systems to develop solutions appropriate to their micro-level contexts. Building awareness and capacity for gender analysis and mainstreaming at the local level needs to form part of this process.

8. *Developing improved approaches to reducing gender bias within key institutions relating to education, including community level structures and local and national structures of political representation, as well as sector institutions.*

Institutional change is critical to achieving a ‘gender mainstreaming’ approach to the education sector. One of the particular strengths of SWAps is their capacity to promote this – but until now more attention has been focused on issues of basic management effectiveness than social policy concerns.

9. *Strengthening methods and institutional capacity to monitor the achievement of gender equality outcomes*

The setting of targets and benchmarks is a powerful way of promoting institutional change. Improving our capacity to measure progress in gender equality of outcomes in education will enable the process of ‘benchmarking’ to be more powerful in terms of promoting such change. Civil society and community-level participation in setting and monitoring such outcomes will enhance the framework for accountability of public policy within the education sector.

10. *Strengthening commitment, co-ordination and consistency of approach to gender mainstreaming in the donor community*

The three case studies demonstrate that the donor community has some way to go before the frameworks outlined in the DAC guidelines are effectively and consistently operationalised. Weaknesses of co-ordination within and between donors need to be addressed. Changing policy based on DAC guidelines is relatively easy; getting understanding is a greater challenge. This cannot be achieved simply by circulation of policy documents, but requires concerted, consistent and coherent reiteration, accompanied by support from expert advisers. Strengthening of intra-donor linkages, especially between social development/gender units and sector-specific units might be required for effective change to take place in many cases.

1: Introduction

1.1 Study Objectives

This synthesis report outlines the findings of a three-country study of efforts to incorporate gender equality objectives into the mainstream of Education Sector Wide Approaches (SWAs) in the education sector. The study forms part of a work programme co-ordinated by the Working Party on Gender Equality (WP-GEN) of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Similar studies in the agriculture and health sectors have been undertaken separately.

The aim of the country studies was to research whether and how the education sector programme has enabled a more coherent approach to gender mainstreaming, or has the potential to do so. Ghana, India and Uganda were selected as the three countries for the study, each providing a comparative situation of a reasonably long-standing experience of education sector programmes.

The overall purpose of the study was taken to be providing – on the basis of the three country experiences supported by other country SWAp literature – practical guidelines to good practice in mainstreaming gender equality into the planning and implementation of education SWAs. This will in turn input into a broader piece of work published by the DAC which will set out concepts, approaches and tools for gender mainstreaming in SWAs. The Terms of Reference for the study are provided in annex 1.

This synthesis report starts with an outline of the general approach taken and the methodology used. The introductory chapter also introduces the key concepts, the major sector-specific gender issues relating to education, and the case study examples.

1.2 Report of the case study process and the premises upon which these were conducted.

Teams of two researchers visited each of the countries included in the study. The research was considerably facilitated as the team leader in the case of both India and Uganda had intimate knowledge of the education sector programme being explored, and in Ghana background information and access to key informants was made readily available.

As anticipated in the inception report, the biggest constraint to completing the study was time. With only ten days available in country, the most effective approach was through secondary literature and semi-structured and unstructured interviewing of those involved in the education sector programme. The latter were mostly secondary stakeholders, although in Ghana it was possible to visit schools in one district to talk to teachers and children in primary grades. Annex 2 lists those interviewed in each country.

In all cases it was possible to make contacts with a considerable number of Government officers in many sections, although the numbers interviewed and the mix of institutions contacted varied. The following contacts were made in each country:

- Ministry of Education and related education ministry service providers
- Education sector institutions (such as teacher training institutes, curriculum development and materials development)
- Other government ministries
- Sub-national level officers (e.g. Divisions and Districts)
- Politicians and representative bodies

Similarly, as anticipated in the Inception Report, there were extensive interviews with key donor agency, development partner, contacts. These included:

- Donors with involvement in the SWAp in the countries studied.
- Donors with long standing involvement in education in that country, but not necessarily engaged in the SWAp process or practice.

Contact with civil society actors included:

- Major non-state providers of education, mostly International NGOs
- Advocacy voices for gender and children
- Specialists in gender and education from the academic community

The literature review has provided an annotated bibliography of information related to three main areas of interest:

- General literature on SWAps
- General literature on gender mainstreaming in education
- Country specific information on gender mainstreaming in the SWAp process and practice.

The research team when considering their task of identifying if a ‘comprehensively gender-sensitive SWAp’ was practised outlined five key questions which needed to be answered during the country studies. These were: does the SWAp

1. Identify and address gender-specific barriers to access and achievement?
2. Take measures to promote non-discriminatory cultures in schools and all educational institutions?
3. Identify gender-specific needs and priorities in consultation with children and communities, and take measures to address these?
4. Establish gender-disaggregated targets/monitoring mechanisms and processes of analysis and feedback into policy?
5. Adequately and appropriately finance its measures to ensure gender mainstreaming in a way that is effective on the ground?

These questions were related to the objectives of the study as outlined in the Terms of Reference (annex 1).

1.3 General comments on process, methodology and limitations of the studies

The fieldwork proceeded on a tight timescale – but without experiencing major constraints or problems. A couple of reasons for this are worth highlighting:

Firstly, in each country informants were exceedingly generous with their time and with their knowledge. There was a remarkable degree of openness in providing information to the researchers, without which the study would not have had such a positive outcome. This applied equally to government, non-government, donor and civil society informants.

Secondly, overall the level of support provided by DFID central and country departments in logistics and programme organisation at short notice and urgently required was remarkable.

The researchers acknowledge the importance of these factors.

In addition, having a large team of researchers rather than relying on one or two as had originally been suggested, was valuable. Not only did this enable simultaneous activities to take place it also gave an opportunity to provide country experts for each of the countries in question. The range of knowledge and the combined skills of the team provided greater opportunities for synergy.

The major limitations of this study have been the minimal opportunity to use participatory methods other than interviews, and the lack of primary stakeholder voice in the analysis. The latter is clearly a limitation, as assertions of successful implementation of initiatives cannot be judged without direct reference to those who are supposed to benefit from those initiatives. This point must be borne in mind during the reading of this report, and in any interpretation of information provided.

1.4 Introductory observations on gender equity issues in education SWAp

The key concepts relating to this study (gender mainstreaming and sector-wide approaches) are explored in the second chapter. For now it is sufficient to note that the working definitions of the concepts of gender equality and gender mainstreaming were taken from the work of the DAC¹. The working definition of the concept of the Sector-Wide Approach is taken from the DFID policy document Learning Opportunities for All (1999).

A WORKING DEFINITION OF A SECTOR WIDE APPROACH (SWAp)

Governments define a macro-economic framework within which Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks determine the resources available for individual sectors

Governments lead a consultative process with stakeholders and investors, including development agencies to define:

- *an overall sector policy framework*
- *priorities, objectives and performance measures*
- *expenditure programmes*
- *institutional reform and capacity building*
- *jointly agreed management, reporting and accounting arrangements*

Major donors jointly support the process and the practice of the sector programme, preferably using common procedures

Technical assistance is commissioned by governments rather than donor agencies

Sector-wide approaches in education in developing countries tend to be intimately bound in with national goals for expanding coverage of basic education. Universal access to Basic and Primary Education is internationally acknowledged as not only desirable, but as a basic human right. There is recognition that in many countries particular sections of the population are less well served than others in access to education. In most developing countries it is generally the case that girls are less able to get into school, regularly attend and stay at school through to completion of primary or beyond. Although in some developing countries there is a burgeoning private education sector, largely as a response to inadequate and unattractive state schooling, it is generally the case that the State is expected to provide physically accessible schooling meeting a set of prescribed standards (such as the teacher:pupil ratio, teachers with recognised qualifications, an agreed curriculum). Lack of resources and poor management leading to internal inefficiency has led many developing countries to seek and accept donor support for both quantitative and qualitative improvements to their education systems. It has also frequently led to an increasing cost burden falling on parents and

¹ In particular the DAC *Sourcebook on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality* (1998) and the DAC *Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation* (1999).

communities in supporting education provision – which has often had a gendered dimension in that households facing the need to ration due to cost, place emphasis on access to education by boys.

Aside from the capacity of parents to meet cost burdens associated with schooling (which include the opportunity costs of the loss of domestic and productive labour) a range of other issues from outside the sector impact heavily on the ability of education systems to produce outcomes that reflect gender equity. These include: vulnerability of girls to harassment while travelling; domestic and other labour burdens on boys and girls; differential norms in terms of marriage systems; differential perceived returns on education investment by households, reflecting gender bias and discrimination in the labour market.

In many countries heavy reliance on external funding has led to considerable confusion as donors bring with them their own education and aid agenda, and the country Governments have found it difficult to coordinate these disparate inputs. Ownership of change has often visibly been seen as belonging to the funding agent, not to the Ministry. Views on pedagogy, on the nature and content of teacher training programmes, of the curriculum and of the suitability of particular teaching and learning aids varies between education advisers of donor countries, and between individuals providing technical assistance. How, or, in some cases, if, equity issues, including gender but also poverty, ethnicity and language, are incorporated throughout all of these concerns varies from one organisation to another. One lead organisation is required to ensure that these views come together in a coherent package that is an Education System.

From this description it might be seen how the desirability of a sector-wide approach has emerged as a common view in development agencies concerned with education. Such an approach is thought to enable a coherence to develop and to overcome some of the problems of lack of co-ordination that have been evident in the past.

Although a 'Sector-Wide Approach' implies the whole sector, emphasis continues to focus on the areas of greatest need which is for all children to have access to basic and primary education. In some, but not all, countries the need to co-ordinate between the sub-sectors has been incorporated into the approach of the SWAp. This is important for several reasons, not least the need to produce a financing strategy which distributes funds appropriately between Primary, Secondary, Tertiary or Higher education, vocational or technical training, and in some places, non-formal education and adult education. The linkages between sub-sectors (with increasing access to primary education fuelling demand for education at higher levels) also indicates the need for sector-wide planning. The disproportionate allocation of funds to higher levels of an education system at the expense of primary education has been identified by some as undermining National goals of UPE, and to particularly benefit the middle classes who are the most likely to progress through to higher education.

Finance is one major concern, but from an education perspective there are sub-sectoral concerns which indicate the attractiveness of a SWAp. The curriculum needs to flow consistently and rationally through grades and from primary, through secondary and on to higher or technical education. The fewer numbers of females progressing to higher education compared to males is an issue which needs to be addressed from the primary level. Girls need to be encouraged through teachers who are aware of the socialisation processes taking place within and beyond the school boundary which do not generate motivation for educational attainment. Socialisation processes affecting boys attitudes towards their roles, the roles of their sisters, future life partners and their mothers need also to be acknowledged and fed into the curriculum and delivered through able and aware teachers. This leads to assumptions about and considerations of teacher training requirements for the whole sector. How teacher career structures might link across sub-sectors and with teacher training programmes (both

pre-service and continuing or in-service provisions) has also to be addressed during the development of those programmes.

In summary, assessments of gender mainstreaming in an education SWAp need to look at the sub-sectoral, cross-sectoral and intra-sectoral components and linkages.

1.5 Introducing the case study countries

Before proceeding we will provide a brief descriptive summary of each of the case study examples.

1.5.1 Uganda

General Outline

The government is committed to a SWAp, the Education Strategic Investment Programme (ESIP), which is fully supported by the international donors, the co-funding agencies. The development of the ESIP has been a government led process with the collaboration of the major donors. From the outset girls' education has been given a high priority. The Ugandan Universal Primary Education policy included the provision of free education to four children in each household, at least two of whom are to be girls. There is strong support for gender equality goals from the country's political leadership, and from the influential Ministry of Finance, which takes an unusually active role in social policy. The inclusion of elements of economic and social rights within Uganda's constitution helps to underpin efforts to mainstream gender equality in policies and programmes. Within the ESIP objectives gender is better articulated in relation to access than gender related quality issues. There is an assumption of gender neutrality in many of the priority objectives. Poverty and the strength of the patriarchal social constructs constrain responsiveness to government led change, although the UPE policy has produced dramatic results. Despite effective decentralisation of education development initiatives and some positive moves towards gender equality, women are not able to participate equally with men. This is particularly the case at school level with teaching and school management, but also applies with policy-making, management, monitoring and implementation in the education sector and more broadly.

Uganda's policy framework shows a strong commitment to poverty reduction, backed up by an information system for monitoring the impact of policy which includes participatory qualitative studies as well as quantitative measures from household surveys. Relatively strong economic growth has been achieved in Uganda in the last ten years - a period which comprises a long, steady recovery from the years of conflict. A major current concern is that the poorest groups are not benefiting adequately from the growth process.

Donor support to gender equality

While donors seem to share a broad vision on gender equality, this is not yet articulated as a clear common commitment as is the case with universal primary education. This appears to be linked to a misconception that 'gender is a Western agenda' and a perception that too assertive an approach will compromise Ministry ownership. This is frustrating to those many Ugandans at different levels in the system who are themselves committed to the gender equity goals. There is an understanding of the inseparable gender dimensions of sustainable development, and they are attempting to respond to the strong momentum coming from the grassroots of Ugandan society.

Sector or sub-sector?

The ESIP is a sector programme, although the focus has been and currently is on basic and primary education. The UPE strategy was instrumental in getting the government to focus on the introduction of a sector programme. Planned improvements to post-primary education

will receive more priority at later stages in the ESIP when the increased demand filters through from the primary sub-sector.

Positive features and learning points

The ESIP in Uganda highlights some useful pointers for effective gender mainstreaming:

- The inclusion of a specific gender element in the UPE entitlement (two out of four children per household with costs waived must be girls) – widely communicated in Ugandan society and with very broad public support – provided a strong symbol of high level support for gender mainstreaming, with many ‘downstream’ benefits.
- The Ministry of Finance performs an effective ‘challenge’ function in terms of social development goals with line ministries – backed by a poverty monitoring system which includes a ‘participatory poverty assessment process’ that effectively highlights real local constraints to achieving gender equality and poverty reduction. This strengthens the hand of those working to gender equality goals in the education system.
- Social objectives (including gender) are backed up by financing systems seeking to promote decentralised responsibility and equitable outcomes. Schools receive capitation grants in line with UPE criteria, and the School Facilities Grant prioritises poorer schools and makes separate-sex latrine provision compulsory.
- The incorporation of a “twin-track” approach into the SWAp, where targeted programmes support a strong mainstream policy focus on social inclusion. The ESIP includes a pragmatic “Disadvantaged Groups Programme”. Funding is made available for alternative forms of education for “hard to reach” groups of children, (within which girls often have a double disadvantage) for facilitators’ salaries, monitoring etc., which makes it possible to sustain successful targeted projects in the medium term.

1.5.2 Ghana

General outline

At the highest level of Government and within the National Development Planning Commission there is support for strategic planning and the development of sector programmes. However, there is lack of coherence in the education sector, with multiple articulations of programmes. Although attempts were made by donors to support the government in the development of a Basic Education Sector Improvement Project (BESIP) this has not enjoyed continued support from the government, or from the donor community (the development partners). Perhaps the nearest the government comes to a donor supported SWAp is the sub-sectoral programme of fCUBE – free compulsory universal basic education. There is at least widespread support for the fCUBE objectives of enhanced access, quality and equity – although the fCUBE documentation does not outline a coherent strategy for achievement of these. Donor coordination is weak, and there continue to be many different donor projects not all linked directly into the sector programme.

There is a good environment for the incorporation of gender equity considerations, with a long term government commitment to gender equity. Access and participation are the main focus of the gender activities, which tend to be specific activities rather than integrated into broader actions.

Poverty reduction has a lower profile in policy debate than in Uganda. Overall growth rates are modest (c. 4 % p.a.), and the poorest are seeing no improvement in their situation. There is little sign of improvement in relation to the major issue in poverty – the wide regional disparities, especially between the better endowed southern parts of the country and the northern sector which has high levels of deprivation by any measure.

Donor support to gender equality

As with the other two countries, there is some disunity in approach to gender mainstreaming. Many similar points were reiterated in the Ghanaian context: the misguided view that gender equity concerns are a Western feminist agenda; poor communication between gender specialists within donor bodies and their sector specific specialists; and the continuing focus on project work perpetuating the implementation of different strategies.

Sector or sub-sector

There is a relatively strong sub-sectoral programme, the fCUBE, but, despite an outline of the content of a sector wide programme, no convincing and detailed programme for post basic has been articulated. Basic education covers 8 years, including as it does Junior Secondary grades. This is both an advantage (encouraging a perception of minimum education being of a longer time period) and a disadvantage (resources and funds appear to be concentrated on the higher grades to the detriment of the primary grades).

Positive features and learning points

The lack of an agreed policy framework for a SWAp alluded to above has weakened the potential for system-wide change in Ghana in terms of gender mainstreaming. The establishment of a ‘Girls’ Education Unit’ in the Ghana Education Service in 1997 has provided a central focus for the issue – but is sometimes seen as distracting from a mainstreaming approach by providing an excuse for other parts of the system to ignore the issue. Nonetheless there are some very positive initiatives in Ghana – especially at the District level where achieving policy and programme coherence is perhaps easier:

- The successful introduction of District Girls Education Officers is a valuable management tool for the introduction of local initiatives to address constraints to girl’s full participation in school. A gradual process is underway to give participatory learning and action (PLA) training to all the DGEOs, this training being provided directly by the GEU staff. The DGEOs themselves are introducing an incremental programme of PLA activities with schools and their surrounding community representatives. Interestingly, this gradual process of incorporation of schools and communities is permitting a rather more sophisticated gender analysis to take place at a local level than at the national level. Both men and women are included in the PLA activities which are designed in such a way that girls and boys, male and female roles and relationships are explored. These are then linked to gender specific constraints to education and the locally specific and locally possible means of overcoming them identified. It may take a considerable time for a critical mass of awareness and understanding of gender concerns related to education to be developed, but this bottom-up approach appears to have a greater potential for success than a centrally determined policy intervention.
- The fact that the DGEO has a place on the district education planning team means that the opportunity exists for locally specific information to be disseminated within the district, and be included in planning processes.
- The GEU has promoted improvements to the content of text books through a gender and equity analysis of current texts. This was followed by the training of Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) staff, master trainers and publishers in gender analysis of texts.

1.5.3 India

General outline

The federal government is leading the development of a sub-sector programme. The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) is a centrally sponsored scheme of the GOI; supported by international donors. It does not have national coverage, although 193 districts in 15 states are now involved. Decentralisation is a key feature of the programme, with

Districts being encouraged to develop their own strategies within certain centrally determined parameters. In a country of the size and diversity of India it is difficult to make generalisations. In the report on DPEP, gender is explored with reference to the complex interactions with poverty, caste, ethnicity and other cross-cutting issues. On every count, females are disadvantaged in Indian society, but the manifestation of this disadvantage varies dramatically. Gender equity is high on the government agenda at policy level, but is less obvious at school level. The attitudes of the different state's administrations vary towards support for and engagement with gender related activities. The start point for improving gender equity is exceedingly low. The disadvantages are so fundamental that gender equity activities tend to get rapidly diluted and ineffectual the closer they get to household level.

DPEP is not a self-consciously defined SWAp, although a comparison of the programme with the key characteristics of a SWAp leads to a conclusion that it does bear many of these characteristics. One of the major challenges in terms of donor support to the programme is the fact that the government is relatively wary of formal policy dialogue with donors. Support for the education sector is largely being focussed at State level, with an implicit agreement that particular states have specific support from one or more donor.

Donor support to gender equality

There is no one donor voice on the most appropriate responses to gender equity in DPEP. The sub-division of support focused on different states exacerbates a lack of uniformity. As well as these inter-donor differences, there are intra-donor communication problems. Sector-specific specialists do not necessarily have a clear understanding of gender mainstreaming and what this should mean for implementation in their area of specialism.

Sector or sub-sector?

DPEP is a primary education programme. Although there is now an increasing awareness of the need for concern about strengthening post-primary education and making linkages between DPEP and the next stages of education, this was not raised during the early DPEP strategy development phases.

Positive features and learning points

- A high level of decentralisation and devolution creates the opportunity for context-appropriate solutions to promoting gender equality to emerge at the local level.
- The DPEP programme – with high political visibility as a federal programme – has raised the profile of gender issues in education effectively across many parts of India.
- DPEP has created some opportunities for cross-state learning on gender issues. State Gender Co-ordinators from across the country meet regularly to address issues, compare experiences and exchange ideas.
- There is a willingness to tackle issues beyond the education sector in some instances (for example programmes in some areas to escort girls to school) – and to make links to wider initiatives in the area of gender equality, such as the Lok Jumbish initiative to promote gender sensitive management.

Chapter three will explore the wider lessons drawn from these three studies, and the literature review, following the review of the conceptual framework for the study in the next chapter.

2: Exploration of Key Concepts

In this section, the definitions of the two key concepts, gender mainstreaming and sector wide approaches, which were outlined in the Inception Report of the study are revisited in light of our experiences. Each sub-section enlarges on the education specific issues related to the theory and practice of gender mainstreaming and sector wide approaches as they arose during the study.

2.1 Gender

The DAC definitions of key terms related to gender were followed. Gender “ refers to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female. In most societies, men and women differ in the activities they undertake, in access and control of resources, and in participation in decision-making. In most societies, women as a group have less access than men to resources, opportunities and decision-making. The nature of gender definitions and patterns of inequality vary among cultures and change over time. A recognition of this variability assists in the analysis of socio-economic contexts and relationships and the possibilities for change.” (Taken from OECD DAC (1999) DAC Guidelines for gender equality and women’s empowerment in development co-operation, pp. 12-13)

This definition is of significance for the study itself. One of the noticeable features of the three countries included in the study are their remarkable differences in terms of gender structures and gender relationships. These differences have significant implications for the potentials for success of initiatives designed to move towards gender equity. From DAC definitions we note that **Gender equality** implies:

- Equal enjoyment by women and men of socially-valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards
- Women and men have equal opportunities to define gender equality and work together towards it
- Changes in institutional practices and social relations through which inequalities are produced and sustained
- A strong voice for women in shaping their societies

Gender equality does not mean:

- That men and women become the same
- Uniformity of gender roles across cultures
- Necessarily equal treatment of men and women: this can perpetuate existing disparities

(Adapted from: OECD DAC (1999) DAC Guidelines for gender equality and women’s empowerment in development co-operation, p. 13)

2.2 Gender Mainstreaming

Our review of literature examined the history of the concepts of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Moser (1989) charts the key changes in approach to gender in development, from an ad hoc “welfarist” approach, through various “WID”(Women in Development) approaches which recognise the specific contribution of women to development and the need for targeting of women in projects, towards an “empowerment” approach which is concerned with a grassroots struggle led by women to meet their own identified contextual strategic needs. Young (1992) identifies and expands upon an emerging “GAD” (Gender and

Development) approach, which analyses the power relationships between males and females and seeks to equalise these. It is recognised that “empowerment” is not achievable at the grassroots level alone. It implies the “mainstreaming” of gender into all development policies and strategies and the analysis of how they impact upon, and meet the identified needs of, both males and females.

The Beijing 1995 Platform For Action espouses the GAD approach, but uses a more practical language of “gender mainstreaming”. This framework defines two main strands as the integration of gender in policy analysis and formulation, and ensuring that the priorities of women as well as men are heard in participatory consultation and development processes. The DAC Definition of Gender Mainstreaming, drawn from the PFA, has been used to guide the Education and other sector studies. The term “Gender Mainstreaming” is key to a body of subsequent literature and has been quite widely adopted by donors, and is defined as follows:

...Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively. (Beijing Platform for Action (1995) para 202)

According to DAC guidelines, a **mainstreaming strategy** has two major aspects:

- The integration of gender equality concerns into the analyses and formulation of all policies, programmes and projects;
- Initiatives to enable women as well as men to formulate and express their views and participate in decision-making across all development issues

A mainstreaming strategy does not preclude initiatives specifically directed towards women. Similarly, initiatives targeted directly to men are necessary and complementary as long as they promote gender equality. (OECD DAC (1999) DAC Guidelines for gender equality and women’s empowerment in development co-operation, p. 15)

The overall literature on gender equality highlights the fact that patterns of gendered power and disadvantage are deeply embedded in different historical, social and political contexts. Actions in one sector by a limited range of institutions need to be seen in this context. In Ghana, for example, women in many southern societies enjoy a higher level of autonomy (economic and social), than in many parts of the north. The tendency for women in the south to have more autonomy (and responsibility) enhances their voice and the level of emphasis placed on developing their capabilities. This in turn leads on to greater social acceptance of the priority of educating girls equally with boys. The ‘gender gap’ in enrolments is consequently lower. This highlights the importance of systems of policy and implementation which are flexible and adaptive to local realities.

Some literature examines what gender mainstreaming means for education, mainly from the perspective of international agencies (research, advocacy and policy documents). Documents from USAID, EU, UNICEF, FAWE, DFID, the World Bank, UNICEF and the Commonwealth, as well as the DAC, summarise in very similar lists what appear to be the most commonly- needed strategies for overcoming common barriers and achieving both “equitable access” (including cost reduction, attention to demand and cultural barriers, flexible time-tabling, appropriate facilities) and “equitable quality” (action on harassment and discrimination, appropriate health and sex education, female teachers providing role models and support for girls, gender sensitive teaching approaches, curriculum and learning materials and community participation in school management).

Beyond the agreement on the types of strategy that have been proved successful in at least some contexts, the literature of different donors parts company to some extent. Some (notably

USAID and UNICEF) emphasise a coherent policy framework and set of linked strategies for “girls’ education”. This is claimed to be a mainstreamed approach, as much evidence suggests that moves to support girls will automatically affect boys positively as well. It is also asserted that it is girls who are most usually disadvantaged and that using the term “gender” can mask that fact. Others however (e.g. EU, DFID, DANIDA, SIDA) prefer to stay closer to the DAC approach, conceptualising a mainstreamed approach as a whole education system which works for girls as well as boys. While targeting is still seen as a necessary strategy, it is asserted that a focus on “girls’ education” might be misinterpreted as a “WID” approach and thus continue to be viewed as outside of mainstream education sector strategies.

Despite these differences of approach, there are nevertheless a number of points which are widely agreed, that effective progress on gender equality needs to:

- be backed by high level commitment to achieving gender equality as a part of UPE and in the context of broader development improvements
- be based on comprehensive gender-disaggregated consultation, research and analysis of educational policy and strategy
- apply a holistic approach to the sector, simultaneously addressing quality and access and enabling prioritisation of basic education but also some attention to equity at the higher levels
- be supported by appropriate institutional structures, capacity and training
- include securing realistic accountability and monitoring mechanisms, ensuring that policies do not evaporate in practice and performance
- be supported by gender –disaggregated qualitative, as well as quantitative, data, information and research for monitoring and ongoing re-appraisal and adjustment.

Two linguistic and semantic notes on the understanding of the term ‘mainstreaming’ are worth mentioning, derived from the country studies. In Ghana, the term ‘mainstreaming’ was found to have a specific meaning in the policy community, which is that a particular policy or programme is nation-wide in scope (not restricted to a particular district or region). This can lead to linguistic confusion, as donor representatives seek to discover if gender policy is ‘mainstreamed’. Obviously this kind of confusion should be fairly quickly cleared up in most circumstances, but it can still lead to significant communication failures in policy dialogue. In India some informants expressed the view that the metaphor of ‘mainstreaming’ was unfortunate insofar as it created an image of policy homogeneity being a desirable outcome – possibly stifling creativity and diversity. In a diverse country a large number of streams might better reflect good policy making than a single current? Obviously, neither of these understandings form to any extent a critique of the DAC concept – but they are useful reminders that language is context specific and that the donor community does not necessarily know the best metaphors for communicating aspirations for social justice in all contexts.

2.3 Sector-Wide Approaches

2.3.1 Defining terms...

Recognition of the need to mainstream gender, particularly since Beijing (1995), has been concurrent with profound changes in development thinking as a whole. Not only “projects targeting girls”, but projects as a whole, have come under question as an effective means of ensuring sustainable development. Harold (1995) first brings together the limitations of projects in terms of demands on local capacity, lack of ownership, problems of sustainability and undermining policy coherence in partner countries. As a proposed solution Harold outlines the “Sector Investment Programme” (SIP). However, despite the seemingly obvious links between the move towards a coherent sector-wide policy framework and strengthened financing and accountability mechanisms and opportunities for gender mainstreaming, these are not articulated in Harold’s work. The rather rigid and narrow perception of a SIP primarily

as a lending instrument for donors (in highly aid dependent African countries) perhaps carries with it the assumption that addressing the chief shortcomings of the project model will automatically overcome the poor gender outcomes, but this is not made explicit.

By 1997, with more actual country experience to draw upon, there is a shift in the literature to the concept of the “**Sector-Wide Approach**” (SWAp), well expounded by Cassels (1997) and later by Foster (1997, 1998, 1999), Jones (1997, 1999) and Ratcliffe and Macrae (1999). This is not simply a matter of changing terminology, but of an evolving concept, because the focus moves from a concern with instruments to a concern with process and outcomes. The process of developing an increasingly coherent sector, with a clear strategy to achieve key objectives, is seen as paramount, with Funding Agencies attempting to give coherent support conducive to achieving this end. Seeking common implementation arrangements as an end in itself, or too soon, has been observed (e.g. Ratcliffe and Macrae) to tend to lead to the conceptualisation of a SIP as a “big donor project”. The emerging more flexible understanding of a SWAp is relevant to a broader range of countries where key policy actors are attempting to move towards greater effectiveness of delivery in key sectors.

The working definition of the concept of the Sector-Wide Approach for the purposes of this study (see section 1.4 above) is taken from the DFID policy document Learning Opportunities for All (1999). All efforts to define SWAps need treating with some caution – as the criteria proposed generally go beyond the status of practice in all but a very small number of examples. Working definitions need to be read as indicating an intended direction of change rather than a blueprint description. It should also be noted that the approach to development co-operation described here still principally applies to the more aid dependent countries. Where donors are relatively minor players in providing resources an intrusive role in budget and planning processes is difficult to justify. The India study illustrates this point well, especially when contrasted with the two African examples. Although international donors play a major role in financial support of the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), overall aid constitutes only 0.6% of GNP. The influence of the international community on GOI programmes is significantly less, and they have to adopt a far more ‘hands-off’ approach, than in some other developing countries, not least Uganda and Ghana.

2.3.2 Social Development and Gender Issues in SWAps

With the shift to a more flexible definition seems to have come more literature focusing on how the move to a SWAp provides a series of opportunities for improving the way in which gender is mainstreamed. Bird and Norton (1998) build on Cassels’ work, exploring the growing understanding that equity outcomes won’t necessarily be achieved if not consciously articulated within a SWAp policy framework, and operationalised through well thought-out procedures. Elson and Evers argue that gender mainstreaming is not about making concessions to girls and women, but the only way of achieving key sector and broader development objectives. They argue for gender analysis in sector processes at different levels, from the setting of the national budget, down to participatory monitoring of service delivery.

Subsequent literature looks in more detail at the implementation issues. SWAps imply a system of forward budgeting and making hard choices about resources: serious attention to gender equality should be reflected in the budget and in the choices made about how resources are allocated. (Elson and Evers, Foster, Norton and Bird). In particular, there is likely to be little progress on gender equality where large numbers of poor children, particularly girls, are excluded from school because of the cost. Some other points to note from the literature looking at social development, poverty and gender issues in SWAps are as follows:

- Because of the emphasis on country leadership, SWAps are only likely to mediate donor and government goals if there is a strong commitment to poverty reduction. This should in turn provide an opportunity to seek out champions of reform on gender issues as well –

if such a commitment is placed within an overall framework emphasising goals of social justice.

- The emphasis on a process approach, and the importance of early and continuing consultation, implies that the involvement of women and girls in consultation and decision making processes is critical.
- SWAps tend to be embarked upon in the context of broader institutional reform. Opportunities need to be taken to ensure that this process enables a better representation of women in management at all levels, and in rural schools; and that capacity is built of staff in key positions of responsibility for gender analysis (Elson and Evers, Bird and Norton, WB, GTZ).
- Attention to building capacity for gender analysis and implementation of necessary targeted strategies often implies bringing NGOs/ CSOs into the SWAp structure (Bird and Norton, Kelly).
- SWAps should not imply a large centralised planning process, even less should they imply centralised implementation of a rigid “package”. Decentralisation brings with it the possibility for better planning and more decision-making at school level to address local problems to make progress on sector goals, and better accountability to poor communities. This will only happen if decentralisation is accompanied by appropriate accountability structures, policy analysis and capacity at the local level to prevent benefits from being captured by elites.

Logically, a commitment to SWAps would seem to imply a mainstreaming approach to gender, and there does indeed seem to be increased attention from those donors with a strong commitment to SWAps to facilitate gender mainstreaming. However, these agencies are challenged to ensure that “gender” is not interpreted weakly as “girls and boys”, and therefore assumed to have been “dealt with” through gender -blind interventions, but that it is viewed as a (usually unequal) dynamic which needs constant attention at all stages within a SWAp. A number of agencies are now examining the implications for their own structures and personnel needs of supporting gender mainstreaming in SWAps in education, realising the need for a complex mix of institutional, financial, economic, educational and social development skills and for effective team structures.

A concern about SWAps that is often voiced in development agencies is that the focus on government leadership from central ministries will lead to a top-down approach to policy making, marginalising civil society and community level actors, and causing donor agencies themselves to lose the diversity of experience and relationships that project interventions provided. The degree to which SWAps are shown to be a positive instrument for mainstreaming gender concerns into policy and practice can be taken as illustrating to a substantial extent whether these broader fears about SWAps are justified or not. The evidence of the country studies is not uniform. On the whole the fear of ‘top-down’ bias did not seem to be supported by our case studies – but this may be in part because all three countries have strong decentralisation policies. The country cases show different degrees of micro level involvement in the mainstreaming of gender concerns, and the degree to which donors are coordinating their activities within the programme varies considerably. The diversity of experiences and relationships being provided by project interventions is considerable within Ghana, for example, where donors are by and large pursuing their own project agenda, with varying degrees of congruence with government programme approaches and targets. In Uganda there is greater cooperation between donors and with government, but some initiatives fall outside of the remit of the sector programme. As suggested earlier, India is complicated by the Federal nature of the nation state: each of the States have autonomy beyond the set of nationally agreed norms, and each has its own education programme. Donors tend not to work at National level with the GOI but at State level, and different donors have aligned themselves to support one or more of the federal States. As is noted in the India country study report, this has led to a situation where the DPEP ‘culture’ is significantly

different in a World Bank sponsored state than in a DFID sponsored state. This is a significant departure from the ‘pooling’ of donor funds envisaged in a SWAp, and is in sharp contrast to the Uganda ESIP.

How closely the three country studies conform to the definition outlined above (1.4) is also significantly different. Annex 3 illustrates the three programmes compared to the characteristics of a sector wide approach. Only one of the three countries, Uganda ESIP, provides a typical SWAp which conforms to all dimensions of the definition used here. The DPEP in India is not a self-consciously defined SWAp, and is not recognised as such by donors or the Government. However, it does bear many of the characteristics of a SWAp. In addition, it is not a sector programme in that it addresses only the primary education sub-sector. Ghana provides a confused picture, with no one programme emerging as a coherent education sector SWAp. This is despite the introduction of an MTEF to finance the Government Vision 2020 social sector programme. There is rarely a situation where a country has a blank sheet on which to write its education programme, and in Ghana the sheet was already full with previous workings of the solution to meeting the education UPE goals. Donors had committed themselves to previous education projects and programmes, and the disjointed moves toward a broader education sector strategic plan appear not to have carried donors forward in equal measure.

Our preliminary analysis of literature and experience on education SWAps suggested that the strengths and potentials of a SWAp for furthering gender equality goals can be seen as residing in the following areas:

- the potential for improving policy coherence within the education sector and thereby enhancing the emphasis on gender equality in policies and budgets
- the potential for applying a sector-wide diagnosis of gender issues to a policy and planning process
- the longer-term time-frame implied in the approach
- the potential for enhancing linkages with the private sector and across government policies in other sectors which would reinforce the gender dimensions of education policy
- the potential to mainstream consultative and participatory approaches piloted in projects into overall sector policy.

The possible weaknesses, risks and pitfalls of SWAps from a gender perspective largely comprise the other side of the coin, namely:

- donor agency differences in procedures, agendas create difficulties in negotiating a coherent policy approach
- emphasis on macro instruments may lead to a top-down, centralised, approach unfavourable to gender focus and with weak involvement from civil society
- necessity of working with existing sector leadership and existing institutional structures may reinforce existing gender bias
- emphasis on mainstream government services may lead to lack of recognition of informal processes.

Re-visiting this analysis in light of the findings from the country studies proves to be an illustrative exercise. As can be seen from material presented in Annex 4, a mixed picture emerges, where the potential strengths of a SWAp are not uniformly met at early stages. However, not only in our three country studies but also from other examples highlighted in the literature review, it can be seen that as long as governments and donors are engaged in a constructive fashion, processes may be initiated which reinforce these potential strengths. Tanzania is an interesting example of where process has now caught up with unrealistic early expectations. One of the possible strengths of a SWAp is the longer time frame implied compared to donor funded project support. Although this does seem to be the intent, it still

seems to be the case that recipient countries are sometimes pressured into meeting timed targets that may well be unrealistic. Tanzania and Ghana are both examples where suggested time frames for substantive changes in some of the early donor documentation were unrealistically short. The importance of taking time to get institutional dimensions of the process right is a key lesson.

Returning to the points made earlier in the section on gender mainstreaming, a focus on girls or women may not meet the ideal of gender mainstreaming. It may, however, be the most appropriate pragmatic response at the particular level of gender equity currently evident, and the capacity and capability of available staff. Provided this is seen as the first stage of a process, that requires to be constructively supported, progress is possible. Criticism of such activities would be counterproductive and would undermine any process for change that might be developing. The reason for repeating this point here is to reiterate the need for governments to find their own pace of change responsive to local circumstances, and compatible with the prevailing attitudes and perceptions. Pressure may be required to ensure that the momentum for and of change is initiated, maintained and possibly increased, but too great a pressure may be misguided. This is particularly the case where capacity to deal with new and potentially taxing technocratic tools has to be built alongside the development of the institutional structures capable of housing and implementing changed approaches. Change management is often a neglected concern; the difficulties of achieving and maintaining consensus within the donor community seems to require more attention to the neglect of change management within recipient country institutions.

A challenge to improving practice in SWAp which emerges most strongly in respect of internal constraints is the difficulty that has been encountered in incorporating non-mainstream education requirements and non-government providers into the SWAp process. This may be a consequence of the early stage of development of most sector programmes, but could also be associated with the fact that clearly articulated programmes are written into government documents. The problem of incorporating flexibility into any programme, and ensuring that dynamics of change take place within the rather inflexible framework of a structured plan, is one that has exercised many minds. The interesting approach of incorporating PLA as a planning tool for decentralised planning to address girls access to schools in Ghana provides a valuable example of one way of dealing with this. This does require mechanisms to enable community and school determined actions to be supported within and by the government services, and for these to be cross-sectoral. It is not known if this is the case. As stated at the start of this report, there were no opportunities to assess the effectiveness of education sector implementation at community level. As an approach, the use of Girls Education Officers to train, supervise and monitor gender-related activities at school and community level would seem to have considerable potential for sustainable and relevant interventions.

Another potential weakness in a SWAp process identified early in the study was the contradictions that might arise where donors are not in accord. The very different approaches towards gender mainstreaming in education certainly produce a lack of coherence and unity of direction. At the least this may lead to a failure to support capacity building in country departments; more significantly, this lack of coherence may cause confusions which undermine programmes. Each donor has its own structure, sets of rules and agenda. In the case of bilateral donors these are set in the home country, often through a ministry such as the British Department for International Development; with multilateral donors the institutional systems are developed by senior representatives in the headquarters of the organisation. The important points to note, the points which have implications for SWAp are:
the diversity of systems and structures that exist and
the degrees to which there is decentralisation of decision making within the donor organisations.

If SWAps are genuinely to be government led processes partner organisations need to be able to respond to the start points of negotiations as outlined by the host government in a way compatible with the local context. Where pre-determined standard responses from briefly visiting donor representatives is the only option, this has constraints for compatibility with both a process approach, and with a government led initiative. In contrast, those donors who have considerable decentralised autonomy based in country offices are in a better position to judge the value of suggested approaches, and to be able to give immediate responses to the host government.

The difficulties of accommodating the variety of donor bureaucratic needs are clearly not insurmountable as the Uganda SWAp appears to demonstrate. But this diversity of needs and requirements does present a considerable challenge unless governments and donors commit themselves fully to ensuring positive outcomes from any negotiations.

In summary, our review suggests that an effective SWAp process can be a powerful mechanism for promoting the mainstreaming gender concerns with the education sector. In particular, we found in the three cases ample evidence of decentralisation and the ‘space’ for local action within SWAps. The fear that they will be a centralising force, crushing diversity and innovation, seems unfounded on the basis of our sample of cases. There are nevertheless still challenges which remain to be tackled if the engagement of civil society and community-level actors in a SWAp process is to be strengthened (these are discussed in the next chapter). Where SWAps fall short of the mark this may reflect a number of different problems. These mostly relate to a lack of commitment to a common approach by key partners, either to the goal of gender mainstreaming, or to making the compromises necessary to ensure that the Sector-Wide Approach itself can function with some coherence.

3: Issues and Lessons Emerging From A Comparison of Country Experience.

This chapter summarises the major lessons and issues which emerge from a comparison of the three country case studies and the literature review. It goes on to highlight ten key challenges which would need to be met if the valuable experience which has been gained so far is to be channelled into a ‘new standard’ of practice for gender mainstreaming. This challenge is important – although the results of our study showed up much good practice at the country level, the potential of the education SWAp as a vehicle for promoting gender equality is far greater than what has so far been achieved.

3.1 Common points arising from the 3 case studies

Goals, targets and objectives

In each of the three cases the country subscribes to macro-level goals of gender equality, but the ability for this to be translated into local initiatives which make progress towards this goal varies considerably. The documented commitment at central government level is often framed within an overall goal of achieving universal primary education – but includes specific targets for girls’ enrolment and female literacy.

Focus on ‘gendered access’, more than ‘gendered quality’

In each of the three country cases there is a tendency to focus on issues of gendered access to education – specifically on expanding female enrolments in basic education. Issues of gender differential in the quality of education and in achieving education outcomes receive much less profile. The links between supply side or quality issues such as curriculum, text books, pedagogy, and teachers training, gender equity and participation and achievement in schools are rarely overtly made and - these issues tend to be overlooked in the education programme strategies.

Disunity of approach in the support given for gender mainstreaming from the donor community

The donor ‘voice’ on advocating gender equality goals in SWAps is inconsistent. While there are many examples of sensitive and effective practice, some cases were found where representatives of key donor agencies were not committed to promoting a gender mainstreaming approach. Sector specialists do not necessarily have a clear understanding of gender mainstreaming and what this should mean for implementation in their area of specialisation. Specialists on economics and institutional change do not always understand the relevance of gender issues to their areas of concern. Frequently there are weaknesses of communication within agencies between cross-cutting departments with responsibility for promoting gender and sector specialists and mainstream managers. In interviews the view was articulated by some donor staff in two of the three countries that gender concerns are a Western agenda which does not enjoy support from within recipient countries. This misapprehension appears to derive principally from a lack of appreciation of the gendered nature of power relations, and lack of familiarity with indigenous movements and constituencies for women’s rights.

A focus on basic education is understandable – but weakens the potential for promoting gender equality

An understandable concentration on primary and basic education is common, but the acknowledgement of the importance of a coherent progress strategy into post-basic education could be strengthened even in sector (rather than sub-sector) programmes. An enhanced focus on increasing opportunities for girls in post-basic education would strengthen the incentive for households to take seriously primary education for all children. There are signs of policy

evolving in this direction. Both Uganda and Ghana have introduced gender equality targets for the higher levels of education. Uganda is seeking to address the issue of gender in its strategic plan for the secondary sector – although there are genuine problems of constrained resources.

3.2 Differences of Experience

The three countries included in the study display a variation of context which make generalisation difficult, but do provide some useful pointers to possible ways forward. The main differences are:

Different understandings of gender issues

The gender constructs of the three countries not only different between the three, but within the countries in question. The nature of gender inequality – its material, social, political and economic foundations – differ by context and by degree. This reconfirms the need for a local focus on gender analysis and the development of localised strategies.

Differences in coherence and leadership in overall sector policy

Although the government commitment to the delivery of a coherent education system is clear, the degree of leadership and ownership displayed varies. Where strong leadership exists within government and within an education ministry a sector programme is more likely to show early signs of coherence and success. The implications of this for gender mainstreaming are that, without this coherence, gender equality objectives will be equally incoherent. The Uganda example suggests that a firm government commitment to poverty reduction will strengthen the context for gender mainstreaming policy.

Differences in the form and history of commitment to gender goals

The experience of the three countries is quite different in historical commitment to and implementation of programmes for women's equality. In the Ghana case, despite the lack of strength in the SWAp, a strong programme addressing girls access to school, and to a lesser degree performance in school (with a focus on maths and science education for girls) exists. Gender targeted programmes pre-date the strategic planning process. In India, a tendency towards 'policy evaporation' in gender goals is observed (strong at the centre but weakening in local implementation) which seems to be a consequence of the lack of local level initiatives towards gender equality, and the intractable nature of gender disadvantage in many contexts (see box 2). Uganda has a short history of active engagement towards gender equality compared to the other two cases, but the issue enjoys strong support from the current political leadership ably backed by an effective Ministry of Finance and Planning.

Box 2 Gender Mainstreaming and ‘Policy Evaporation’

A gender mainstreaming approach does not preclude the use of targeted interventions to achieve specific goals in relation to girls’ education. There can be a tension, however, between the two. If targeted action is presumed to have ‘looked after’ the gender issue then policy makers may shirk responsibility to take action in mainstream policy and budget areas. Longwe alludes to a scenario that may develop if targeting detracts from mainstreaming, leading to a kind of ‘policy evaporation’:

‘attention to policy commitments on women’s participation or gender equality is not systematic in the planning and implementation cycle. Analyses prepared... in support of project formulation may include references to these commitments, but often in a separate section rather than as an integral part of the analysis. The policy commitment becomes increasingly less visible in the process of specifying project objectives, anticipated results, implementation strategies and evaluation. A broad commitment to improving the relative position of women and reducing gender disparities is often reduced to a “women’s component” that has a very small claim on project resources, or a focus on counting the number of women in various project activities.²

An analysis of the articulation of gender in DPEP documents reveals a number of important issues. Firstly, it seems that very often girls’ education is subsumed under a wider goal of improving access and achievement – rather than an end in itself. That is to say, educating girls is mechanistic, linked to improving productivity and other development goals as opposed to linking to wider gender issues in the Indian context.

Secondly, while a strategic focus on girls’ education may be the only realistic way forward, given the huge gender disparities evident in India, the danger is that focus on girls obscures and distracts attention from a long-term vision based on changing the complex power structures that ultimately cause the restrictions and barriers to girls participating fully in education, and thus limiting the potentially radical impact of the programme.

Thirdly, girls are often linked to other categories of disadvantage – for example the disabled, Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. This collapses the huge variety of experience and situations within the category ‘girls’, and militates against an understanding of the complex interactions of gender with, say, caste, class, and age. This also reinforces the perception that being a girl is in itself the problem, where in fact wider gender relations and gendered power structures are at the root of the problem.

Much of any potential tension between gender mainstreaming and gender targeting can be removed through achieving appropriate balance. Yet, there is a further challenge in that what might constitute “appropriate balance” should probably not be static. As capacity is built, and increased development understanding is generated and disseminated, it may be desirable that the balance should shift. An analysis of DPEP from a gender perspective reveals that the programme is seeking to reduce gender inequity through both mainstreaming and targeting. But, with so much progress having been made, it may thus now be appropriate for the balance in DPEP to shift, too. The commitment to girls’ education, clearly articulated in policy and budgets, may now have laid a foundation for more complex gender mainstreaming goals and commitments, and ones that would tend to reduce ‘policy evaporation’ of the kind described by Longwe.

² Longwe, quoted in DAC source book on concepts and approaches linked to gender equality

Differences in the context and approach to poverty reduction

The degree of poverty experienced varies considerably within and between the three countries. However, the way poverty impacts on women and men and what consequences this has for children's education are similar. Girls education tends to be the first to be affected where household costs are incurred for education; boys education is affected where economic opportunities exist, usually from the higher grades of primary. The responses to poverty of the three countries are different. One striking anomaly in Ghana is the considerable cost involved in attending school, despite the provision of a 'free' government service. In Uganda the UPE policy of ensuring that education is free for the first four children, at least two of whom are girls, has made a significant impact on enrolment, particularly for girls. India is difficult to generalise as each State pursues its own strategies.

Differences in the size, scale and complexity of national social, political and administrative structures

The federal structure of the Indian nation state causes particular complications. The Pakistan example included in the literature review confirms the difficulties that are encountered where Provinces or States have autonomy over certain aspects of education policy but not others. In both of these examples, the stark contrasts between different areas in the one country indicate that very different types of strategies are required. The pace of change that can be expected in these vastly varied contexts and how those changes are initiated will be different - and one national programme is unlikely to be able to deal with these differences without considerable inbuilt flexibility. On the positive side – India's federal structure and the high level of local decentralisation also makes space for creativity and innovation.

3.3 Lessons learned and challenges for the practice of SWAps in education

In summary, we present two compressed lists of key findings from the study. These summarise the key lessons, and the most important challenges for donors, governments, educationalists and civil society if SWAps are to fulfil their potential as vehicles for promoting gender equality.

Ten principle ‘lessons learned’ from the study

- 1) Compared to a situation where donor agencies are pursuing support to an education sector through project interventions – the transition to an effective SWAp should enable an enhanced capacity to promote a gender mainstreaming approach through the sector. This is dependent on a number of other conditions – most notably the SWAp functioning with a minimum level of coherence. These conditions apply unevenly in the three case study countries – so the full potential is not currently being realised.
- 2) For education SWAps to maximise their potential for promoting gender equality, a strong general policy of gender equality is required at the national level, with a supporting institutional framework, widely implemented and donor-backed. A SWAp cannot create the conditions necessary to drive change in the sector on its own. Strong political commitment within and beyond the sector – and incentives to deliver are essential. Recognition of the international human rights framework for gender and education in a country’s constitutional and policy frameworks helps to create the conditions for this.
- 3) It is important to recognise ‘mainstreaming’ as a process which needs to permeate the whole programme. In the absence of this the gender issue tends to be perceived as a simple issue of increasing girls’ enrolments – without attention to wider issues of gendered quality and outcomes, and structures of power and authority which impede the realisation of gender equality.
- 4) Carrying out a thorough overall diagnosis of the constraints to achieving gender equity within the sector early in the process of formulating the policy framework for the SWAp is potentially valuable for highlighting strategies and policy measures which can then be incorporated in plans and budgets. This is an area where, on the evidence of the case studies, practice could in future be strengthened.
- 5) Goals and targets are of key importance, clearly defined and locally specific – and properly resourced in both financial and technical terms. In education these should cover gendered dimensions of access, retention, attendance (participation) achievement and transition to post primary opportunities.
- 6) Systems of information – relating to the gender context, to inputs (e.g. budgets), outputs and outcomes need to be capable of generating gender disaggregated analysis. The Uganda case illustrates the potential value of incorporating qualitative and participatory components into a national poverty monitoring system for ensuring that issues of service quality and access emerge strongly at the level of the national policy debate.
- 7) It is important to recognise that ‘one size’ does not fit all – country and locally specific gender analysis is required as a basis for action.
- 8) SWAps are at their strongest when they act as a vehicle to promote decentralisation of decision making and empower local structures to find contextual solutions to the complex challenges of promoting gender equality.
- 9) A fully rounded gender perspective is an important starting point, but a specific focus on girls’ education can be justified as a practical tool to guide implementation, and mobilise support within and outside the sector institutions.
- 10) Gender mainstreaming needs a supportive constituency within the national institutions involved in the SWAp process to be sustainable in the long run. Pressure for change needs to come from civil society, specialists in government agencies, political representatives, as well as donors.

Ten challenges for improving the impact of education SWAps on gender equality

1. Moving the focus from gendered access to a gendered approach to quality and outcomes

All of the three case studies showed evidence of admirable and serious commitment to improving the access of girls to basic education. In some cases this was seen as having been taken care of by the policy aspiration of universal access – but other notable efforts have also been made (for example the specification of household level entitlements for girls in the system of allocating four free places per household in Uganda).

In all three cases a major challenge is to build on the demonstrated commitment to ensuring equitable access, by focusing on measures to promote equitable quality of education between the genders.

Moving beyond issues of gendered access to gendered quality involves a heightened focus across all parts of the institutional and policy framework in the sector – including such areas as curriculum development, text book production, pre-service and in-service training. If access goals only are being addressed these are areas which might receive little attention from a gender perspective.

2. Strengthening the transmission of commitment to gender equity in SWAps from central to local institutions

The studies found that formal commitment to objectives relating to gender (whether in a GAD or WID framework) tended to be strong at the centre – but to be subject to ‘policy evaporation’ as policy and implementation moved from the central to the local. This highlights the weaknesses of a ‘top-down’ planning approach to gender mainstreaming.

3. Using the SWAp process to create space for bottom-up pressure for enhancing gender equity

In our three case studies the ‘SWAp’ process had worked primarily to strengthen approaches to mainstreaming gender equity through donor negotiation with national institutions. In the long run the focus for making institutions accountable for delivering better outcomes for education for all groups suffering social disadvantage needs to shift from donor agencies to domestic constituencies for change. This requires changes in donor strategies and thinking – including paying more attention to strengthening poverty and gender advocacy ‘voices’ in structures of sector governance – and improving public information flows. The development of gender disaggregated information systems (including approaches to gender budgeting) will be important.

4. Improving the diagnosis of gender issues within the sector programme – and the application of the diagnosis to the development of policy measures to enhance gender equity

The level to which an analysis of gender issues had preceded the development of the SWAp policy framework varied in the three cases. In many instances the sense that gender was about *access* issues only led to an assumption that a policy of Universal Basic Education was all that was necessary in this field. Opportunities were thus missed (for example in Uganda) to further strengthen the gender outcomes of the programme by designing a coherent approach to gender mainstreaming from the start of the SWAp.

Compared to a framework for partnership based on projects negotiated with individual donor agencies, the SWAp framework offers a greatly increased potential for linking the analysis of

issues of gender disadvantage to mainstreamed policy change. Through the medium of the SWAp's programme of work linkages can be established between a diagnosis of key issues to be tackled, appropriate policy responses, and the budgetary and institutional changes which will be needed to ensure implementation follows on a national and system-wide scale. In order to implement such an ambitious agenda, however, it would be important that the diagnostic process took account of the gendered nature of power and authority within institutions and communities – to identify blockages and constraints which pertain to women's lack of voice and decision-making authority.

5. *Maintaining spaces for diversity of response to issues of promoting gender equity at the local level within the SWAp framework*

One of the common fears in relation to SWAps is that the space for local action which is appropriate in the variable contexts which exist at the micro level will diminish in the face of a unified programme of funding support from donors. Our case studies suggest this is not necessarily the case. With appropriate decentralisation the space for innovation and locally appropriate response can be maintained and even enhanced

6. *Improving the capacity of SWAps to tackle constraints to gender equity which lie outside the institutions of the education sector (e.g. child domestic and productive responsibilities)*

The toughest challenges which face education SWAps in pursuing the mainstreaming of gender equity lie in addressing issues which are outside of the framework of institutions usually understood to comprise the sector. There are some examples of initiatives to address barriers to access which derive from the broader social and political environment (e.g. initiatives to escort girls to school in some parts of India). Increasingly as institutions in the education sector more effectively take gender into account these cross-cutting issues will be the most important challenges. A robust and effective poverty monitoring system, incorporating a qualitative component, can play a vital role in highlighting cross-sectoral policy issues. This is illustrated by the work carried out under the auspices of the Poverty Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in Uganda.

7. *Encouraging decentralised responsibility for analysis and policy development through capacity building at school and community level supported by responsive district administrations*

The decentralisation of authority is critical for allowing local level systems to develop solutions appropriate to their micro-level contexts. Building awareness and capacity for gender mainstreaming at the local level needs to form part of this process.

8. *Developing improved approaches to reducing gender bias within key institutions relating to education, including community level structures and local and national structures of political representation, as well as sector institutions.*

Institutional change is critical to achieving a 'gender mainstreaming' approach to the education sector. One of the particular strengths of SWAps is their capacity to promote this – but until now more attention has been focused on issues of basic management effectiveness than social policy concerns.

9. *Strengthening methods and institutional capacity to monitor the achievement of gender equality outcomes*

The setting of targets and benchmarks is a powerful way of promoting institutional change. Improving our capacity to measure progress in gender equality of outcomes in education will enable the process of ‘benchmarking’ to be more powerful in terms of promoting such change. Civil society and community-level participation in setting and monitoring such outcomes will enhance the framework for accountability of public policy within the education sector.

10. Strengthening commitment, co-ordination and consistency of approach to gender mainstreaming in the donor community

The three case studies demonstrate that the donor community has some way to go before the frameworks outlined in the DAC guidelines are effectively and consistently operationalised. Weaknesses of co-ordination within and between donors need to be addressed. Changing policy based on DAC guidelines is relatively easy; getting understanding is a greater challenge. This cannot be achieved simply by circulation of policy documents, but requires concerted, consistent and coherent reiteration, accompanied by support from expert advisers. Strengthening of intra-donor linkages, especially between social development/gender units and sector-specific units might be required for effective change to take place in many cases.

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ANNEX 1: Terms of Reference

MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY IN SECTOR WIDE APPROACHES: CASE STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Background

1. The Education and Social Development Departments of the Department for International Development (DFID) wish to appoint consultants to undertake a summary study of efforts to incorporate gender equality objectives into the mainstream of Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPs) in the education sector. The study will form part of a work programme co-ordinated by the Working Party on Gender Equality (WP-GEN) of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The study will serve to improve DFID's own understanding of our experiences regarding SWAPs as well as contributing to the wider debate.
2. A two person team, combining education sector and gender and development expertise is required. The study will consist of the preparation of three case studies, and a synthesis report. It is envisaged that two of the case studies will be drawn from Ghana, Uganda and India. The study will be based predominantly on a review of published and unpublished literature, but will include short visits to consult key stakeholders in case study countries.
3. Similar studies in the agricultural and health sectors are to be undertaken by other consultants, with funding support from other WP-GEN members. The key findings of the DFID study will be fed into an overall synthesis study to be published by the DAC which will identify good practice and lessons learned and set out concepts, approaches and tools for gender mainstreaming in SWAPs.

Objectives

4. The study will have the following objectives:
 - to assess the extent to which gender equality and gender specific goals have been identified as objectives in education SWAPs in three developing countries
 - to identify the concepts, approaches and tools used to incorporate gender analysis and objectives into the design and implementation of the selected SWAPs
 - to analyse the effectiveness of the approaches taken to mainstreaming gender concerns
 - to identify lessons from experience and good practice, and propose means by which gender mainstreaming in education SWAPs could be strengthened in future work
 - to explore the extent to which contextual factors such as institutional frameworks and stakeholder groups may influence the incorporation of gender into Education SWAPs (i.e. is there a Gender Unit in the MoE? Is it effective?)

Outputs

5. The study will produce the following outputs:
 - a brief inception report, setting out a work and travel plan for the study, for approval by the DFID steering group
 - three case study reports, each between 7,500 and 10,000 words in length
 - a synthesis report, of not more than 10,000 words in length
 - an “Issues Paper” providing consideration regarding whether more information is needed to produce guidelines for the incorporation of gender analysis into education SWAps
 - bibliography and/or resource list
6. Final reports will be submitted in hard copy (six bound copies, and one unbound original, of each report) and in electronic format (by e-mail or on 3.5” floppy disk) in Word 7. Draft reports may be submitted by e-mail or on floppy disk, with one hard copy of each.

Tasks

7. The consultants will undertake the following tasks:
 - undertake a preliminary, rapid assessment of the availability of literature and other sources of information on the candidate case studies, in consultation with DFID education and social development advisers and interested members of the DAC WP-GEN and make recommendations on the final selection, to be included in the inception report
 - submit an inception report for DFID approval within two weeks of the commencement of the study
 - undertake a general, rapid review of literature on education sector SWAps and, in particular, from a gender perspective
 - review published and unpublished literature on each of the case study SWAps
 - consult and interview, by telephone and e-mail, key stakeholders from participating governments, donor organisations, and NGOs with knowledge of, and involvement in, the case study SWAps
 - undertake brief visits of one week’s duration to each of the case study countries to consult locally available reports and literature, and consult and interview key stakeholders (is one week enough? Perhaps ten days?)
 -

Person specifications

8. A two person team is required, combining expertise in education sector development and gender analysis. Both consultants should have significant

experience of development research, consultancy, and/or project implementation in both Africa and Asia.

Inputs and timing

9. The consultants will provide a total of 120 person days of input, divided equally between the two team members. The study will be conducted over a three month period, commencing in September 1999. A full draft report will be submitted to DFID by 15 December, 1999. A final report will be submitted early in 2000, within two weeks of receipt of comments from DFID.

Reporting

10. The consultants will report to a steering group made up of members of the Education and Social Development Departments of DFID. The steering group will nominate one member to act as day-to-day liaison point for the consultants.

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ANNEX 2: List of People Interviewed

1. UGANDA

Ministry of Education and Sports

- Mrs Florence Malinga *Commissioner for Educational Planning*
- Mr. Goddfrey Dhatamwa *Assistant Commissioner for Educational Planning*
- Mr Albert Byamaguisha *Head of Monitoring and Evaluation, EPD*
- Mrs Joyce Otim Nape *EPD/ GAPS study*
- Mr Wilberforce Muhana *Economist, EPD*
- Mr Mackay Ongona, *Economist, EPD*
- Mr William Owino, *School Facilities Co-ordination Unit*
- Mr. George Ouma Mumbe *COPE Officer, Primary Education*
- Mrs Alice Ibaale *Instructional Materials Unit, Primary Education*

Mukono District

- Mr Oto Akwe *District Inspector Of Schools*
- Headteachers and teachers *from Bishop Central, Bishop West and Kyessereka Primary Schools*

Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

- Mr Leonard Okello *Poverty Monitoring Unit (Phone and e-mail)*
- Ms Anne Marie Ainger *Education Desk Officer*

Ministry of Public Service

- Mr Chris Burgess *Consultant*

Funding Agencies

- Mr. Philippe Loop *EU*
- Ms Harriet Nannyonjo *World Bank*
- Mr Michael Ward, Ms Bella Bird *DFID*
- Mr George Kalibbala Mr Joseph Hoenen *Netherlands Embassy*
- Mrs Sarah Mayanga *USAID*
- Mr Kevin Colgan *Irish Aid*
- Mr Neill McKee, *UNICEF*

CSOs/NGOs

- Mrs Florence Kanyike *FAWE*
- Ms Meenu Vadera *ActionAid*
- Ms Catherine Kennedy *SCF US*

Researchers and Consultants

- Mr Joseph Carasco *Makerere University*
- Ms Christine Kiganda, *SfGE consultant*
Mr Kevin Brown *ESIP consultant*

2. INDIA

GoI

Sumit Bose (Joint Secretary)
Roopa Joshi
Rashimi Sharma
Kameshwari (Mahila Samakya)

EdCil

Deepa Das

DFID India

Geeta Unnikrishnan
Felicity Townsend
Phil Harding
Vikram Menon

Other donors

Mervi Karikorpi, EC
Dr Jangira, World Bank
Dr CJ Daswani, UNESCO

NGOs

Vimala Ramachandran, Educational Resource Unit
Geeta Menon, CARE India
Divya Lata, AKF
Kumud Sharma, Centre for Women's Development Studies
Rohit Dhankar, Digantar
Yogender Upadhaya, Bodh Shiksha Samithi

Consultants, researchers

Shushmita Dutt,
Subir Shukla
Ramya Subrahmaniam
Dr Geetha Nambissan Jawaharlal Nehru University, Centre for Educational Studies

3. GHANA

Ministry of Education

Mr Ayida Patrick Yiriyellah	Donor Coordination Officer Director, PBME
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Ghana Education Service

Emmanuel Acquaye	Director, Basic Education
Elizabeth Addabor	Director, Teacher Education Division
Felicia Adofo,	School Health Education Programme, GES
Mr Agyare,	CRDD
Sarah Agyeman,	Girls Education Unit, GES
Mary Ampah-Nkrumah	Deputy Director (BED)
Sophia Awortwi,	Girls Education Unit, GES
Margaret Brew-Ward	Girls Education Unit
Florence Daaku	Coordinator, ICU
Rose Korang-Okrah	Girls Education Unit
John Obeng-Asamoah,	Director, Admin. & Finance Division, GES
J Buda-Smith	DDG (Academic) GES
Alhassan Seidu	Whole School Development Coordinator, Director, TED
Alex Tetty-Enyo	Deputy Director-General (A&F)

Koforidua District

Ing. E. Adu Boateng	Municipal Chief Executive, New Ju Aben Municipal Assembly, Koforidua
Members of the Koforidua District/Municipal Oversight Committee	
District Director of Education	
District Girls Education Officer	
Assistant Director District Education Office, Supervision	
Head teacher and staff,	Freeman Methodist primary 'A' school
Head teacher and staff,	Jumapo Anglican Primary School
Steven Adoo	Teacher Training Coordinator, TRC

Regional Office, Central Region

Mrs Ewura-Abena Ahwor	Director, GES Regional Office, Cape Coast
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Ministry of Finance

Mr Hudu Siita

Office of the Head of the Civil Service

EF Ofusu-Appeah Director, Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme

National Development Planning Commission

Dr Ebrynn and Team Director

National Council for Women and Development

Mrs Tackie,

Development Partners

Marilyn Aniwa,	Developmental Officer, Canadian High Commission
Camilla Christensen	Young National Expert, European Union
Helen Dzikunu	Programme Officer, DANIDA
Junko Izumiyama	Environment and WID officer, JICA
Kurt Komarek	Team Leader, Assistance to Teacher Education Programme, GTZ
Peter Kresge,	Education team leader USAID
Kofi Marrah	Social Development Adviser, World Bank
Ian Steward	First Secretary Aid, British HC
Joe Vere	Head, Human Resources Development Programme, UNICEF
Malcolm Watson	DFID Education Field Manager

CSOs/NGOs

Juliana Adu-Gyamfi	Reflect coordinator, Action Aid
Dede Bruku,	Regional Gender Coordinator, Action Aid.
Douglas Gitiani	Officer In-Charge Education, Plan International
John Oldale	Director, Girl-Child Education Project, WUSC
Lori Wicchart	Catholic Relief Services
Mrs Yeboah	FAWE coordinator

Trades Union

Irene Adanusa Deputy General Secretary, Ghana National Association of Teachers

Researchers and Consultants

Takiyiwa Manu	Senior Researcher, Institute of African Studies, Ghana University, Lagon
Charles Otoo	Consultant, Global Auditors
Rosemary Shaughnessy	WUSC consultant, GEU, GES

ANNEX 3: Country cases, gender mainstreaming and the characteristics of a SWAp

Basic Elements Characterising a Sector- Wide Approach:	Basic elements characterising a gender main-streamed SWAP	Gender mainstreaming in India DPEP	Gender mainstreaming in the Ghana education sector	Gender mainstreaming in the Uganda education sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments define a macro-economic framework within which medium term expenditure frameworks determine the resources available for individual sectors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government processes integrate gender concerns into the formulation of policy & budgetary frameworks • Equal opportunity for men & women in influencing & participating in policy formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overall macro-economic framework is not well articulated; however a systematic appraisal of district plans in respect of finance for gender activities is attempted. The success or otherwise varies from state to state. • The numbers of women in key position of influence on policy formation is minimal at the highest level; i.e. above the level of DPEP bureau. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An MTEF is in place in Ghana, and budget lines for women/girls specific activities are included, with annual targets to assess effectiveness. Other than specific budget lines no other activities are considered in gender terms, or assessed in gender disaggregated ways. • A women’s desk in each Ministry is a requirement, although their effectiveness to date is nominal. Recent legislation requires 30% of all recruits to government positions to be women; this too is in its infancy of implementation. No women were included in discussions in any of the finance sections visited during the field visit for this study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An MTEF is in place which has an emphasis on primary education. There are a number of clearly articulated sector goals, though prioritisation of these remains a challenge. A number of strategies are designed to address gender equity, particularly for access. Equitable quality is not so strongly articulated. • Proportion of women in the MoE has improved. 3 out of 7 Commissioners for Education are women. However, few measures are in place at any level to ensure women are able to participate fully in management. Opportunities for training key personnel in gender analysis not taken.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments lead a consultative process with stakeholders and investors, including development agencies to define: • An overall sector policy framework; • Priorities, objectives and performance measures; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultative process integrates gender concerns; ie equitable participation of stakeholders & investors in consultation process • Development agencies themselves demonstrate integration of gender in policies, programmes & activities • Provision of training & support for specialist gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerted efforts made within DPEP to work towards this ideal: through district planning, village level mapping activity, etc. In practise, however, the quality of participation in this consultative process (especially in gender terms) needs support. • Integration of this kind is manifest to varying degree in respect of DPEP; but overall DPEP is a good example of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At macro level, the NCWD is represented in all policy development fora. In the education sector, the GEU plays a policy development role for girls’ specific education initiatives. At meso level, the DGEO represents the interests of girls and women on the District planning body; at micro level there are women representatives on all formal bodies such as the local assembly. The bottom-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has responsibility for mainstreaming gender across sectors, working through the gender desks in each sector ministry. The MoGLSD has devised the National Plan of Action on Women 1999-2004 with girls education being one out of four priorities. It does not however have a significant role in SWAp development,

Basic Elements Characterising a Sector- Wide Approach:	Basic elements characterising a gender main-streamed SWAP	Gender mainstreaming in India DPEP	Gender mainstreaming in the Ghana education sector	Gender mainstreaming in the Uganda education sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure programmes; • Institutional reform and capacity building; • jointly agreed management, reporting and accounting arrangements. 	<p>personnel in Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities, objectives & performance measures reflect gender concerns; gender disaggregated data; data on other cross-cutting issues (caste, class, disability etc) • Development of methodologies to assess the gender impact of SWAP • Research agenda that incorporates a focus on developing understanding of gender issues in the sector • Expenditure programmes & budgets that reflect gender concerns in processes of formation • Institutional reform and capacity building that takes account of gender issues in representation in decision-making, staff composition, working conditions, sexual harassment & internal/external perceptions • Management, reporting and accounting arrangements that make gender visible 	<p>what can be possible in terms of putting structures in place. The implementation of an integrated approach to gender needs strengthening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and support of this kind is a significant feature of DPEP at the policy level; the quality & resourcing of such training could be stronger • Criterion generally exemplified within DPEP, but a particular challenge exists to strengthen gender disaggregated MIS • Not yet at an advanced stage • Strongly encouraged through DPEP: indeed one of DPEP's gender strategies. However, this is an academic agenda; it needs work in terms of linking to grassroots level change • Gender explicit financial parameters not prescribed, but gender disaggregated financial appraisal and monitoring in evidence to some extent. However, there is a need for more systematic monitoring of spending patterns on gender elements of the programme • Rhetoric and intent at a more advanced stage that action; constraints linked to capacity; with capacity 	<p>planning process is said to be representative of all stakeholder interests; this could not be tested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development partners vary considerably in the degree to which gender concerns are mainstreamed, and there is no uniformity of view or approach • The GEU is an established line unit within GES and officers have been trained and supported by specialist gender trainers. GES and MOE officers provided with some gender training but limited attendance reduced effectiveness. No on-going support other than in GEU specific activities. • Gender disaggregated data on enrollment and literacy routinely used, but measures of priorities, objectives and performance of other aspects not routinely disaggregated for gender or other groupings. • A SWAP is not clearly defined. Gender impact of initiatives towards the access and participation objectives of various programmes assessed, but other objectives generally not considered for gender equity • Past research on gender issues in education has been used as the basis for the 	<p>being more concentrated on advocacy than policy analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy for Girls Education lists ideas for addressing the many constraints faced by girls. It is more of an advocacy than a strategic document. • Limited SWAp specific consultation with primary stakeholders and no thorough diagnostic exercise on gender. There is also a lack of focused cross sectoral dialogue on gender. • The ESIP includes a wide variety of approaches to gender and programmes addressing gender to varying degrees, but many of these are not linking. • Gender disaggregated data on access and retention. Ways of monitoring learning outcomes by gender not yet in place. • Steps have been taken to reflect gender in the budget The District Financial Incentive where schools are awarded re progress on achieving gender equality eg number of girls reaching P7 and progressing to secondary school.

Basic Elements Characterising a Sector- Wide Approach:	Basic elements characterising a gender main-streamed SWAP	Gender mainstreaming in India DPEP	Gender mainstreaming in the Ghana education sector	Gender mainstreaming in the Uganda education sector
		<p>greater at the centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress made as a result of DPEP, but this is still a major future challenge 	<p>formulation of the girls education strategy. Quality academic research on gender and education available from University departments and FAWE. Not routinely used to inform education policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See first section relating to finance and budgeting • Institutional reforms are on-going which have some gender focus, but a greater number of gender implications. Little evidence of changes to working conditions to suit women employees and no actions on sexual harassment. • Gender blindness (an assumption of gender neutrality) is usual in all management approaches and systems, other than in GEU specific work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty Monitoring Unit of MoFPED is to be screening all sector budgets for gender implications, and using information from the UPPAP to drive a mainstreaming approach. • Strategic budgeting initiative gives schools increasing flexibility and incentives to make their own strategic choices in achieving ESIP priorities including gender equality.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major donors jointly support the process and the practice of the sector programme, preferably using common procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender agenda clear in process & practice of sector programme • Gender equality concerns integrated into agreed procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. Good use made of development of gender strategies. However, the division of DPEP support among donors at state level, & the resulting existence of different ‘DPEPs’ (e.g. culture of DPEP in World Bank states stresses financial accountability) suggests that donors cling to some degree to the bounded nature of a project approach • Lack of consistency in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development partners vary in their support for the education sector programme, which itself is ill-defined. Project rather than programme support dominates, with some exceptions. Gender within these donor initiatives varies from mainstreamed to not considered. • Procedures are still in the process of agreement; it is not known if gender equality concerns are being considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor coordination has helped to ensure gender is on the policy agenda for top management. • Donors broadly share the same vision, but they are not yet articulating common commitment to gender equality. Their support depends on their own knowledge and commitment to their own gender policies. • Those with a particular gender responsibility/ technical expertise tend not to

Basic Elements Characterising a Sector- Wide Approach:	Basic elements characterising a gender main-streamed SWAP	Gender mainstreaming in India DPEP	Gender mainstreaming in the Ghana education sector	Gender mainstreaming in the Uganda education sector
		<p>donor approaches and bounded sectoral divisions in donor institutions (health/education/social development) mitigate in some ways against gender mainstreaming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPEP stronger in respect of a gender targeted approach, as opposed to a mainstreamed approach. The latter presents the greater challenges for the future 		<p>be centrally involved in sector level policy development. Inputs seem to be more targeted to the development of specific programmes such as the disadvantaged groups programmes.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance is commissioned by governments rather than donor agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender concerns integrated into process by which TA is commissioned; gendered TORs for example 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many examples in DPEP of this occurring to a considerable extent, but even greater integration still represents an ideal toward which to strive. E.g. gendered TORs, including in JRMs, would strengthen gender aspects of the programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because of the variation in donor support, TA is both commissioned by donors and by government. Gender is not integrated into the process of selection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement reached to focus on institutional capacity building, clearly identified and managed by government. Donors are accepting clear code of conduct for operating within the SWAp process. Greater integration of gender concerns still needed.
	<p><i>Additional points of note</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of understanding of women’s strategic needs, as well as practical needs, i.e. some recognition that gender is more than meeting the needs of women/girls • Rights versus wants: gender analysis enables children’s basic rights to be met. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall the focus is on women and girls rather than gender, although some micro-level initiatives (the use of PLA for local assessment of education) has the potential to identify and address gender equity issues. • Both women’s rights and children’s rights are recognised at macro level. At micro level this is not so well understood or recognised with consequences for the success of local initiatives. 	

ANNEX 4: Country case studies - strengths and weaknesses in relation to gender mainstreaming of the SWAp"

Potential strengths of a SWAp	India	Uganda	Ghana
the potential for improving policy coherence within the education sector and thereby enhancing the emphasis on gender equality in policies and budgets	The potential is there, but mainstreaming is a <i>process</i> that requires vigilance & monitoring & reflection on the achievement of short-term strategic goals, as well as long-term agenda of profound attitudinal change	Clearly outlined objectives, including gender equality in access within a coherent education sector programme	This potential has not yet been achieved in Ghana. There is no one programme uniformly supported by all donors, and there is lack of coherence in the overall sector, with several policy documents defining education programmes
the potential for applying a sector-wide diagnosis of gender issues to a policy and planning process	Again, the potential is there but an integrated, sector wide integration of gender concerns is hampered by a lack of ownership at some levels, and a slippage from a broadly understood gender agenda to a focus on girls' education	Initial lack of gender analysis leading to a 'patchy approach' with weaker focus on equitable quality	The Girls Education Unit has undertaken a diagnostic exercise for the education sector, although this tends to be focussed on basic education and on access rather than quality issues
the longer-term time-frame implied in the approach	The longer time-frame should lead to consistency; but must be accompanied by shorter-term strategic gender objectives (understood as a step along the way) to stop it slipping from the agenda	Responsive processes are being developed with a view to gradual introduction of change over a longer time frame	Within basic education the <i>f</i> CUBE programme has a development process which will incrementally involve all basic schools (P1-P6 and JS1 – JS3), including PLA for gender analysis. The GOG has a 25 year strategic plan – Vision 2020 – which includes all social sectors, but this has yet to be translated into coherent action programmes throughout
the potential for enhancing linkages with the private sector and across government policies in other sectors which would reinforce the gender dimensions of education policy	There is, it seems, a deep divide between public and private sectors, part of an entrenched, conservative public sector culture. Reform of public sector & mainstreaming of gender concerns in government is vital as part of integration of gender in education policy	Cross-sectoral needs of girls appear not to be given full attention; certain activities and institutions remain outside the sector process	Both of these last two points conflate. One approach being explored is the use of 'best practice' to enhance government programmes. The forum to identify these practices includes NGOs and donors and therefore does have this potential of improving practice through sharing across the sector and between sectors
the potential to mainstream consultative and participatory approaches piloted in projects into overall sector policy.	Community participation & VECs are a key component of DPEP. However, quality of participation in gender terms is questionable; as are some of the expectations placed on VECs.	This potential is evident, with the integration of parallel strategies and programmes	See previous note.

Potential Weaknesses of a SWAp	India	Uganda	Ghana
donor agency differences in procedures, agendas create difficulties in negotiating a coherent policy approach	This is certainly an issue in India, with approaches to gender differing between donors, & between donor policy & practice. However, these very differences may have a positive effect in creating spaces where innovative & appropriate strategies can flourish	This has not proved a problem in Uganda, where a unified and facilitative support has been forthcoming	Donors range from gender-blindness, gender-neutrality, gender-focussed and gender mainstreamed in their approaches. Their perspectives on and agreement to engage in common funding of a sector programme are diverse and contradictory. In addition, continuing support for individual ‘labelled’ projects is strong.
emphasis on macro instruments may lead to a top-down, centralised, approach unfavourable to gender focus and with weak involvement from civil society	The policy/national level focus on gender does not in many cases connect with grassroots concerns	Decentralisation is a key feature of the ESIP, with e.g. schools given planning responsibility	This does not seem to typify social service provision in Ghana; a long-standing populist government has focussed on local level political representation and complementary institutional structure. Social service provision is decentralised, hence structures are in place with the potential to support gender equity initiatives at local level.
necessity of working with existing sector leadership and existing institutional structures may reinforce existing gender bias	A greater problem is the fact that at national, state and local levels, key stakeholders are not talking the same ‘language of gender’: experiences, backgrounds and hence priorities are so vastly different.	This may be a problem, and one which is exacerbated by donor attitudes, for example the PSRP is seen as gender neutral; any reforms will thus perpetuate and possibly reinforce existing gender biases in the PSs. Gender training of key staff at different levels could be strengthened. Commitment to gender and social justice in the mainstream political and administrative system is strong however - for example in the support to the Poverty Eradication Action Plan implementation programme of the Ministry of Finance and Planning.	There is a danger that certain individuals may prevent implementation, but generally this was found not to be the case. Commitment to ‘Women’s rights’ is high at all levels. However, some civil society representatives indicated bureaucratic hurdles were sometimes used to prevent implementation of alternative non-formal education for hard to reach girls and boys. As some officers found ways around such hurdles this indicates a lack of commitment from some quarters.
emphasis on mainstream government services may lead to lack of recognition of informal processes.	More of an issue is the fact that the task in hand is so great, that a) the weight of impossible expectations falls on informal processes and programmes and flexible institutions (e.g. NFE); and b)	The low level of inclusion of other than mainstream government services, such as NGO provision, in the policy process may be leading to sub-optimal recognition of alternative and successful	See previous note.

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	the very flexibility of these processes carries the danger of exacerbating gender inequalities (e.g. poor conditions for mostly female NFE teachers)	approaches and mechanisms	
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