

Gender Assessment & Gender Action Plan of USAID/ Nepal

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by

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THE GENDER ASSESSMENT

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ACRONYMS

Automated Directives System	ADS
Community Forest Users' Groups	CFUG
Commercial Sex Workers	CSW
Department of Electricity Development	DOED
District Development Committee	DDC
Demographic and Health Survey	DHS
Environment and Forest Enterprise Activity	EFEA
Environment/Social Impact Assessment	EIA/SIA
Female Community Health Volunteers	FCHV
Gender Action Plan	GAP
Gross Domestic Product	GDP
Health Education, Adult Literacy	HEAL
International Conference on Population and Development	ICPD
Information, Education Communication/Behavior Change Interventions	IEC/BCI
Interagency Gender Working Group	IGWG
Intermediate Results	IRs
Ministry of Population and Environment	MOPE
Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare	MWCSW
Nongovernmental Organization	NGO
Population, Health & Nutrition	PHN
Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper	PRSP
Sexually Transmitted Infections	STI
United Nations Development Program	UNDP
United States Agency for International Development	USAID
Village Development Committee	VDC
Women's Empowerment Program	WEP
Women in Development Technical Assistance Project	WIDTECH
World Health Organization	WHO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This assessment analyzes gender issues in USAID/Nepal's strategic framework, program, and activities for strategic objective two (SO2)—reduced fertility and protected health of Nepalese families; SO4—increased private sector participation in environmentally and socially sustainable hydropower development; and SO5—strengthened governance of natural resources and selected institutions. It identifies entry points for the integration of gender into ongoing activities. The assessment was based on document review, interviews, and field observations with forest user groups, women's empowerment groups, and Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs), as well as working sessions with USAID/Nepal staff.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Nepal is a multiethnic, multicultural country with a complex overlay of religion and caste. Regardless of the cultural diversity, the majority of the population is dominated by patriarchal values that emphasize early marriage, male children, and male inheritance of family property. Women lag far behind in their access to education, information, economic resources, and opportunities for employment. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. This poverty has exacerbated the low status of women. Small scale, low productivity agriculture is becoming feminized while the share of agriculture in the GDP is declining, thus increasing women's economic marginalization.

The Constitution provides for the equality of women and men. However, the public law undermines that equality in areas such as citizenship, property rights, legal transactions, and migration. Many Nepalese citizens have been disenfranchised from meaningful political participation on the basis of gender and caste. Even though legislation mandates that 20 percent of the local elected seats and five percent of the parliamentary candidacies should be held by women, they have minimal decision-making roles at any level. Women hold only 3.4 percent of the seats in parliament and constitute only 4 percent of the judiciary. There has been some progress at the local level as a result of the 1997 Act on Local Elections. The Nepalese civil service is largely dominated by men, due to the many constraints on women's participation. Women constitute 5 percent of the officer level employees in the civil service, and 3.5 percent of the non-officer level.

In 2001, Nepal ranked 129th out of 162 countries on the Human Development Index. The maternal mortality rate of 539 deaths per 100,000 live births is one of the highest in the world. The total fertility rate is 4.1. One in every eleven children dies before the age of five. Child mortality rates are higher for girls than boys. There is significant gender gap in literacy and education. Literacy rates are 57 percent for males and 27 percent for females. A girl has more than two and a half times the risk of not attending school. The higher the level of education, the lower the representation of females.

HMG Nepal's Ninth Five-year Plan showed significant progress in the integration of gender issues in national programs and policies. The major thrusts were mainstreaming gender issues in development, eliminating gender inequality, and empowering women. Only a few of the proposed actions have been implemented, in part due to the under-staffing and under-funding of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare which received 1 percent of the budget.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Initially, international development efforts to improve the status of women focused on enabling women to participate more fully. Now it is widely recognized that social processes and institutions create inequalities between men and women that are costly to development as a whole. Hence these societal and development issues are not simply a "women's concern." It is clear that it is necessary to reshape development programs and processes to reflect the visions and needs of women as well as men and to support gender equality. USAID/Nepal has been at the cutting edge of USAID's gender and development initiatives. It was the first Mission to elevate women's empowerment to the strategic objective level. During the design of the country strategy for 2000, the Mission decided to close out the women's empowerment SO and integrate women's empowerment into all of the SOs in the new strategy.

Gender Assessment of USAID/Nepal Strategic Plan

The 2000 strategy focuses on three sectors: health, hydropower, and the governance of key natural resources and selected institutions. Gender is treated as a cross-cutting issue in the strategic plan by incorporating it in the discussion of synergies among strategic objectives (SOs). Most of the technical analyses, conducted in preparation for the 2000 strategy, addressed gender issues.

The focus of SO2 is on increased family planning services, increased use of selected maternal and child health services, HIV/STI prevention in high-risk groups in target areas, and strengthened capacity to control vector-borne diseases. In 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development produced a program of action supported by 180 countries, including the United States. It included a goal of universal access to family planning and other reproductive health services by 2015, as well as specific measures to advance the economic, educational, legal, and health status of women. This agreement is very important because gender related obstacles often prevent people from achieving good reproductive health. A gender approach to reproductive health identifies gender-related obstacles to reproductive health, designs and implements activities to reduce the obstacles, and uses quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure success in reducing barriers.

SO2 has made significant contributions to women's empowerment in Nepal. USAID and other donors are providing support for 46,000 Female Community Health Volunteers

(FCHVs) who increase health access for women and girls and serve as change agents in communities, in part, through their work with mothers' groups. Between 1995 and 2003, 66,000 women will have completed health education literacy courses through the Health Education, Adult Literacy (HEAL) program. Innovative radio programs have targeted general audiences through drama and health workers through distance education, resulting in an 11 percent increase in contraceptive prevalence rates and improved counseling skills. The Safe Motherhood Network is comprised of over 70 organizations working in maternal health at the grass roots to advocate safe motherhood. The 2001 Demographic and Health Survey included extra modules on women's status and male involvement. A 2001 study of volunteerism also examined gender issues.

Suggestions for strengthening gender integration in SO2:

- Ensure that the work plan for the new bilateral program builds on the gender sensitive work of the current program and uses the "Strategies to Facilitate a Gender Perspective in Population and Health," proposed by the Interagency Gender Working Group (IGWG).
- Also use these strategies in the design of new results packages in the future as the Mission continues to consolidate SO2 activities.
- Integrate gender issues into in-service and pre-service MCH/FP training, adapting the training materials on gender and reproductive health developed by the World Health Organization and others.
- In the new work on adolescents' reproductive health, analyze the socio-cultural context and the power relations between boys and girls, adults and youth to inform new activities to help youth, particularly girls, gain options to make decisions in this area.
- Consider conducting training for FCHVs and VDC members, similar to the training provided for women elected representatives. This should help strengthen VDC capacity to assess and manage local health needs from a gender perspective.
- Make the WEP training materials available to FCHVs and mothers' groups. Encourage them to promote gender equality in their work.
- Continue gender sensitive operations research, IEC/BCI radio broadcasts, and male reproductive health animators working with men. Use these channels of communication to promote women's reproductive health and equality.
- Analyze the data from the 2001 DHS to identify changes in gender relations and the relative status of females and males in health, education, and other issues. Also examine the gender issues findings from the volunteerism study. Incorporate these findings in a gender annex in the R4. Share them with other SO teams, partners, and MOH officials and discuss the implications for program activities.

- Promote increased opportunities for women to enter into paid, decision-making positions in the health system.

The SO4 program focuses on strengthening the technical capacity and procedures of the Department of Electricity Development (DOED) and other institutions, in analyzing, planning, and developing environmentally and socially sustainable small hydropower projects. This includes improving the regulatory environment and strengthening environmental and social impact assessments (EIA/SIA).

The , issued in 2000, states that the gender-blindness of most dam projects around the world has increased gender disparities by imposing a disproportionate share of the social costs on women without giving them a fair share of the benefits. Work done when SO4 was a special objective has made some progress toward gender integration in this challenging sector. The draft “Scoping Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment of Hydropower Projects” for Nepal include “gender issues” as one of the indicators. The draft “Manual for Public Involvement in the Environmental Impact Assessment for Hydropower Projects” stresses the importance of involving women and the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people at the start of the process. Increased private sector participation in hydropower has resulted in the construction of schools, clinics, and roads. Electrification has had a positive effect on the lives of women as well as men and children in Andhi Khola.

Suggestions for strengthening Gender Integration in SO4:

- Conduct gender awareness training for DOED staff, explaining why it is important to include women and lower caste groups in the EIA/SIA process and building skills for this outreach.
- Develop guidelines for addressing gender as a cross-cutting issue in the EIA/SIA scoping matrix and specify the type of information that needs to be collected on “gender issues.”
- Revise the draft “Manual for Public Involvement in the Environmental Impact Assessment for Hydropower Projects” to add tactics for involving women and lower caste groups such as outreach by local FCHVs, women’s groups, and other female leaders to increase women’s participation.
- Apply the following World Commission of Dams “Guidelines for Good Practice” in technical support and training to develop procedures to improve public awareness, disclosure and public participation in EIA/SIA: a gender and caste sensitive participation plan; use of gender analysis in social baseline construction; and gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation.
- In the development of standards for accrediting EIA/SIA professionals, include a requirement for skill in gender analysis.

- Ask the SO4 program contractor to help DOED and the developer to record public meeting participation and concerns expressed by gender and caste and to report to the Mission on that documentation.
- For indicator 4.2.1 (number of approved environmental impact assessments that meet or exceed international guidelines) include the following international criterion: mitigation plans address impoverishment risks to women and lower caste groups and define hydropower benefits they will receive.
- Incorporate gender-sensitive participatory and quantitative methods in monitoring the benefits and equality issues of recently completed hydropower project. Disseminate the findings to DOED and hydropower project proponents and use them to improve future projects.

SO5 is a new SO that incorporates elements of SO1 (increased sustainable production and sales of forest and high value agricultural products) and SO3 (women's empowerment). It focuses on increased management capacity of natural resource groups, increased advocacy capacity of selected civil society groups, and increased women's participation. It also addresses trafficking of women and girls for prostitution. For many people, governing their own natural resources is the first and most important means to exercise their democratic rights, affect public affairs, and gain control over their lives.

Understanding gender roles and relations in their socio-economic context is essential in a community-based approach to natural resource management because gender affects how communities and households are organized, That in turn affects their understanding and management of the environment and their inclusion or exclusion of people in decision-making. Laws, customs, poverty, illiteracy, and violence limit women's roles in public life. An estimated 5000-7000 Nepalese girls are trafficked each year and 200,000 Nepalese girls and women are working in the sex industry in India.

SO1 has made important progress toward increasing gender equality in natural resource management. Women make up over 46 percent of the growers of high value agricultural products and 80 percent of the participants in USAID supported community forestry programs. USAID has provided environment and conservation-focused informal education to 11,399 women in 168 centers. 162 women's community forest users groups have taken part actively in forest resource management, influencing 72,035 beneficiaries use of over 5,296 hectares of forest. 907 women have become members of 97 active savings and credit groups. Thirty-three percent of the executive positions in forest user groups are held by women in Rapti and the Terai project areas.

SO3 also has made very impressive progress. Training for women elected representatives significantly increased their understanding of local government, their responsibilities, and the project development process. The Women's Empowerment Program(WEP) created a microfinance approach based on building equity (savings) rather than incurring debit (credit provision). WEP provided training and support to 6,500 groups (130,000 members) in the Terai. Women mobilized \$1,180,000 from savings, interest, and

fundraising. 89,000 women reported increased decision-making authority in family planning, children's marriages, buying and selling property, and girls' schooling. 86,000 women started a business. 63,700 women gained a level of literacy. Groups have initiated 78,600 collective community and advocacy activities. Horizontal networks of WEP groups linked with female political leaders organized campaigns on issues of common concern such as anti-trafficking and domestic violence.

Suggestions for strengthening gender integration in SO5:

- The development of the work plan for the new agreement to support SO5 will be an excellent opportunity to ensure that activities take a gender approach in promoting women's opportunities.
- Begin the technical capacity and organizational skill building activities with gender awareness training for male leaders in the VDC, local religious leaders, local representatives of line ministries that deal with natural resources, and male members of natural resource management groups.
- Provide gender awareness training for police and anti-trafficking committees.
- Adapt WEP training materials for use in microenterprise development, literacy, and bookkeeping training.
- In the documentation of best practices, include strategies for increasing women's participation, leadership, and benefits from NRMG participation.
- Increase the understanding of women's human rights through the adaptation of some of the effective behavior change approaches applied in PHN.
- In the work with civil society groups, survey national associations to identify their policies on gender and ethnic equality and the attention given to gender and diversity in their programs. Use the data to ensure that strong associations that promote gender quality are among the groups involved and can serve to inform and influence other organizations.
- Include gender and ethnic equality on the agenda for policy research and discussion fora. For example, assess the status of the implementation of the 1999 Local Self Governance Act requirements for women and ethnic minorities.
- Consider using a training of trainers approach in training elected women representatives to build the skills they need to train other VDC members.
- In radio campaigns to raise voter awareness about elections, include messages about women's legal rights and the importance of women's political participation.

- Conduct and compare impact studies of the WEP program, and the NRMG programs. Also examine the gender-related findings of the 2001 DHS and the study of volunteerism in health. Analysis and comparison of findings in all of these studies will provide a valuable knowledge base to guide implementation of the Gender Action Plan.

There are several areas where synergies among SOs can be enhanced:

- Coordinate the integration of gender and fostering synergies among the new program start-ups for SO2, SO4, and SO5.
- Encourage active participation of women previously trained through WEP and HEAL as well as FCHVs and NRMG members activities to promote gender equality in new program activities.
- Adapt the HEAL and WEP training materials for use in other SOs.
- Assess the health impacts of dams and pointing out the links between population, health, and environment.
- Train women leaders, FCHV, and NRMGs about the population, health, environment links and health assessment.
- Complement the macro policy approach of SO4 EIA/SIA with the grass roots advocacy training of SO5.
- Add messages about women's rights, gender equality, and participation in hydropower projects to PHN broadcasts on health and family planning.
- Coordinate HIV/AIDS prevention activities with counter-trafficking activities, taking into account the need to avoid further stigmatizing returning trafficked victims in their communities.
- Prepare an annex for the R4 that focuses on gender as a cross-cutting issues in all SOs, drawing on the studies conducted as well as program reports.

The Agency's strategic planning and results reporting structure poses a great challenge to strategic planning, implementation, and results reporting that cross-cut SOs. Agency requirements for consistency in reporting indicators over time, the already defined and approved results framework, and the issue of the manageable interest of the Mission limited the extent to which gender integration could be strengthened in the PMP. These constraints are clearly reflected in the Results Report and Resource Request (R4). Although the R4 captured the impressive results of the WEP program under SO3, it did not include all of the important contributions to women's empowerment made through the activities of SO1 and SO2 because women's empowerment was not among the intermediate results (IRs) and indicators supporting those SOs.

Despite this limitation, the R4 format does allow for special annexes that provide more detail than the R4 format allows. An annex on gender equality as a cross-cutting issue provides an opportunity to highlight the results. The R4 also requires the preparation of close-out reports for SOs that have been completed. The close out reports also provide an opportunity to document the significant results and lessons learned in the women's empowerment work of SO1 and SO3.

It is important to make a distinction between the limited set of indicators monitored for reporting to Washington and more detailed data that are needed to manage Mission programs to ensure sustainable results. The latter provide an early warning system to ensure that programs activities are on track and benefiting women and girls and well as men and boys.

Performance monitoring of gender equality to inform Mission management of programs is particularly important in Nepal where the limited economic and political participation, low literacy, and high mortality rates of females has long been recognized as an impediment to development. It can be argued that progress toward gender equality is an essential condition for economic growth and progress toward participatory democracy in Nepal. Hence it is necessary to track this progress as an important part of the enabling environment for USAID/Nepal's programs and it should have a place in the introductory section of the R4 every year. Gender equality monitoring to inform Mission management is also important to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment as a cross-cutting theme remains front and center in USAID/Nepal program activities even though development funds have diminished.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This gender assessment is an analysis of potential gender issues in USAID/Nepal’s strategic framework, results framework, programs and activities. It focuses on SO2 (reduced fertility and protected health of Nepalese families), SO4 (increased private sector participation in environmentally and socially sustainable hydropower development) and SO5 (strengthened governance of natural resources and selected institutions). It also identifies potential entry points for the incorporation of gender into ongoing activities. The gender assessment provided the basis for the development of a Gender Action Plan (GAP)—the programmatic and organizational road map for integrating gender into USAID activity planning and implementation, performance monitoring and evaluation, procurement, and information and human resource management.¹ The gender assessment and the GAP address gender as a cross-cutting issue, following the newly revised Agency Strategic Plan² and the gender requirements of the automated directives system (ADS).³

METHODS

The gender assessment and development of the GAP were based on:

- A document review of USAID/ Nepal, program implementers/partners, NGO, PVO, donor, and other reports and evaluations as well as other gender studies and manuals.⁴
- Interviews with members of USAID/Nepal’s SO teams, Program Office, Contracts Office, Personnel Office, a sample of USAID partners/implementers, USAID-funded NGOs, women leaders, and major donors with important gender programs in Nepal.⁵
- Field interviews and observations with Forest User groups, Women’s Empowerment Groups, and Female Community Health Volunteers.⁶

¹ See Annex I: “Statement of Work” for specific details of the assignment; see the USAID/Nepal Gender Action Plan .

² See Annex II:” Gender Mainstreaming in the USAID Strategic Plan.”

³ See Annex III: “ADS Gender Requirements.”

⁴ See Annex IV: “Documents Reviewed.”

⁵ See Annex V: “Persons Contacted.” See Annex VI: Gender Mainstreaming Suggestions From Partners, “ for a summary of partner’ suggestions about the most effective approaches to gender mainstreaming and gender equality as well as ways to strengthen gender integration in USAID Programs.

⁶ Also listed in Annex V.

- USAID/Nepal staff working sessions on gender indicators for SOs 2, 4, and 5.⁷

ORGANIZATION

The gender assessment begins with a description of the country context, highlighting inequalities in the opportunities and resources available to women and men and indicators of gender inequality. This section also includes a summary of mainstreaming in HMG Nepal's Ninth Five-Year Plan. The next section offers a brief summary of the evolution of thinking about gender. This is followed by a summary of the evolution of USAID/Nepal programs to improve the status of women. The final section is a gender assessment of strategic objectives two, four, and five, including the activities, and results reporting. For each SO there is a brief description of the SO, general gender issues related to the sector that apply to Nepal, specific gender issues in Nepal, highlights of gender activities and outcomes, and recommendations for strengthening gender integration in the SO and in performance monitoring. The assessment ends with a discussion of the challenges of performance monitoring and reporting on gender as a cross-cutting issue.

SO3 (women's empowerment) was completed and closed out at the end of fiscal year (FY) 2001. SO 1 (increased sustainable production and sales of forest and high-value agricultural products) will be completed and closed out at the end of FY 2002. Activities and results from these SOs are discussed in the section on SO5, a new SO that will build on SO1 and SO3.

⁷ See Annex VII: "Gender Training Sessions for Mission Staff," for the materials distributed in the session. One two-hour session provided staff a briefing on key gender concepts and issues as well as the automated directives system (ADS) requirements for gender and began a discussion of indicators. In a second working session, small groups examined potential new gender-disaggregated indicators for performance reporting. Annex VII lists additional gender resource material provided to the Mission in electronic and other forms.

CHAPTER TWO THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

FACTORS AFFECTING GENDER INEQUALITY IN NEPAL

Socio-cultural Factors

Nepal is a multiethnic and multicultural country with a complex overlay of religion and caste. There are twelve languages and thirty different dialects. People in Nepal today are descendants from three major migrations from India, Tibet, and Central India. Among the earliest inhabitants were the Newars of the Kathmandu Valley and the aboriginal Tharus in the southern Terai region. The ancestors of the Brahmin and Chetri Caste groups came from India. Other groups trace their origins from Central Asia and Tibet, including the Gurungs and Magars in the west, the Rais and Limbus in the east, and the Sherpas and Bhotias in the north. The Chetri, Brahmin, and Newar groups dominate the country numerically, socially, politically, and economically,⁸

These groups can be divided into two categories based on the language that they speak: Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryan. The Tibeto-Burmans live mostly in the hills and mountains; the Indo-Aryans live mostly in the hills and the Terai. Ethnographic research on intra-household socio-economic relations, funded by USAID/Nepal in the late 1970s, found that women in the Tibeto-Burman communities were less constrained socially than Indo-Aryan women in their mobility, marriage, remarriage options, and income earning opportunities. Because ritual purity of women was extremely important for the Indo-Aryan group, child marriages, arranged marriages and restrictions on widows remarrying were widespread and women were expected to restrict their activities to the household. Women from the Tibeto-Burman group were free to engage in income generating activities and businesses outside of the household. They traveled widely for trading and operated tea houses along trekking routes and major roads and in tourist areas. They also had relative freedom in their choice of marriage partners and child marriages were less common.⁹

Findings from a more recent study, “Labor Market Development and Poverty,” contrast with the above based on an analysis of the wider economy (beyond the household). The researcher found that, for the most part, the Indo-Aryan women were as enterprising as the Tibeto-Burmans. High caste and Newar women predominate in professional, technical, and managerial work and among working proprietors. It appears that that opportunities and power relations in the macroeconomic framework are greater for the Indo-Aryan women.

⁸ Nepal Background Notes, US Department of State October 2001, p.2.

⁹ The Rural Women of Nepal, An Aggregate Analysis of 8 Village Studies by Meena Acharya and Lynn Bennett, 1981.

Tibeto-Burmans face a less favorable socioeconomic structure and power relations that provide fewer opportunities for entrepreneurship.¹⁰

Regardless of cultural diversity, the majority of the population is dominated by patriarchal values that emphasize early marriage, male children, and male inheritance of family property. Universally in Nepal, men inherit the land. Women lag far behind in their access to education, information, economic resources, and opportunities for employment. Because land is passed from father to son and daughters move to their husbands' family to live and labor, daughters are not valued. Many parents see no reason to educate girls because the benefits would go to the household of their husbands. In a country such as Nepal, where there is no social safety net, sons provide the primary social security for both their mothers and fathers.¹¹

A majority of men and women are married before they are 25 years old. Nevertheless, the mean age of marriage for women has increased significantly from 15.4 years in 1961 to 18 years in 1991. This change has been most pronounced for young girls. In 1961, nearly 25 percent of the girls aged 10-14 were reported as married. By 1991, only 7.4 of the girls in this age group were married. An increase in mean age of marriage suggests increased power for women and men to choose their own marriage partners. Early widowhood with little possibility of remarriage is another cultural curse on women, particularly among the Indo-Aryans.¹²

Economic Factors

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. The per capita income is \$210 and an estimated 42 percent of its citizens live in absolute poverty.¹³ While only 20 percent of the land is arable, agriculture is the means of livelihood for 80 percent of the population.¹⁴ A limited natural resource base, land-locked and rugged terrain, rapid population growth, environmental degradation, low levels of literacy, limited infrastructure, and widespread poverty present formidable development challenges.

The fact that Nepal is one of the least developed countries in the world exacerbates the low status of women. Small-scale subsistence agriculture is becoming progressively feminized. In hill agriculture, women operate most of the farms due to male labor migration. At the same time, the share of agriculture in the GDP is declining. This suggests that women are being left out of structural changes in the Nepalese economy, increasing their economic marginalization.¹⁵ In addition to the concentration of women in low-productivity agriculture, female wage laborers are also clustered in unskilled low paying jobs outside of agriculture. There are more girl child laborers (aged 10-14) than boy laborers. For every 100 boys who

¹⁰ Labor Market Development and Poverty: With a Focus on Opportunities for Women, by Meena Acharya, 2000, pp. 102-103.

¹¹ Women in Nepal, Country Briefing, the Asian Development Bank, 1999, p. 3 and p. 7.

¹² Ibid. pp.7-8.

¹³ Beijing Plus Five Nepal Review, UNDP Nepal, Executive summary

¹⁴ USAID/Nepal Results Review and Resource Request, March 2001, p.5.

¹⁵ Women in Nepal, Country Briefing, Asian Development Bank, 1999, pp. 29-31.

work, there are 219 girls in the mountains, 217 girls in the hills, and 177 girls in the Terai who work.¹⁶

Even though Nepali women are vital and productive workers, their contributions have not been recognized, valued, or fully counted in the census. Unremunerated work, particularly in agriculture, is often undervalued and under-recorded as economic activity.¹⁷ Hopefully, UNDP-supported efforts to increase the counting of women's economic contributions in the 2001 census will result in more accurate figures.

Political and Legal Factors

The Constitution provides for the equality of women and men. It states that all citizens are equal in terms of the law and no discrimination can be made on the basis of sex in legal practice, by the state, or in wages for the same work. However, the (public law) undermines that equality in areas such as citizenship, property rights, legal transactions, and migration. For example, a person can obtain Nepalese citizenship if their husband or father is a Nepalese citizen but not on the basis of their wives' or mothers' citizenship. For some time legislators have been debating proposals to change property laws that deny females' rights to a share of the property of their parents and spouse. Transactions carried out by a wife without the consent of her husband are not recognized as legal.¹⁸

Women world-wide have participated in political movements in times of crisis but, once the crisis ended, they have been relegated to the domestic arena. The same has been the case in Nepal. Nepalese women participated widely in political movements of 1951, throughout the underground struggle for democracy during the Panchayat era (1960-1990) and in the mass movement of 1990. Women were instrumental in revitalizing the 1990 movement. Once the multiparty system was restored and the constitution was framed, women were pushed to the periphery.¹⁹ Many Nepalese citizens have been disenfranchised from meaningful political participation on the basis of gender and the caste system.²⁰

Democratic gains, achieved in Nepal since 1990, are threatened by ineffective governance and corruption. The Nepalese Government's unwillingness and incapacity to enforce the laws established by the constitution has crippled the democratic process overall.²¹ The spread of a violent Maoist insurgency in half of the country's districts has generated momentum by criticizing the government of Nepal for failing to represent the interests of the people and by highlighting weaknesses in local government administration.²² The Maoist insurgency has attracted many female and lower caste recruits who lack a voice in the current political system. The All Nepal Women's Association-Revolutionary, affiliated with the Maoist

¹⁶ Ibid. pp. 37-38.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 28.

¹⁸ Beijing Plus Five Review, 1999, pp. 11-12.

¹⁹ Ibid. pp. 42-43.

²⁰ Nepal Democracy and Governance Assessment, October 1999, p. 11.

²¹ Ibid., p.5.

²² USAID/Nepal Country Strategic Plan FY 2001-2005, p. xv.

insurgency, has successfully pressured the government to tighten laws on the use of alcohol nation-wide.²³

Even though legislation mandates that 20 percent of the local elected seats and five percent of parliamentary candidacies should be reserved for women, they have minimal decision-making roles at any level. The constitution stipulates that at least five percent of the total number of candidates running for the House of Representatives from each party must be women. It also requires at least three women in the Upper house. Significant progress was made at the grass roots level with the 1997 Act on Local Elections which required all parties to field at least one female candidate at the ward level. Representation is also mandatory at the Village Development Committee (VDC) and District Development Committee (DDC) levels.²⁴ The 1999 Act on Local Governance requires at least one woman representative and one representative of a marginalized ethnic group at the VDC and DDC level, and sets aside 20 percent of the positions at the ward level for women. It also sets aside development funds for women and marginalized ethnic groups at the VDC and DDC levels.²⁵

The Nepalese civil service is largely dominated by men due to the many constraints on women's participation, particularly their lack of access to education. The revisions to the Civil Service Act in 1998 are expected to facilitate women's entrance into the civil service. The maximum age for entering the Civil Service is 40 for women and only 35 for men. Women are eligible for promotion one year ahead of men. The probation period is one year for men and six months for women.²⁶

INDICATORS OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN NEPAL

In the 2001 Human Development Report, Nepal ranked 129th out of 162 countries on the Human Development Index. While this is an improvement from the ranking of 144th in 2000, Nepal still remains among the countries with a low human development index.²⁷ For the 2001 Gender-related Development Index, which is based on life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rate, combined primary, secondary and tertiary enrollment ratio, and estimated earned income, Nepal ranked 120th.²⁸ Nepal ranked 129th for the Gender Empowerment Measure which is based on seats in parliament held by women, female legislators, senior officials and managers, female professional technical workers, and ratio of estimated female to male earned income.²⁹

²³ "Nepal Imposed Drinking Age Limit," Associated Press, Kathmandu Nepal, August 26, 2001.

²⁴ Women in Nepal, Country Briefing, Asian Development Bank, 1999, p. 43.

²⁵ Local Self-Governance Act 2055 (1999), HMG Ministry of Law and Justice.

²⁶ Women in Nepal, Country Briefing, Asian Development Bank, 1999, p.45.

²⁷ Human Development Report 2001, p. 143; "Nepal Jumps to 129th rank in the HDI ladder," Kathmandu Post July 10

²⁸ Human Development Report 2001, p. 212.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 216.

Health and Fertility

Over the past two decades, there have been significant improvements in women's health status. For example, the life expectancy for women increased 11 years between 1975 and 1993. The reported maternal mortality ratio decreased from 850 deaths per 100,000 live births in the 1980s, to 539 in 1996. The total fertility rate declined from 6.3 in 1976 to 4.6 in 1996.³⁰ Despite this progress, females suffer from poor health more than their male counterparts due to malnutrition, anemia, the lack of facilities to handle pregnancy complications, and diseases related to reproduction.³¹

The life expectancy³² for women is 53.5 years compared with 55.0 years for men, placing Nepal among only three countries in the world where life expectancy is lower for females than for males. Risks related to pregnancy and childbirth account for a great deal of this difference. The maternal mortality ratio in Nepal is one of the highest in the world at 539 deaths per 100,000 live births. Some estimates are as high as 1,500 deaths per 100,000 live births. Even today doctors and nurses assist only an estimated 9 percent of all deliveries. Only 7 percent of the women giving birth in the past five years received antenatal care and 90 percent of the women delivered at home. Following cultural tradition, one fifth of all Nepalese women marry between the ages of 15 and 19. Early marriage results in high-risk pregnancies that contribute to maternal mortality. Failed or incomplete abortions account for as much as 40 percent of all maternal deaths.³³ In addition, an estimated 50-80 percent of women in Nepal are anemic.³⁴

Although the total fertility rate declined from 6.3 in 1976 to 4.1 in 2001, it is still too high. In a patriarchal society such as Nepal, women derive status from their fertility but have little control over it. In Hindu tradition, women are worshipped for their fertility and infertility is considered a curse. Frequent pregnancies impinge on women's health and even their lives. Therefore one of the most important indicators of women's empowerment is control over their fertility.³⁵

The infant and child mortality rates in Nepal are also high. Preliminary results from the suggest that one in every 11 children born in Nepal dies before the age of five. More than 70 percent of these deaths occur in the first year of life.

³⁰ Women in Nepal, Country Briefing, Asian Development Bank, 1999, p.11. Results of the 2001 Demographic and Health survey, available in early 2002 will provide vital new information on this progress.

³¹ Women in Nepal, Country Briefing, Asian Development Bank, 1999, p.11

³² The Women in Nepal Country Briefing notes on p. 11 that , "strictly speaking life expectancy rates cannot be used for comparison of male/female gender status of health since birth and death registration is not widely practiced." The Central Bureau of the Census derives male life expectancy from an estimate of female life expectancy and an assumption that men live longer than women in South Asia.

³³ USAID/Nepal RFA Program Description, Nepal Family Health Program, p. 23.

³⁴ Beijing Plus Five Nepal Review, UNDP, 1999. p 2 of Introduction.

³⁵ Women in Nepal: country Briefing, 1999, p. 9. The 2001 TFR is from the Preliminary Report of the 2001 Nepal DHS.

Infant mortality is 64 deaths per 1000 live births.³⁶
 suggests that there is no gender discrimination reflected in infant mortality.³⁷

However, child mortality rates are higher for girls than boys. Within the under-five group, 125 boys per 1000 die per year compared with 139 per 1000 for girls.³⁸ The major causes of under-five mortality are diarrhea, acute respiratory infection, malnutrition, vitamin A and other micronutrient deficiencies, and measles. Infant and child mortality rates are indicators of women's status for two reasons. First, they reflect social attitudes toward male and female children, and in the case of Nepal, the preference for sons. Boys receive better nutrition, more access to health care, and work less than girls. Second, they shed light on the health situation of women as mothers because high infant and child mortality rates force women to have multiple and wasted pregnancies thus depleting their strength.³⁹

The proportion of the population under 15 has been increasing over the last 20 years, in large part due to the high adult mortality and fertility rates. An estimated 43.5 percent of males and 41.3 percent of females in Nepal are under 15.⁴⁰ This population structure has significant implications for development. The dependency ratio is high. That is, adults are using their resources to support the basic needs a growing group of young people. Many children must work to survive instead of getting an education.

Although HIV/AIDS prevalence on the national level remains low (at 0.2 percent), recent studies indicate a concentrated epidemic in high-risk groups (commercial sex workers, injecting drug users, and migratory workers). There is also an increase in incidence in the Western districts with significant labor migration to India. Trafficking of girls to India also contributes to increasing HIV transmission in the Kathmandu Valley, along transport routes, in the Terai, and in the far western region.⁴¹

³⁶ Preliminary Report: Nepal Demographic and health Survey 2001, p.24.

³⁷ Estimates of infant mortality rates in Nepal differ significantly depending on census versus survey data source, the attributes of particular estimates, and the assumptions about the sex ratio at birth. Census data shows significantly higher mortality rates for female infants. The survey data generally show a higher rate of mortality among male infants. The "Preliminary Report for the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey" recommends caution in interpreting the infant mortality information because it depends on the quality of information collected in the birth history section of the Woman's Questionnaire and women are generally reluctant to talk about their dead children. Mortality data are also subject to large sampling errors (p. 24). The Nepal Human Development Report 1998, Chapter 4, "Health," used both census and survey data for the infant mortality rate and makes the assumption of a sex ratio of 105 male births per 100 female births. The estimated rate for male infants was slightly higher than for female infants. In contrast, the UNDP Beijing Plus Five Nepal review states that the female infant mortality rate is higher, at 104 per 100,000 live births for females and 94 for males, 1998, Introduction, p. 4

³⁸ Women in Nepal: Country Briefing, 1999, p.13

³⁹ Ibid. p. 12

⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 2.

⁴¹ USAID/Nepal Strategic Plan 2000, p. 11, RFA Program Description, Nepal Family Health Program, p. 23.

Education and Literacy

Females have made substantial gains in literacy over the past 25 years, in part due to vigorous campaigns for girls' education starting in the 1970s. However, the gender gap in literacy still remains. The literacy rate⁴² of females aged six and above increased from four percent in 1971 to 25 percent in 1991. This compares with a change from 24 percent in 1971 to 54 percent in 1991 for males. More recent surveys suggest literacy rates of 57 percent for males and 27 percent for females in 1996.⁴³ Female literacy rates vary by age, location, and ethnicity. In 1996 among the 11-14 year age group, 77 percent of the boys were literate and 56 percent of the girls were literate as compared with the over 60 age group with 29 percent literate men and 2 percent literate women.⁴⁴ While 47 percent of adult urban women can read, only 17 percent of their rural counterparts are literate. The high caste groups and a few of the smaller ethnic groups fall in the upper literacy ranges while the lowest-caste groups are relegated to the bottom of the range.⁴⁵

School enrollment, drop out, and attainment rates also reflect a major gender gap in access to education. A girl has more than two and a half times the risk of not attending school. This risk increases with age. For each two boys who drop out of school, there are four girls. The higher the level of education, the lower the representation of females. The enrollment ratios in lower secondary school are 31 percent for girls and 46 percent for boys. In higher secondary school they drop to 6 percent for girls and 16 percent for boys.⁴⁶ As in the case of literacy, there are significant differences in school enrollment based on location and ethnicity/caste.

Political and Civil Service Participation

In 1991 women held 3.4 percent of the seats in parliament.⁴⁷ As of 1997, women constituted only 4 percent of the judiciary's decision-makers.⁴⁸ As a consequence of the 1997 Act on Local Elections, in 1997 more than 100,000 women participated in VDC level elections as candidates and more than 36,000 were elected. Few of these women were elected to executive positions. Women hold 289 out of 3,993 ward chair positions. Women hold 26 out of 8000 VDC chairs and vice chair positions. There are no women mayors, vice mayors, or DDC chairpersons. One woman was elected to a DDC vice chair position.⁴⁹

⁴² Chapter 5, Education and Human Development in the Nepal Human Development Report 1998, cautions that census figures may overestimate functional literacy because literacy tests are not administered. Biases may be result from reporting or enumerator errors or due to parents who exaggerate the degree of literacy achieved by their children. Functional literacy rates are usually exaggerated throughout Asia by 10-25 percent.

⁴³ Women in Nepal: Country Briefing, 1999, p. 14.

⁴⁴ Nepal Human Development Report 1998, Chapter 5, "Education and Human Development."

⁴⁵ Women in Nepal: Country Briefing, 1999, pp. 15-16.

⁴⁶ Ibid. pp. 16-18.

⁴⁷ Nepal Human Development Report, Annex 3.13.

⁴⁸ Women in Nepal, Country Briefing, the Asian Development Bank, 1999, p. 45.

⁴⁹ Women in Nepal, Country Briefing, the Asian Development Bank, 1999, p.44.

Women's participation in the civil service is increasing very slowly. At the officer level, women increased from 3 percent of the people employed in the civil service in 1978 to five percent in 1997. At the non-officer level, women increased from 2.8 percent in 1978 to 3.5 percent in 1997. There are only 3 women in the highest decision making echelons of the civil service.⁵⁰

GENDER MAINSTREAMING BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL

The Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2001)

HMG Nepal's Ninth Five-Year Plan showed significant progress in the integration of gender issues in national policy and programs. The long-term policy is to create a well balanced society in which both males and females will be in the mainstream of development, consistent with the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. The major thrusts of the plan are to mainstream gender issues in development, eliminate gender inequality, and to empower women.

Mainstreaming actions include:

- Mainstreaming women into all sectors of development activities.
- Creating institutional structures for coordinating women in development activities among agencies and organizations.
- Strengthening monitoring and evaluation and development of gender statistics.
- Incorporating household work in national accounts.

Elimination of inequality actions include:

- Reviewing laws that discriminate against women and determining how to reformulate them to incorporate gender equality.
- Establishing affirmative action policies and programs to reduce current inequalities in economic, social, and other areas.
- Strengthening action policies and programs to protect women's rights against all types of violence through coordinated efforts of government, nongovernmental, and local institutions.

Women's empowerment is promoted as a part of the poverty alleviation program. Some of the special provisions include:

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 45.

- Allocating 10 percent of VDC funds for girls and women's education.
- Establishing legal provisions for mandatory representation of women in the formulation of policies and programs at all levels from local to national.
- Ensuring women's rights in ownership in land, and access to agricultural training, marketing, and other income generating activities.
- Developing a health system based on the healthy life cycle approach to a woman's life to ensure wider access to improved facilities for safe motherhood.
- Expanding programs such as female scholarships, recruitment of female teachers, and special facilities in technical education.
- Increasing women's participation in all technical, entrepreneurial, and management training and access to institutional credit.
- Introducing technological improvements in agriculture and other fields to reduce the drudgery of women's work and increase their productivity.⁵¹

Unfortunately, only a few of these actions have been implemented, in part due to the under staffing and under-funding of the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare (MWCSW) that was established as the focal point to mainstream women in programs and policies. MWCSW received 0.10 percent of the budget in 1999.⁵²

The Tenth Five-Year Plan

The Tenth Five-year Plan is now being prepared, based on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), prepared for the World Bank. Multilateral and bilateral donors are assisting the MWCSW in negotiations with the National Planning Commission and other ministries to ensure that gender issues are addressed effectively in the new plan. UNIFEM has formed a think-tank of gender experts. UNIFEM is also facilitating grass roots dialogue about the new five-year plan and sharing these ideas and concerns with the National Planning Commission.

⁵¹ Women in Nepal: Country Briefing, 1999, p69.

⁵² Beijing Plus Five Nepal review, UNDP, 1999.

CHAPTER THREE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

FROM WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT TO GENDER

Initially, efforts to improve the status of women focused on measures to enable women to participate more fully. Thinking then moved to the processes and relations that recreate and reinforce the inequalities between women and men. This led to an emphasis on gender relations that shape life outcomes for both women and men.

Questions emerged regarding the degree to which further integration of women into an unequal development process, without deeper questioning of the development agenda, could change their subordinate position. These questions led to an increased emphasis on women's participation in decision-making and their empowerment to develop and pursue strategies to address their own situation and the direction of social change. Now it is widely recognized that:

- The problem is not women's integration in development or their lack of skills, credit, or resources. It is the social processes and institutions that result in inequalities between women and men, to the disadvantage of women.
- Inequalities between women and men are not only costly to women but to development and a whole. Thus gender inequalities must be addressed as societal and development issues rather than simply a "women's concern."
- There are political as well as technical aspects that must be taken into account in addressing inequalities. It is not merely a matter of "adding women in" to existing programs and processes. It is necessary to reshape those programs and processes to reflect the visions, interests, and needs of women as well as men, and to support gender equality.⁵³

KEY CONCEPTS

It is important to ensure that terms used in the gender assessment are clear so the Mission staff can use them in implementing the gender action plan. This clarification of terms is particularly important because a number of the people interviewed expressed the concern that many people working in development in Nepal think that gender is another word for women.

⁵³ DAC Source Book on Concepts and Approaches to Gender, OECD, 1998, p. 12.

Gender refers to the economic, social, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female. The social definitions of what it means to be male or female and the patterns of gender inequality vary among cultures and change over time.⁵⁴

Gender analysis assesses the differences between men's and women's activities, roles, responsibilities, access to resources, and political voice in order to identify their practical and strategic development needs as well as the constraints and opportunities for meeting those needs. Gender analysis also takes into account differences based on ethnicity, class, religion, age, place of residence, and means of livelihood.

Gender equality is the full and equal participation of women and men in civil, cultural, economic, political, and social life at the local, national and international levels.⁵⁵ Promotion of gender is not simply a "women's concern," but a broad societal issue that women and men need to address in partnership.⁵⁶

Gender mainstreaming: The Beijing Platform for Action states that governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programs, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men respectively. Mainstreaming is the overall strategy adopted in Beijing to support the goal of gender. This includes:

- The integration of gender concerns into the analyses and formulation of all policies, programs, and projects; and
- Initiatives to enable women as well as men to formulate and express their views and to participate in decision-making across all development issues.⁵⁷

Women's empowerment generally refers to the recognition that women legitimately have the ability and should, individually and collectively, participate effectively in decision-making processes that shape their societies and their own lives.⁵⁸ USAID/Nepal defines this term as "the ability of women to improve their well being and that of their communities."⁵⁹ During a customer survey in 1996, rural Nepalese women defined women's empowerment as "a complex set of conditions: being knowledgeable, skilled, confident, having the ability and willingness to share time and skills; able to speak in public, earn money, and generally stand on your own feet."⁶⁰

⁵⁴ As defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation in Development (OECD) Donor Assistance Committee, 1998, p.10.

⁵⁵ As defined in the Beijing Declaration of the Fourth UN World Conference on Women, 1995.

⁵⁶ OECD DAC Guidelines for Gender and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation., p.11.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 12.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Breaking New Ground: A Case Study of Women's Empowerment in Nepal, 1998p. 21.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p.2.

EVOLUTION OF USAID/NEPAL'S PROGRAMS TO EMPOWER WOMEN

Improving Women's Status

USAID/Nepal has been at the cutting edge of USAID women in development and gender and development initiatives since the early days of Agency work in this area. Recognizing the importance of improving women's status to the achievement of sustainable development in Nepal, USAID/Nepal funded eight in-depth ethnographic studies on women's status among different ethnic groups in Nepal in the late 1970s.⁶¹ The studies examined marriage and residence patterns, the division of labor, household decision-making, mobility, and access to resources and income. This set of studies has been an extremely valuable guide for subsequent work to improve women's status. It is particularly important because it demonstrated the need to examine differences between women of different ethnic groups.

USAID/Nepal's first WID Action Plan was drafted and adopted in 1988 and in 1989 it was updated and strengthened. During this period, the Mission funded programs for women's literacy and income generation and integrated women into sector programs. The health sector activities consistently focused on improving women's health by increasing access to quality reproductive health services.

Women's Empowerment

In 1995, as a part of Agency reengineering, USAID/Nepal became the first Mission to include women's empowerment as a strategic objective (SO). The new streamlined Strategic Plan discontinued several programs and merged others under three SOs. Ongoing projects in literacy, economic participation, and legal rights and advocacy were consolidated under SO3, women's empowerment. This was based on the premise that literacy is a key element in women's empowerment, and the positive impact of literacy training is increased when combined with active economic or legal rights and advocacy interventions.⁶²

This was the first time that a Mission had defined what it means to be an empowered woman and assembled the key elements of empowerment in a results framework. The rationale was to go beyond mainstreaming to elevate women beneficiaries to a higher level of priority within the strategic plan and to allow the Mission to measure the impact of its program on women in a more holistic manner. A central hypothesis of SO3 was that WEP interventions would help women empower themselves to change resource allocations in the household, direct expenditures to investment in family well-being, and take more active roles in the community.

In 1997, a new phase of SO3 implementation began when existing SO3 contracts ended and were replaced with an integrated three-year Women's Empowerment Program (WEP). This

⁶¹ The Rural Women of Nepal: Aggregate Analysis of 8 Village Studies, 1981.

⁶² Ibid. pp. 11-12.

was implemented through two cooperative agreements to provide technical support to accomplish the intermediate results of SO3. This program design was based on lessons learned from the first phase of WEP, a baseline survey for program targeting, a customer survey, a case study of female literacy, and technical assistance from USAID/ Washington exploring gender-focused synergies between SOs⁶³ and help in developing the results package.⁶⁴

Phase II of WEP took an integrated approach that combined microfinance, literacy, and women's legal rights and advocacy and focused in one geographical area - the Terai. WEP adopted an innovative approach to savings led credit and village banking, building on existing savings groups. It also generated impressive mobilization of women for collective action on issues of local concern such as excessive male drinking, domestic violence, polygamy, and trafficking of girls.

Other Mission programs also supported women's empowerment during this phase. The health sector program included a health education and literacy activity within its overall strategy. In agriculture and natural resource management, women received literacy and savings and loan training. The Mission has emphasized synergy between the SO programs and requested technical assistance from Washington SO synergies and gender.⁶⁵ Unfortunately, by July 2001, only one staff person remembered the technical assistance and indicated that there had been only one synergy group meeting and no action.

Gender

In 2000, an assessment of SO3 was among the studies conducted in preparation for a new strategic plan. The review team concluded that there were already measurable, tangible behavioral changes in the SO3 indicators after only ten months. Women talked more with their husbands about key household decisions and had more confidence in making decisions themselves. They demonstrated clear tendencies to invest more income in savings and productive endeavors, and they undertook more collective actions in their immediate wards. They were beginning to interact with the wider community. The review team stressed that USAID had very few, if any, programs worldwide that had achieved such a behavioral change impact in such a short amount of time.⁶⁶ They concluded that the WEP program was successful, effective, replicable, sustainable, and should be continued if resources permitted. Other technical assessments that also addressed gender issues included: democracy and governance, forestry, natural resource management, and microenterprise development.

Facing dramatic budget cuts, and earmarks in population and child survival (accounting for 80 percent of the remaining Mission OYB budget), the decision was made to extend the WEP

⁶³ Creating Opportunities for Program Synergy by Focusing on Women: Recommendations for USAID/Nepal, WIDTECH 1997.

⁶⁴ USAID/Nepal's Female Literacy Program Technical Assistance Trip Report, WIDTECH, 1997,

⁶⁵ Creating Opportunities for Program Synergy by Focusing on Women: Recommendations for USAID/Nepal, WIDTECH 1997.

⁶⁶ USAID/Nepal SO3 Review, 1999, p.36.

program one year, close out SO3, and build on the materials developed and lessons learned to integrate women's empowerment into the three SOs of the new Strategic Plan for Nepal, approved in November 2000. In 2001 the Mission requested technical support from USAID/Washington to conduct the present gender assessment of the Mission programs and to develop a gender action plan. The goal was to incorporate the lessons learned from SO3 into other SOs and to comply with the new requirements for gender integration in the automated directives system (ADS).

Expanding key elements of SO3's women's empowerment approach, along with successful approaches taken in SO1 and SO2, is an important next step for USAID/Nepal. The socio-economic indicators cited earlier clearly demonstrate that the low status of women is an impediment to economic development and democracy in Nepal. Hence, the empowerment of women is critical. At the same time, it is essential to understand and track men's and women's changing roles, responsibilities, and access to power and resources in order to achieve women's empowerment. It is also essential to engage men as well as women in the empowerment of women. It is very important to ensure that future women's empowerment activities take a gender perspective and do not slip back into the women-only focus that marginalized women in the past. For these reasons, the term "gender equality" may provide a useful heading for USAID/Nepal's next steps in gender programming. The term incorporates both gender and the empowerment of women. It is also a recognized international goal that is recognized in USAID's Strategic Plan.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ See Annex II Gender Mainstreaming in the USAID Strategic Plan.

CHAPTER FOUR

GENDER ASSESSMENT OF USAID/NEPAL'S STRATEGIC PLAN (2000)

The new strategic plan focuses on three important sectors: health, hydropower, and the governance of key natural resources and selected institutions. It reflects USAID/Nepal's vision for responding to the changing development context in Nepal as well as the changing priorities and resources in the US Agency for International Development. The integrating theme for the strategic plan is better governance for equitable growth because governance is the factor that most affects Nepal's ability to achieve growth with equality.

The USAID/ Nepal Strategic Plan 2000 includes the following Strategic Objectives (SOs):

- SO2: Reduced fertility and protected health of Nepalese families.
- SO4: Increased private sector participation and investment in environmentally and socially sustainable hydropower development.
- SO5: Strengthened governance of natural resources and selected institutions.

Gender is treated as a cross-cutting issue in the strategic plan by incorporating it as an important part of the discussion of synergies among SOs.

USAID's Women's Empowerment Program (SO3) is widely acknowledged to have brought innovation and results to donor efforts to promote women's participation in Civil Society in Nepal. SO 3 interventions have offered basic literacy skills, knowledge of legal rights and advocacy, financial management and collective decision-making, and participation in local governance. The Mission will apply the lessons learned from SO3 to broaden and strengthen public participation in natural resources management and hydropower to include women and more marginalized members of Nepali society.⁶⁸

Women's empowerment is also noted, along with democracy, in the discussion of synergies for SO2:

A USAID/Nepal priority is to strengthen democratic processes in Nepal. Opportunities exist in the health and family planning network of district and community level activities to diffuse a broader message of civic education, rights, and responsibilities in support of social and health services. The Mission will explore using selected modules of the successful women's empowerment program in health education and literacy programs.⁶⁹

SO2: REDUCED FERTILITY AND PROTECTED HEALTH OF NEPALESE FAMILIES

USAID is the lead donor and the largest financial contributor to Nepal for both public and private sector family planning services. SO2 accounts for 80 percent of the Mission budget. The aim of SO2 is to improve health care provider skills, promote behavior change, and

⁶⁸ USAID/Nepal Strategic Plan 2000, p.7.

⁶⁹ USAID/Nepal Strategic Plan 2000, p.12.

ensure contraceptive supply as well as quality of services. SO2 focuses on increased quality of family planning services, increased use of selected maternal and child health services, HIV/STI prevention in high risk groups in target areas, and strengthened capacity to control vector-borne diseases. USAID/Nepal works in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, International NGOs (INGOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to improve family health and family planning services at the community, district, and national level.

Gender Issues in Population, Health, and Nutrition

In 1994, at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, nearly 180 countries reached an unprecedented consensus on a comprehensive 20-year Program of Action. Among its key recommendations, the Program of Action called for universal access to family planning and other reproductive health services by 2015 and specific measures to advance the economic, educational, legal, and health status of women.⁷⁰ By signing the agreements of the ICPD, the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, and their five-year reviews, the United States declared that it would:

- Promote women's empowerment and gender equality;
- Focus on the needs and rights of individual women and men, promoting a comprehensive reproductive health rights approach; and
- Involve women in leadership, planning, implementation, and evaluation of reproductive health programs.⁷¹

These agreements are very important because gender-related obstacles often prevent people from understanding and achieving good reproductive health. Women's lower literacy may limit their access to information about reproductive health, including family planning. The gender dynamics of a couple may make it difficult for a woman to negotiate contraceptive use. Socio-cultural definitions of masculinity that equate virility with the number of children fathered may constrain male use of condoms, even in situations with high risk for STIs (sexually transmitted infections) and HIV/AIDs.

A gender approach to reproductive health identifies gender-related obstacles to reproductive health, designs and implements activities that reduce the obstacles, and uses gender-sensitive quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure success in reducing the barriers. In many instances, activities that reduce gender-related obstacles to reproductive health are only slight modifications of existing activities. For example, a project aimed at improving client-provider interaction through counseling skills training could incorporate discussion of gender to help the providers understand their own gender biases.

⁷⁰ Saving Women's Lives, Protecting Women's Health: U.S. Global leadership in Family Planning, US Department of State and USAID, April 2000, p.7.

⁷¹ Guide for Incorporating Gender Considerations in USAID's family Planning and Reproductive Health RFAs and RFPs, Interagency Working Group, October 2000, p.1.

Common Gender-Based Obstacles to Reproductive Health

- Policy makers or service providers lack awareness of the concept of gender and its importance in achieving PHN objectives.
- Cultural constraints limit dialogue on reproductive health issues between providers and clients.
- Cultural constraints limit discussions on reproductive health issues with a spouse.
- Cultural beliefs restrict use of certain family planning methods or health services
- Providers hold biases about certain types of clients (based on gender and other socio-cultural factors such as ethnicity).
- Female options throughout life are limited due to differential access to education between girls and boys.
- Gender differentials in participation in decision-making in the household and community limit access to PHN services and female input into assessment of needs.
- Time constraints limit women's access to PHN services due to multiple responsibilities in the household.
- Restrictions on women's mobility limit their access to PHN services.⁷²

There are many opportunities to overcome gender-based obstacles and promote gender equality in reproductive health programs. Censuses and surveys, such as the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), can provide accurate data on gender differentials at the population level as well as information on the effects of population, health, and nutrition (PHN) programs. Bringing under-represented groups, such as women's health advocates, into policy dialogue, can ensure that gender issues, including women's empowerment, are an integral part of each stage of the entire policy process. Operations research can identify gender-related barriers and ways to overcome them in specific contexts.

Communications programs can help communities promote gender equality and understand how gender disparities negatively impact human sexuality, maternal health, reproductive health, and relationships, and increase family violence. They can also promote reproductive rights and reproductive health literacy. Gender training for PHN managers and providers facilitates their understanding of the influence of gender norms on interactions with clients, clients' access to services, and reproductive health.

Addressing the gender dynamics that hinder access to and use of family planning services can promote improved reproductive health. Women's autonomy and decision-making can be reinforced and appropriate male participation can be promoted through the means by which services are delivered as well as which services are available.

Contraceptive and logistics management offers opportunities for overcoming gender-based obstacles to reproductive health as well. By analyzing decisions about which contraceptives are selected to go where and by what process, gender biases can be identified. Logistics systems can address limited access by expanding delivery endpoints to include a wider range of actors such as women's groups and other non-clinical delivery points. Design and

⁷² Adapted from *Mainstreaming Gender in Monitoring and Evaluation: A Practical Tool for Reproductive Health and Nutrition Programming*, prepared by the Interagency Gender Working group, August 2001 draft.

management of logistics systems can provide opportunities to increase participation in the program and make it more responsive to users.⁷³

Gender Issues in Health and Family Planning in Nepal

The socioeconomic indicators cited in the “Country Context” section offer a grim picture of the status of people in Nepal as a whole and the significantly worse status of females compared with males. Women have shorter life expectancy and very high maternal mortality rates, in part, because women have very limited access to health care services. In some areas, beliefs about the impurity of women during menstruation and childbirth require women to deliver babies and spend the post partum period outside the house in animal sheds with mud floors and cow dung. Childbirth in these sheds increases the threat of infection to both the mother and her infant.⁷⁴

Infant and child mortality rates are high and there is a neglect of girls’ health. Women have little control over their own fertility. The fertility rate is high, contraceptive use is low, and there is a significant unmet need for contraception.⁷⁵ The “Strategic Analysis to Operationalise the Second Long Term Health Plan,” conducted by the MOH with World Bank support, in preparation for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), notes that gender is one of several factors affecting equality of access to health services and health status. Others include caste, ethnic group, age, and area of residence (rural/urban; east-central-western regions).⁷⁶

The same study also identified a “gender mismatch” between service users and service providers in Nepal. Women are underrepresented in paid positions in the health sector, particularly in decision-making roles such as medical officer and paramedicals. The report suggests that the scarcity of women workers could limit women’s access to health care. This problem lies at the sub-post and district levels where more serious health problems are referred, not at the community level where unpaid women volunteers deliver basic health services.⁷⁷

Highlights of SO2 Gender Equality Activities and Outcomes

SO2’s new family planning and maternal and child health bilateral program supports gender and women’s empowerment. Approximately 50 percent of the level of effort is focused on strengthening community based delivery services to improve health status of women and children. The two specific areas of focus are (1) increasing male involvement in decision

⁷³ Guide for Incorporating Gender into USAID’s Family Planning and Reproductive Health RFAs and RFPs, Interagency Gender Working Group, 2000, pp.3-4).

⁷⁴ Birthing Practices Study: Remote Area Basic Needs Project, May 1999.

⁷⁵ Women in Nepal: Country Briefing, Asian Development Bank, 1999, pp. 9-14.

⁷⁶ Strategic Analysis to Operationalise Second Long Term Health Plan, Nepal Draft Report, HMGN and World Bank, February 2000, p.22.

⁷⁷ Ibid. p.32.

making about women's reproductive health and; (2) enhancing local government's knowledge of the importance of quality reproductive health services and their involvement to ensure access and availability at the most peripheral levels of health care delivery. Significant efforts are being made at the national, district, and community level to further strengthen the role and further empower the 46,000 female community health volunteers in Nepal. Improving adolescent reproductive health is a cross-cutting theme for the new bilateral program because Nepal has a very young population and traditional views have limited adolescents' access to family planning information and contraceptives.

Women's empowerment is implicit in many of the family planning and family health interventions employed in SO2. For example, women's access to contraceptives to control their fertility is a significant factor in women's empowerment and their ability to negotiate with their husbands to use condoms. Sophisticated information, education communication and behavior change interventions (IEC/BCI) are based on careful analysis of the target audiences by gender and other social variables.

- USAID, UNFPA, and UNICEF are providing primary support for 46,000 Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs). As Nepal's largest cadre of health workers, they increase access to health care for women and girls. These regularly trained volunteers provide information and services to control diarrheal diseases, pneumonia, Vitamin A deficiency, and promote family planning and safe motherhood. Distribution of high dose Vitamin A tablets by FCHVs has saved the lives of an estimated 30,000 children per year. FCHVs are change agents in their communities and work with mothers groups on community development projects. They overcome gender-based obstacles to health service and family planning access and they can promote gender equality. More than 10 percent of the FCHVs have been elected in the local government positions.
- Between 1995 and 2003, 66,000 women will have completed health education literacy courses through the Health Education Adult Literacy (HEAL) program. Women learn about family planning, safe motherhood, nutrition, child health, and hygiene, as well as the prevention of HIV/AIDS, STIs, and other infectious diseases. Their awareness is raised regarding anti-trafficking. There is ample evidence that women's literacy contributes significantly to increased family planning use and other appropriate health seeking behaviors, as well as increased women's empowerment and progress toward gender equality. [Congressional earmarks for use of USAID health sector funds do not permit USAID/Nepal to support the delivery of large-scale literacy courses. USAID/Nepal has developed an approach to integrate health education and literacy to simultaneously improve the women's literacy as well as their knowledge of health and practice of good health behavior. This approach will be continued under the new FP/MOH bilateral activity.]
- Innovative radio programs on family planning have targeted general audiences through serial dramas. At the same time they reach health workers through distance education programs. Potential family planning users and health workers receive the same information through different media formats relevant to their needs. Distance education has reached about 12,000 clinic-based providers. An evaluation of the program showed

that counseling skills improved and client satisfaction also improved. The serial drama radio programs have contributed to an 11 percent increase in the contraceptive prevalence rate in the districts studied. The radio dramas include carefully scripted characters who promote positive behaviors. One example is the “caring male” who appreciates the contribution of his wife to the household and makes joint decisions with her regarding family planning options.

- The Safe Motherhood Network is comprised of over 70 organizations working in maternal health, particularly at the grass roots level. It provides a forum for diverse groups to collaborate at the national level to advocate for safe motherhood. The network secretariat, funded by USAID, organizes national events, disseminates information, and distributes safe motherhood booklets to female literacy classes. It also advocates for safe motherhood policies aimed at improving services to reduce Nepal’s high maternal mortality rate.
- HIV/AIDs behavioral studies in Nepal look at unbalanced power relationships between men clients and women commercial sex workers (CSWs), to identify the most affective approaches to help CSWs effectively negotiate with their clients on condom use.
- CARE conducted a “Birthing Practices Study in Bajura District” ⁷⁸(a remote hill area) in 1999 through the Safe Motherhood Program. The study revealed that significant progress has been made towards safer deliveries but the change has been slow due to deeply rooted cultural beliefs and practices regarding the impurity of women during childbirth. The safe home delivery kits designed for use in this setting include: plastic, soap, a razor blade, a clean cutting surface, string, and instructions. The researchers found that 20-50 percent of the women in Bajura used the safe home delivery kits introduced by the USAID program. The study findings were shared at a national conference attended by donors and other agencies working in maternal health care.
- In 2001, a Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) was conducted, updating the 1996 DHS figures. The modules on Women’s Status and Male Involvement were also used. When the results are available (early in 2002) this will be a valuable resource for assessing progress toward women’s empowerment and gender equality.
- In the summer of 1991 a study was initiated to examine volunteerism in the health sector in Nepal. Key issues addressed included:
 - Documenting the various definitions of volunteerism, types of community health volunteer programs, and approaches to volunteerism.
 - Identifying types of supervision used, the relationship of volunteers to the government system, and payments/incentives provided.
 - Studying the types and activities of mothers’ groups and other women’s groups; and examining lessons learned from working with community health volunteers and proposals for including them in other activities.

⁷⁸ Birthing Practices Study: Remote Area Basic Needs Project, May 1999.

When the study results are available, this will be a valuable resource that will inform efforts to promote gender in the other SOs as well.⁷⁹

Suggestions for Strengthening Gender Integration in SO2

The recommendations are organized according to the intermediate results (IRs) and supporting activities described in the strategic plan. They also include activities described in the RFA for the new bilateral program that will implement some of the SO2 program portfolio. Several suggestions apply to both IR2.1 and IR 2.2. These are listed after the suggestions specific to those IRs.

The development of the work plan for the new bilateral program will be an excellent opportunity for the Mission to ensure that its activities: build on the excellent gender sensitive work of the current program, take a gender approach using the strategies proposed by the Interagency Gender Working Group shown below, and coordinate with the implementers of SO 4 and SO 5 regarding the possible gender synergies noted at the end of this section. As the Mission continues to consolidate PHN projects and begins to develop new results packages, it will be useful to use the Interagency Gender Working Group “Guidelines for Incorporating Gender Considerations in Family Planning and Reproductive Health RFAs and RFPs,” to comply with the gender requirements of the ADS for activity design and procurement.

Strategies to Facilitate a Gender Perspective in Population and Health

- Assess gender norms and the opportunities and constraints they create for achieving reproductive health objectives.
- Assess the potential impact of program goals and outcomes on gender equality.
- Encourage participation from project inception to evaluation.
- Demonstrate institutional commitment to gender equality and gender expertise.
- Empower communities to promote reproductive health and gender equality.
- Provide a variety of sexual and reproductive health services.
- Promote a multisectoral approach.
- Identify key variables to evaluate, monitor, and analyze progress in promoting reproductive health and gender equality.

IR 2.1: Increased Use of Quality Family Planning Services

Activities supporting this IR will result in increased use of contraceptives and a decrease in total fertility rate by 2005. Activities include IEC/BCI, competency based in-service and pre-service training, appropriate monitoring and supervision of health care providers and

⁷⁹ Research Proposal for the Study of Volunteerism in the Health Sector of Nepal, prepared by Dr. Judith Justice, April 2001.

services, development of a cadre of informed consumers demanding quality services, and donor coordination for contraceptive procurement.

- A gender issue related to IEC/BCI activities in the new bilateral program is the additional focus on male involvement and adolescents. Experience has shown that directing family planning programs exclusively to women is less effective than gaining acceptance by both partners. On the other hand, promoting male involvement requires careful attention to gender power relations and the promotion of gender equality to ensure that existing inequalities are not exacerbated. Current USAID-funded radio dramas (described in “Highlights of SO2 Gender Activities and Outcomes”) that promote positive behaviors, such as the “caring male,” are powerful tools to promote appropriate adult and adolescent male involvement.
- Comprehensive family planning services activities in the new bilateral program will include assessments to better understand the unmet needs of both adult females and adolescents. It will be very important to examine the socio-cultural context and gender power relations of adolescent girls and boys with the same sensitivity that it has been examined in USAID-funded research on behaviors affecting HIV/AIDs transmission in Nepal. This suggestion also applies to IR 2.3.
- Integrating gender into pre-service and in-service training is an important complement to clinical reproductive health training. Training on gender and reproductive health developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) Department of Reproductive Health and Research, Harvard School of Public Health, and Witwatersrand University in South Africa is a good model.⁸⁰ The core curriculum features the following topics:
 - Social determinants of health and illness.
 - Gender - how gender concepts are socially constructed, maintained, and reinforced and how they influence development and health.
 - Reproductive rights.
 - Application of gender analysis in health research.
 - Making policies effective and promoting gender equality.
 - Health systems and the impact of gender relations on planning and organization.
 - Community participation is also an important training topic.

IR 2.2: Increased Use of Selected Maternal and Child Health Services

The activities under this IR will result in further reduction of the maternal and infant mortality rates by 2005. Activities include a strong emphasis on service delivery at the community level through FCHVs, continued support for the Safe Motherhood Network, efforts to enhance the policy environment, improved coordination among partners

⁸⁰“Training in Gender and Reproductive Health,” in Progress in Human Reproduction Research, No. 50, 1999UNDP/UNFPA/WHO Special Program of Research, Development, and Research Training in Human Reproduction, , p. 7.

implementing safe motherhood programs, and improved quality of services and training curricula in emergency and obstetric care.

- FCHV's can play important roles in strengthening VDC and other relevant management committees' ability to assess and manage local health needs. It could be useful to include health needs assessment in refresher training for FCHVs, using the basic approach introduced in the needs assessment training for women political representatives.
- Recognizing the important roles that the pool of women trained through HEAL can play as change agents in their communities, the new bilateral program should encourage their involvement in the community health development activities with FCHVs. This participation can also help the HEAL graduates use and retain their literacy skills and serve as role models for other women.
- It will be very helpful to place the HEAL materials on the Internet so they can be accessed easily by INGOs and their NGO partners for literacy and health education.
- It is important to continue and expand the community-based Safe Motherhood health education sessions, facilitated by male animators, that teach men about danger signs in pregnancy and how to develop emergency transportation plans.
- For IEC/BCI activities in the new bilateral, the existing national media-based campaigns may need to be expanded to support a focus on maternal and child health, adolescents, and male involvement, and reinforced with consistent supportive communication and outreach at the district and community levels. This integrated communication approach provides a powerful means to amplify the communication about gender equality that has already been transmitted through USAID-funded radio dramas for the general public, in coordination with distance learning for health workers.

IR 2.1 and IR 2.2

- Encourage and support the FCHV's community development work with mothers' groups to promote gender equality in nutrition and access to health care and family planning services. They can accomplish this by making women aware of their own worth, their rights, and their nutritional needs as well the importance of providing food, health care, and education equally to daughters and sons. The materials developed for the Women's Empowerment Program are likely to be very useful tools for this work.
- Continue the use of roving male animators who work with men on understanding health and family planning issues and use this as an opportunity to explain the value of women's and girls' economic contributions and the importance of their health, nutrition, and education.
- The Strategic Analysis of the Health Sector, noted earlier, also stated that the concept of "community participation," the cornerstone of equality, is not clearly or consistently

defined. This concept is neither fully understood nor trusted by many staff at the central and district level of the MOH. Community level participation in the management of health services is very limited. Given this context, success in strengthening VDC health assessment and management capabilities will be improved by developing a better understanding of community participation, linked to gender equality, as a part of central and district level in-service training.

- It will be important to provide in-service gender training for male and female health workers at the district level. This training needs to emphasize a client focus, and include the social determinants of health, how gender concepts are socially created, maintained and reinforced, and how gender bias can affect service delivery, as well as women's reproductive rights.
- The under-representation of women in paid, decision-making positions in the health system is a major challenge to be addressed in the long term by increasing females' access to education and opportunities for work in the health sector. Pre-service training is one area where the small pool of qualified female health workers can be increased. In-service training should provide a means for women to advance in the health system. It is important to identify strategies for increasing the number of women in paid, decision-making health sector positions. The 1998 Civil Service Law provisions might be helpful.

IR 2.3: Increased HIV/STI Prevention and Control Practices by High-Risk Groups in Targeted Areas

The activities supporting this IR will decrease transmission of HIV/AIDs by 2001. The program focuses on primary prevention activities with targeted high-risk groups in the border areas and the Kathmandu valley. Because the risk of contracting HIV/AIDs is high among trafficked persons, IR2.3 activities will be linked to and mutually supportive of other USAID and US Mission anti-trafficking programs.

- It is important to continue sending messages to male seasonal migrant laborers about STIs and their responsibilities for protecting their wives' health through condom use.
- It is also important to continue the operations research on gender dynamics in HIV/AIDs transmission and prevention and the study of adolescent behavior affecting reproductive health. These studies of gender relations may have wider application to other SOs.

Suggestions for Strengthening Gender Integration in SO2 Performance Monitoring for the R4

- Use data from the recent Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), particularly the Women's Status and Male Involvement modules, to compare the health status data on women and men, as well as changes in gender attitudes and behavior. Share the DHS

gender data analysis with MOH decision-makers, partners, and other SO teams and discuss the implications for program activity.

- Include a brief summary of the DHS analysis in the introductory narrative of the R4. Also consider preparing a special annex on gender as a cross-cutting issue to elaborate the gender data from the DHS in more detail than the R4 text format allows. The gender annex should also include gender-related findings from the volunteerism study as well as relevant data from other SOs.
- In the introductory narrative for the R4, include brief descriptions of activities that aim to reduce disparity in health and nutrition of girls and boys. Also include other activities carried out to overcome gender-biased obstacles to health and family planning, such as operational research and IEC/BCI.

Indicator 2.1.4: Number of Health Workers Trained to Competency in Family Planning

This indicator is already disaggregated by sex, cadre of health worker, and training course. Given the disparity in numbers of female and male health workers in the health system, and a reluctance in the Nepalese civil service, as a whole, to offer training opportunities to women, this will be a valuable tool to monitor and leverage female access to training.

Indicator 2.2: Under-Five Mortality Rate

The Performance Indicator Reference Sheet states that this indicator can be disaggregated by sex and region. Because of the disparity between male and female children's mortality rates, it is important to monitor this indicator by sex and by region. This will inform programming where the most at risk groups of girl children are located so that special measures can be taken to reach them through FCHVs. Over time this indicator should show a reduction in the gender disparity in survival and an increase in survival for children overall.

Indicator 2.2.2: Children with Pneumonia Symptoms Given Appropriate Treatment in Intervention Districts

Given the higher mortality rates of girls, and their more limited access to health services, it would be valuable to gender-disaggregate these data for a sample of the population to monitor where gender differentials in health access are continuing to occur. If discrepancies are significant, it may be necessary to expand monitoring to guide the development of strategies to address the barriers to female access.

SO2 Synergies with Other SOs

It is important to coordinate with other SO teams to encourage the participation of HEAL trainees in natural resource management, advocacy, support for women candidates, and stakeholder committees in hydropower communities. It is also important to share summaries of the gender-related findings of the DHS and the Voluntarism study.

Synergy with SO4

SO4 EIA/SIA requires assessment of the human health impacts of dams.⁸¹ Increase in STIs and HIV/AIDs has occurred with the influx of construction workers building the dams.⁸² Experience worldwide indicates that the issue of equality gap is at the root of adverse health impacts of dams. The VDC, FCHVs, and mother' groups can play important roles in health assessments and community participation for communities with hydropower projects.

PHN IEC/BCI activities at the national, district, and community levels can also be vehicles for transmission of targeted messages that also support other SOs - human health and dams for SO4, and the inter-relationship between population, resources, the environment, and development (from the ICPD, Cairo Conference Fifteen Principles) for SO5. The street theater project on population and environment conducted by the International Conservation Union, UNFPA, The Ministry of Population and Environment, and the National Planning Commission could provide some valuable lessons learned.

Synergy with SO5

The new SO2 bilateral program (strengthening MCH-FP delivery at the community level) will strengthen VDC and relevant management committees' capacity to address local health needs in coordination with health staff. Because SO5 is also working on VDC capacity, with an emphasis on transparent use of funds, this promises to be a good area for coordination. It will be useful to explore the feasibility of including local health needs assessment and management as a part of the curriculum for women representatives, as well as FCHVs.

SO4: INCREASED PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION AND INVESTMENT IN ENVIRONMENTALLY AND SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE HYDROPOWER DEVELOPMENT

Hydropower projects generate power that can be used to electrify rural areas. Availability of electricity can generate production opportunities in agro-processing and other post-harvest

⁸¹ Draft Scoping Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of hydropower projects. DED, HMG Nepal, Annex 7.

⁸² Dams and Development: A New Framework for Decision-making, Chapter 4, Social Performance, World Commission on Dams, 2000, p. 119.

activities. At the same time, policies are needed to ensure fair, equitable distribution of the benefits of hydropower.

USAID activities under SO4 focus on strengthening the technical capacity and procedures of the Department of Electricity Development (DOED), and to a lesser extent other institutions, in analyzing, planning, and developing environmentally and socially sustainable small⁸³ hydropower projects. This includes improving the regulatory enabling environment, strengthening environmental and social impact assessment (EIA/SIA) procedures, and broadening stakeholder participation.

SO4 began as a special objective under the previous strategic plan. The new strategic plan states that SO4 will build on lessons learned from Special Objective 4, SO1, and SO3 to promote greater public participation in decision-making, impact monitoring, and benefit sharing related to hydropower investments. The lessons from the other SOs will be incorporated in guidelines and best practices for engaging the participation of all stakeholders in the EIA/SIA process. The DOED can encourage the use of these guidelines by private sector hydropower project proponents in public disclosure and consultation, including environmental impact assessments, impact mitigation strategies, and the monitoring and implementation of those strategies.

While the results package, reflected in the RFP for the technical support contract for SO4, does not present a gender analysis, very significantly, it includes gender in the criteria for evaluating proposals. Proposals must identify and address gender considerations in all activities and provide specific mechanisms, procedures, and appropriate targets.

Gender Issues in Hydropower

The World Commission on Dams Report (2000) observes that the gender-blindness of most dam projects worldwide has increased gender disparities by imposing a disproportionate share of the social costs on women without giving them a fair share of the benefits. In assessing impacts and determining compensation, there has been a tendency to link women with household activities and ignore their important roles in agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry. Women are rarely compensated for resource access lost due to dam construction. Loss of resources such as fishing areas has accelerated male labor migration and increased the workload of women.⁸⁴

Because many health concerns are associated with the interface between land and water, the health impacts of many small dams may be equal to or greater than the impact of a few large dams of equal total volume.⁸⁵

⁸³ Small hydropower projects are those involving grid-connected stations below 10 MW, USAID/Nepal Strategic Plan, p. 19.

⁸⁴ Dams and Development: A New Framework for Decision-making, Chapter 4, Social Performance, World Commission on Dams, 2000, p.114.

⁸⁵ Health and Human Dams, World Health Organization, 1999, p. 11.

Dam projects have also had positive impacts on communities. There have been cases where dams have provided benefits to everyone in the community, including women, through increased availability of water for household uses, electricity that reduces effort required for household chores, provision of social services, and increased family income from irrigated agriculture. A few dam projects have provided opportunities to give property rights to women through land tenure reform.⁸⁶

Gender Issues in Hydropower in Nepal

Even though Nepal has enacted strong, comprehensive environmental regulations governing the assessment of environmental and social impacts, the government agencies charged with review of EIA/SIA have limited experience, technical capacity, and resources to fully address issues in this area. Even though the law requires public disclosure and consultation regarding proposed hydropower projects, the process has been very “top- down” and directive. The fora for public consultation remain largely inaccessible to uneducated and marginalized people, including women and lower caste groups.⁸⁷

Some Nepalese civil society organizations have expressed concern about poor and inadequate compensation for persons affected by dam projects in the past, stressing that the losers have been poor farmers, fishermen, and indigenous communities and the winners have been the wealthy developers and elites located in large cities that receive more electricity. They have noted problems with resettlement, water rights, threats to traditional livelihood, and conflict over local benefits, even in smaller dam projects.⁸⁸

The Nepalese Civil Service is largely dominated by men due to the many constraints on women’s participation, particularly their limited access to education. In addition, hydropower is a field that is male dominated in most countries, including Nepal. Recent efforts to involve women in EIA/SIA training and workshops, conducted when SO 4 was a Special Objective, encountered resistance from male bureaucrats who saw no reason to train their female colleagues. At the community level, women rarely attended public meetings on hydropower projects.

Given the social, cultural, and legal constraints on women and lower caste people in Nepal, their the heavy dependence on common natural resources, and their lack of property rights, it is very important to incorporate gender analysis and to ensure participation of women and lower caste groups as stakeholders and professionals in the EIA/SIA process.

⁸⁶Ibid. pp. 115-116.

⁸⁷ USAID/Nepal Strategic Plan 2000, p.21.

⁸⁸ Dams and Civil Society in Nepal, Pandey Bikash, World Commission on Dams, 1998.

Highlights of SO4 Gender Equality Activities and Outcomes

- The draft “Scoping Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment of Hydropower Projects,” drafted by DOED in collaboration with USAID, includes gender as one of the major environmental indicators for the scoping matrix.
- The draft “DOED Manual for Public Involvement in the Environmental Impact Assessment Process of Hydropower Projects” stresses the importance of involving women and the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the EIA/SIA process. It also notes that these stakeholders are often the most difficult to identify and get involved. Hence, it is important to engage them from the very beginning of the process.
- In recent years in Nepal, increased private sector participation in hydropower projects has resulted in the construction of schools, clinics, and roads that have benefited communities, including women and children.
- Electrification of community development has had a positive effect on women as well as men and children in Andhi Khola. Electrification has decreased the labor required for household chores and increasing safety.⁸⁹

Suggestions for Strengthening Gender Integration in SO4

Because the activities under SO 4 will take place under a new contract, these suggestions are based on the activities proposed in the Strategic Plan for USAID/Nepal (2000), the Request for Proposals (RFP) for technical support for SO4, and the Program Performance Monitoring Plan.

In the review of the proposals to support SO4, it will be important to examine evidence of an understanding of gender issues in Nepal, strategies to actively address gender, gender analysis expertise in the consultant pool, and plans to gender-disaggregate monitoring and evaluation data. The start up of a new program that is required to address gender by the evaluation criterion for proposals places USAID/Nepal in an excellent position to initiate and maintain a strong emphasis on gender equality and participation in a challenging sector. The development of annual work plans and reports for this contract provide the Mission opportunities to ensure that the proposed gender equality activities and monitoring plans are fully developed and on track. It is also a good time to encourage coordination with relevant implementers of SO 2 and SO 5 on the areas of possible synergy noted at the end of the SO 4 section.

⁸⁹ The Andhi Khola Hydel and Rural Electrification Project: Success Stories in Environmentally and Socially Sound Hydropower Development. International Resources Group, February, 1999.

IR 4.1: Improved Enabling Environment for Equitable and Sustainable Hydropower Development

Staff implementing the Hydropower Special Objective Program for USAID strongly recommended gender sensitization of men in DOED and other key institutions to make them aware of the importance of the participation female colleagues and women in communities, and to make very clear the long term costs of leaving women out of the process. Such awareness is an important aspect of the enabling environment necessary to facilitate women's participation in hydropower at all levels.

- Conduct gender awareness training for DOED and other institutions involved in hydropower. Raise the issue of gender and caste equality in technical assistance and training to facilitate of a policy dialogue between government and civil society groups on benefit sharing policies and their implementation. Include this issue in targeted training for the media. Discuss why it is important to assure that women and lower caste groups also share the benefits from the hydropower.
- Stress that messages need to be targeted to women and lower caste groups as a part of technical assistance to develop and implement outreach and education programs to inform target audiences of key issues. Given their low literacy rates, encourage use of a wide range of media, including pictures illustrating critical information, and animators who can explain the process in clear and concrete terms.

IR 4.2: Strengthened Environmental and Social Soundness Procedures, with Broadened Stakeholder Participation

The Scoping Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment of Hydropower Projects, drafted by DOED in collaboration with USAID, include gender as one of the major environmental indicators for the Scoping Matrix. "Gender issues" falls under the heading of "culture" in the Scoping Matrix, along with belief systems, traditions, socio-cultural values, caste, and ethnicity. However, there are no details regarding the type of information to be collected about gender issues. The Draft DOED Manual for Public Involvement in the Environmental Impact Assessment Process of Hydropower Projects, stresses the importance of engaging women, the most vulnerable, and the disadvantaged early in the EIA/SIA process because these stakeholders are often the most difficult to identify and get involved. But it does not offer tactics for increasing the participation of women and other excluded groups.

- Develop guidelines for addressing gender as a cross-cutting issue in EIA/SIA and specify the type of information that needs to be collected on "gender issues" for the Scoping Matrix.
- Revise the draft "Manual for Public Involvement in the Environmental Impact Assessment Process of Hydropower Projects" to include tactics to involve those who are usually excluded. Including a woman on the EIA/SIA team is valuable but not a

sufficient to ensure women’s participation. FCHVs, local women’s and natural resource management user groups might be able to provide vital assistance in outreach to women and disadvantaged ethnic groups. The FAO, and ⁹¹ provide some useful tactics and participatory techniques for social inclusion.

- Strengthen technical support for development of procedures to improve public awareness, disclosure, and public participation in hydropower project EIA/SIA and implementation by applying the following approaches from the World Commission on Dams “Guidelines for Good Practice”:
 - A gender and caste sensitive participation plan.
 - Stakeholder analysis that includes women and lower caste stakeholders and identifies ways to overcome constraints on their participation.
 - Strategies for democratic identification and participation of stakeholder committee members.
 - Incorporation of gender analysis in social baseline construction.
 - Distributional analysis of winners and losers.
 - Impoverishment Risk Analysis.
 - Participatory development of mitigation plans that address the impoverishment risks for women and lower caste groups and ensure that they share in the hydropower benefits.
 - Gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation.

- Include the following points in technical assistance and applied training for DOED, Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) and other relevant GON agencies in EIA/SIA procedures, and public consultation. Also include them in the training and technical support to develop local private capacity for EIA/SIA/s:
 - Gender sensitive participation plans.
 - Stakeholder analysis emphasizing the importance of including women and lower caste people, and involving them in stakeholder committees.
 - Discussion of specific strategies for involving women and lower caste people.
 - Review of the roles and responsibilities of stakeholder committees detailed in the DOED public participation manual, particularly in providing input into the mitigation plans and where needed, vulnerable community development plans.
 - Training on participatory approaches, including participatory monitoring and evaluation, and gender resource mapping.
 - Training on social baseline assessment and gender sensitive methods for conducting them.

⁹⁰ Located at www.fao.org/sd/seaga.

⁹¹ Located at www.worldbank.org/participation.

- Introduction of the Impoverishment Risk and Reconstruction Model, described in Annex D of the DOED Manual for Public Involvement in the EIA process for Hydropower Projects, including its attention to gender and caste disparities.
- The Impoverishment Risk and Reconstruction Model is a valuable tool for training workshops, seminars, partnerships, and other regional information exchanges that engage media, NGOs, federations, and elected bodies in positive efforts to resolve natural resource and equality issues. Explore the potential to coordinate these SO4 activities with SO5 activities to strengthen the organizational skills of women and men in natural resource user groups and to build advocacy skills.
- Include a requirement for skills in gender analysis in the standards to be developed for accrediting EIA/SIA professionals.
- Incorporate gender-sensitive participatory methods and more quantitative gender sensitive survey methods in impact monitoring and evaluation of the benefits and equality issues of recently completed hydropower projects. This will help ensure that the positive and negative impacts on women and lower caste groups are identified, analyzed, and used to inform future projects. Disseminate the findings through the media and NGOs, and send reports to DOED, other relevant institutions, and project proponents.

Suggestions for Strengthening Gender Integration in SO4 Performance Monitoring

Indicator 4.2.1: Number of Approved Environmental Social Impact Assessments that Meet or Exceed International Guidelines

In further defining and measuring this indicator, it is very important to prepare a list of specific criteria from the International Guidelines that need to be addressed in EIA/SIA work under this SO. Include the following criterion from the International Guidelines on that list:

- Mitigation plans address impoverishment risks to women and lower caste groups and define specific hydropower project benefits they will receive.
- Consider using an independent expert review panel, as recommended in the World Commission on Dams, to monitor the extent to which the assessments meet the International Guidelines. The expert review panel members can also serve as mentors to provide additional targeted technical assistance to DOED if needed to meet the standards.

Indicator 4.2.2: Public Hearings for Hydropower Projects Conducted with Local Stakeholders and Affected Communities

It is clearly beyond the manageable interest of the Mission to report on the actual stakeholder participation in the public meetings. However, the Mission can ask the contractor to encourage and help DOED and the developer to document stakeholder participation by gender and caste, to record concerns expressed by gender and caste, and to report to the Mission on the outcomes. This reporting will emphasize the importance of taking into account women's and lower caste views. This also will enable the Mission and the contractor to assess the extent to which women and lower caste people are being included in the EIA process and identify any need for additional targeted technical assistance and training on community participation.

Indicator 4.2.3: Number of Professionals Trained in Reviewing Environmental/Social Impact Assessment

Given the importance of social impact assessment and the complexity of Nepalese culture and society, the DOED "Manual for Public Involvement in the Environmental Impact Assessment Process of Hydropower Projects" recommends an interdisciplinary approach using a team that includes one or more social scientists (preferably an anthropologist) along with environmental scientists and local stakeholders. It also recommends including a woman on the EIA/SIA team to address women's issues and perspectives.

Given this guidance, the indicator needs to be gender-disaggregated. A realistic target for female participation will depend on the pool of female professionals available. Because the assessment is an interdisciplinary endeavor, and requires social scientists, it will provide a larger pool of available females than would a narrower focus on environmental specialists. The target for females should be no lower than 30 percent of the trainees and preferably 50 percent.

SO4 Synergies with Other SOs

SO2

Health and sanitation are major indicators required for EIA/SIA assessment in Nepal. This includes waterborne diseases, introduced diseases (including STIs and HIV/AIDs brought by workers building the dams) sanitation, and the psychological environment, This provides a natural link with SO2 and SO) work on HIV/AIDs as well as SO2 work to improve quality of maternal and child health care and to strengthen VDCs and relevant committees' ability to address health needs.

Experience world-wide indicates that women, children, and marginalized groups experience more of the adverse effects of dam projects. The report on Human Health and Dams,

prepared for the World Commission on Dams by the World Health Organization, stresses that the issue of inequality is at the root of adverse health impacts of dams. The health risks resulting from inequality need to be identified at an early stage and managed as an integral part of dam design, construction, and operation. Female Community Health Volunteers will be valuable resources for the EIA/SIA health assessments.

SO5

Synergies between SO4 and SO5 are already noted in the Country strategic plan. While SO4 largely targets the government with its technical assistance, SO5 has the potential to complement this with its community-level focus. SO5 activities could build organizational and advocacy skills to promote gender and ethnic equality in a democratic process for hydropower development. The 1999 Local Self Government Act requirement to provide development funds for women and disadvantaged ethnic groups at the DDC level provides further justification for an emphasis on equality. Efforts to increase skill in advocacy under SO5 could complement SO4 by increasing NGO capacity to promote in benefit sharing from dam development. It is important to explore the potential to incorporate this in civic education and training for women political leaders in SO5.

SO5: STRENGTHENED GOVERNANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND SELECTED INSTITUTIONS

SO5 is a democracy and governance objective that focuses on natural resource management. It is a new strategic objective that retains and incorporates elements of SO1 (increased sustainable production and sales of forest and high-value agricultural products) and SO3 (women's empowerment) under the rubric of democracy and governance, which is a cross-cutting theme in the country strategy. The strategic plan states that a key focus of the SO5 program is expanding women's participation and leadership because women suffer disproportionately from poverty, illiteracy, and inequality. These factors are at the root of trafficking, which the program will also address.⁹²

- IR 5.1 (increased management capacity of natural resource groups) includes strengthening the involvement of women and disadvantaged groups.
- IR 5.2 (increased advocacy capacity of selected civil society groups at community and federation level) will build on the lessons learned from advocacy training under the Women's Empowerment Program.
- IR 5.3 (increased women's participation) focuses largely on increasing women's leadership in political offices and in anti-trafficking activities.

⁹² Amplified Strategic Objective Description, SO5, July 2001, p.2.

For many individuals and communities, governing their local natural resources is the first, most tangible, and most important means to exercise their democratic rights, affect public affairs, and gain greater control over their lives. USAID/Nepal's approach also reflects the need to address growing public disillusionment with corrupt and ineffective governance in a country where rural poverty is high and 80 percent of the people live in rural areas and depend on natural resources.⁹³ As noted earlier, many recruits to the rapidly expanding Maoist insurgency are rural, poor, lower caste, and women.

Gender Issues in Governance and Natural Resource Management

Among the most common and persistent barriers to more open political representation are the customs and traditions that relegate women to subordinate roles in public life. Whether imbedded in daily routines or codified in secular or religious law, these barriers limit women's opportunities throughout all of society. Poverty is perhaps the most pervasive factor limiting women's ability to participate in politics. Illiteracy further limits women's political participation. Violence against women also restricts political activity. Even where poverty, illiteracy, and threat of violence are endemic, women and women's groups have emerged as powerful agents for social and political transformation. Women's groups provide a forum for educating women and men about public issues. They create opportunities for women to articulate their concerns and priorities. While women's groups provide the infrastructure for women's political activism, these groups alone cannot overcome the barriers that limit women's political legitimacy as candidates for political office. Over the long term, expanding women's political participation will produce better development decisions. The broader the base of democratic participation in government, the less vulnerable countries are to anti-democratic pressures.⁹⁴

Sustainable community-based natural resource management and democratic governance require the involvement of the full community-- both women and men of all ethnic groups. Understanding gender roles and relations in their socio-economic context is essential in a community-based approach because gender affects how communities and households are organized. That, in turn, affects their understanding and management of the environment and their inclusion or exclusion of people in decision-making.

It is necessary to develop strategies for improved natural resource management based on democratic principles and an understanding of how gender and other social factors, such as ethnicity, religion, and caste, shape access to and control of resources and participation in community activities. It is also important to address the economic, social, institutional, and legal constraints to effective management of the environment by women and men. This is critical to enable both women and men of all ethnic groups to play effective roles in environmental decision-making, and leadership, and to participate in civil society as advocates for natural resource management.⁹⁵

⁹³ Annual Program Statement: USAID/Nepal: Democracy and Governance (APS-367-01-002), p.2.

⁹⁴ Women's Political Participation: The Missing Half of Democracy, Information Bulletin No.3, USAID Office of Women in Development, July 1999.

⁹⁵ Working with community-based Conservation with a Gender Focus: a Guide, WIDTECH, 1999.

Gender Issues in Governance and Natural Resource Management in Nepal

Governance

Despite constitutional provisions for women's rights, women remain marginalized and do not play an adequate role in political decision-making. Unfortunately, many women do not vote. Few feel empowered to run for elected positions. Elected women often lack the confidence and skills to be effective in their positions. The "Nepal Democracy Assessment," conducted in 1999, concluded that the empowerment of women will not be possible unless attention is paid to the role women play in exercising their rights through local and national politics. Increasing women's participation in local political life is crucial for improving governance and the successful functioning of democracy in Nepal. Nepalese women constitute a key constituency for political reform. Given information about their rights and skills for advocacy, they can become strong supporters of democratic governance.⁹⁶

The 1997 Act on Local Elections requires all political parties to field at least one candidate at the ward level. Representation is also mandatory at the Village Development Committee (VDC) and District Development Committee (DDC) levels. While the presence of women and minorities in DDCs, VDCs, and ward committees is an important step, it is also important to promote and develop their capacity to participate in decision making. This requires knowledge and skills to articulate and negotiate issues of concern to people in the community, particularly those of the otherwise excluded people they represent.

Recent surveys conducted by NDI and the Asia Foundation showed that women elected leaders face considerable obstacles but they are eager to overcome them.

- 37 percent had no knowledge of the responsibilities of their job.
- More than 50 percent of the women had never attended a ward meeting.
- After two years on the job, more than 70 percent had no idea how to initiate a development activity for their community.⁹⁷

The most common constraints on Nepalese women's political participation were: lack of education, finances, lack of support from family and the VDC, and discrimination against women's participation in politics that was based on patriarchal values and religious beliefs.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Nepal Democracy and Governance Assessment, October 1999, p.16. This conclusion was the answer provided to the question: how can USAID/Nepal ensure that the successes of the Women's empowerment program are replicated by other donors and the Nepalese Government and are linked to the devolution of authority?

⁹⁷ NDI/Nepal, Women Representatives Training Program Evaluation Report, 2000.

⁹⁸ Impact Study Report on the Locally Elected Women's Leadership Training Program, 1999.

Trafficking

Due to the clandestine nature of trafficking and the lack of consensus on its definition, there are no reliable data on the magnitude of trafficking in Nepal. The most widely quoted statistics are an estimated five to seven thousand Nepali girls trafficked for prostitution per year and an estimated 200,000 Nepali girls and women working in the sex industry in India. There is consensus that female trafficking is complex and multi-causal. At the local level it involves deep-rooted processes of gender discrimination, lack of female education, naivete, poverty and lack of economic opportunities. These local processes are shaped by macroeconomic and social changes that affect the operation of markets and labor requirements. Many of the factors contributing to trafficking in Nepal are aggravated by national and local level political apathy and lack of law enforcement mechanisms. Many of these factors are part of global changes that are leading to increased feminization of poverty and increased female migration.⁹⁹

Natural Resource Management

Rural women are among the most frequent and important forest users in Nepal. They collect fodder, fuelwood, and other products and suffer the most when there is inadequate fuelwood. Thus, forest management is a major concern for women and their participation forest management activities is essential. Forest management improves with the participation of women and the status of women improves with this participation. They gain greater access to information and resources, increased communication with larger groups, and increased influence over group decisions. Gradually, the crucial role of women forest users was noted by planners and implementers of forestry development activities and efforts were made to include women in the executive committees of Community Forest Users' Groups (CFUGs).¹⁰⁰

Many other challenges remain. The pool of female professionals trained in natural resource management is small. There are not enough female field staff and in many instances women are not encouraged to take leadership roles. Women face major time constraints due to their heavy workload (which combines household, child care, and agricultural responsibilities) and the lack of labor-reducing technologies. Though many women have learned to read through non-formal education, many more are illiterate.

Highlights of SO5 Gender Equality Activities and Outcomes of SO1 and SO3

Because this is a new SO, the activities and outcomes are drawn from SO1 and SO 3 outcomes and lessons learned that will be incorporated in SO 5.

⁹⁹ Prevention of Trafficking and the Care and Support of Trafficked Persons: In the Context of an Emerging HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Nepal, the Asia Foundation and the Population Council, February 2001, p. 14.

¹⁰⁰ Forest management by Nepali Communities, GreenCOM and New Era, May 1997, pp. 16-19.

SO1: Increased Sustainable Production and Sales of Forest and High Value Agricultural Products

- USAID-funded community forest projects are making significant efforts to increase women's participation in community forestry, decision-making about natural resource management, and increased production and sales of high-value forest products. Women make up over 46 percent of the growers of high-value agricultural products and 80 percent of the participants in the USAID supported community forestry program.
- Community forestry programs are also increasing female literacy through non-formal education focused on natural resource management. The Environment and Forest Enterprise Activity (EFEA) has provided environment and conservation focused non-formal education to 11,399 women in 168 centers. An evaluation of the CARE component of EFEA found significant changes in the lives and self confidence of the women who participated:
 - 83 percent of the graduates participated in the community/private forestry program.
 - 92 percent went to the health post and the hospital when there were medical problems.
 - 41 percent said that, after the training, they felt confident to speak out in public meetings and in meeting with outsiders.¹⁰¹
- Through the EFEA Program, 162 women's community forest user groups have actively taken part in forest resource management and decision-making processes, influencing 72,035 beneficiaries of over 5,296 hectares of forest.¹⁰²
- Through the EFEA Program, 97 active savings and credit women's sub-groups have been formed with a total of 907 women members.¹⁰³
- In Rapti and the EFEA Terai area, women hold 33 percent of the key executive positions in community forest user groups. In these two areas, 200 women from different community forest user groups hold executive positions in DDC, VDC and Municipalities (one VDC chair person, four ward chairpersons, and 195 VDC ward members).¹⁰⁴
- A new one-year grant to provide technical assistance to water user groups, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank, will include a gender specialist on the team to increase women's participation in the groups. The technical assistance will help the groups obtain ownership of the irrigation systems.

¹⁰¹ Annual Program Report, Environment and Forest Enterprise Activity 1999/2000.

¹⁰² Ibid. p. 30.

¹⁰³ Ibid. p.31

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 32.

- CARE Nepal will be conducting a study of the management practices of women's forest user groups in CARE programs under EFEA, in response to interest expressed by DFID.

SO 3 Women's Empowerment

The Women's Empowerment Program, described in the section on "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment," focused exclusively and systematically on gender equality. The approach combined literacy training with economic and political empowerment of women. Training for women elected representatives, implemented by NDI and the Asia Foundation, made significant progress and identified a great need for more training on a wider scale:

- Training for women elected representatives, conducted during the first phase of WEP, significantly increased their understanding of local government structures, responsibilities of the VDC, and the project development process. It also increased capacity in communication skills and strategies for making their voices heard among their male counterparts.
- Training for women representatives also increased their interest in running for office again. At the start of the training 72 percent of the participants said they would run again. After the training, 89 percent of the participants indicated they wanted to run for office in the local elections.
- Women representatives also learned how to conduct a household needs survey which ensures that people's needs are not ignored on the basis of caste, class, religious and political differences. This also allows them to become better acquainted with their constituencies and the potential voters in the next election.

In phase II of the program, implemented by PACT and the Asia Foundation, women's groups used self-instructional materials on savings, business skills, village bank management, legal rights and responsibilities, and advocacy skills. Local NGOs facilitated the learning process through mobile workshops. WEP created a microfinance model based on building equity (savings), rather than incurring debt (credit provision by financial institutions or intermediaries). Most microfinance programs have taken the debt approach. WEP served as a time limited catalyst to create large numbers of independently functioning, locally controlled savings and credit groups.

By the end of the project, WEP produced some impressive program impacts:

- 240 Nepalese organizations were recruited, trained and enlisted as WEP partners.
- Training and support was provided to 6,500 groups with 130,000 members in the lowland Terai region of Nepal. Of these groups, 6,265 were still active in June, 2001.
- Existing groups have already created over 800 new groups with no financial support from WEP.

- Despite the region's extreme poverty, the women participating in WEP mobilized \$1,180,000 from savings, retained interest earnings and help fundraising events between June 1999 and June 2001.
- Only 4 percent of the groups made loans that defaulted and 82 percent kept their own records without outside assistance.
- An average of 89,000 women reported increased decision-making authority in: family planning, children's marriages, buying and selling property, and girls' schooling.
- 63,700 women gained a level of literacy. Half of those who had never gone to school were able to read "easily" or with "some difficulty."
- 86,000 women started a business since joining WEP and had an independent source of income for the first time.¹⁰⁵
- WEP groups initiated 78,600 collective community and advocacy activities with visiting local government officials, group gatherings, mass rallies, door-to-door campaigns, and labor contributions.¹⁰⁶
- WEP designed a series of special "men's meetings" and "family meetings," to gain family and community support and cooperation by helping everyone understand the program and its benefits. This also helped to minimize resistance to more active and public roles for women in the program. These meetings provided a forum for WEP participants to report on their activities and accomplishments. Facilitators maintained a positive, supportive atmosphere where community men and the families of the participants could acknowledge and feel proud about women's progress and achievements.¹⁰⁷
- WEP also fostered horizontal networks of WEP groups organizing to campaign on issues of common concern such as combating trafficking of women and girls, male alcohol abuse, and domestic violence. Links also were made with female political leaders who could advocate for WEP group concerns.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Impact Evaluation: PACT's Women's Empowerment Program in Nepal: A Savings and Literacy Led Alternative to Financial Institution Building, prepared by Jeffrey Ashe and Lisa Parrott for the USAID Office of Microenterprise, the SEEP Network and PACT. October 2001.

¹⁰⁶ This figure reflects the activities conducted as of November 2000. Breaking the Mold: Women's Empowerment and Village Banking, PACT Nepal, November 2000.

¹⁰⁷ Breaking New Ground: A Case Study of Women's Empowerment in Nepal, 1998, p.5.

¹⁰⁸ Breaking the Mold: Women's Empowerment and village Banking: A Model for Sustainable Expansion and Replication, November 2000.

Suggestions for Strengthening Gender Integration in SO5

Because SO5 will be implemented through a new contractual mechanism, the following suggestions are based on the possible activities presented in the “Amplified Strategic Objective Description” for SO5, the Annual Program Statement eliciting bids for technical support for IR 5.2, IR 5.3, and one element of IR 5.4, and the draft Performance Monitoring Plan. Because IR 5.1 and the other IR activities will be implemented by different partners, it will be important to coordinate their activities and monitoring systems to ensure that their approaches to gender integration and gender equality are consistent. The development of the work plans for these new implementers of the SO5 program will provide an excellent opportunity to ensure that program activities take a gender approach in promoting women’s participation and gender equality. It is also a strategic time to work on the gender synergies, noted at the end of the SO5 section, with other SO implementers.

IR 5.1: Increased Management Capacity of NRMGs (including community forest user groups, buffer zone management committees, water user groups and hydro site communities)

Great progress has been made in strengthening local control of natural resource management in Nepal. However, community natural resource management groups (NRMGs) have been constrained by internal and external governance issues. Within the groups, the democratic process is often weak and women and other disadvantaged groups are excluded from full participation. Groups lack mechanisms and skills to advocate for policy change and resource allocation.

- Begin the technical capacity training with gender sensitization of male leaders in the VDC, local religious leaders, local representatives of line ministries that deal with natural resource management, and male members of the NRMGs. This is important to develop an understanding of the concrete economic and environmental reasons why women need to participate in NRM technical capacity training and natural resource decision-making.
- In training activities for all types of NRM groups (forest management, identification processing and marketing of non-timber forest products, irrigation works operation and maintenance, biodiversity, watershed management in Hydropower project areas, planning for conservation in buffer zones) ensure that women as well as men have an opportunity to gain NRM skills. Aim for no less than 30 percent and ideally 50 percent female participation. Increasing women’s participation will require taking into account special constraints they face, such as the need for child care, potential resistance by husbands, lack of self confidence, and low literacy.
- In some communities, it may be necessary to conduct separate training activities for women and men to build women’s confidence and public communication skills and to enable more active participation by women.

- Include female trainers on the training teams. They provide role models for community women. Women who lack self-confidence are usually more comfortable sharing their concerns with other women.
- Introduce participatory facilitation skills, listening and other techniques for engaging women and others who are unaccustomed to voicing their views in public fora.
- Build an understanding of gender and ethnic equality in NRM training through participatory techniques such as gender resource use mapping. This is particularly applicable for refining user group operational plans using participatory approaches. The and (noted under SO4) offer useful techniques for this training.
- In supporting the development of microenterprises, adapt the Women's Empowerment Program (WEP) materials for use by women and men and, if possible, translate into the other main languages used in the target communities.
- In best practices documentation, include strategies for increasing women's participation, leadership, and benefits from NRMG participation. Also include evidence of the value added to natural resource management achieved by including women and ethnic minorities in user group activities.
- Begin the organizational skill building with gender sensitization of male leaders in the VDC, local religious leaders, local representatives of line ministries that deal with natural resource management, and male members of the NRMGs. This is important to develop an understanding of the concrete economic and environmental reasons why women need to participate in natural resource decision-making.
- Use training activities in group decision-making, conflict resolution, and raising awareness on rights and responsibilities as opportunities for gender sensitization for men and confidence building for women as well as communication skill building. For each target group, consider whether it will be more effective to conduct the training in mixed or separate gender groups, or a combination of both, to ensure women's active participation.
- Ensure that women have an opportunity to participate in the various training activities (group decision-making, conflict resolution, bookkeeping and financial management) Aim for 50 percent participation; keeping it no lower than 30 percent. Address the obstacles to women's participation noted under 5.1.1.
- In conducting non-formal literacy classes, combine literacy with natural resource management, bookkeeping, and women's legal rights training content. Adapt the WEP materials and, if possible, translate into the main languages used in the target

communities. Explore the applicability of elements of the HEAL training materials as well, making the link between environment, population, and health.

- Explore the potential for adapting elements of the WEP village banking training materials for the bookkeeping/financial management training.
- In joint workshops with NRM groups, VDCs, and DDCs, address gender and ethnic equality issues through participatory group activities, ensure that at least 30 percent of the participants are women and 50 percent of the facilitators are women for the reasons noted in 5.1.1.
- Share information about positive contributions by women VDC members (trained by NDI and TAF), women's groups (WEP and NRM users' sub-groups) to make the case for the importance of women's participation and contribution. Consider inviting some of the most articulate women's group leaders to share their success stories.
- A group activity could be designed around: how to implement the 1999 Local Self Governance Act requirements for women and ethnic minority VDC representation and resources in a participatory way that benefits everyone in the community and increases NRM management. Use a mixture of same gender and mixed gender working group activities.
- Adapt some of the effective behavior change approaches applied in PHN to develop an understanding of women's human rights and change attitudes about women's roles and contributions to the family and the community. Some examples include—radio “soap opera” programs, street theater, and use of cartoons (such as the UNICEF produced “Meena” series). A few efforts along these lines have been carried out in Nepal and will be valuable resources for SO 5.
 - The Global Bureau GreenCOM project mobile video production helped members of EFEA community forest user groups produce “Video Newsletters” that expressed their concerns about forestry policy. Community representatives presented the videos to policy makers and shared their views. The forum was taped and shared with the CFUGs. This was part of an effort to help accelerate local control and management of natural resources and encourage “bottom up” planning and policy reform. GreenCOM also helped EFEA strengthen CFUGs, and increase women's participation. GreenCOM used a drama video to help CFUGs learn how to solve problems when forming democratic user groups. Print materials and audiotapes were also developed.¹⁰⁹
 - The International Conservation Union Nepal Office conducted a three-year street theater project on population and environment with UNFPA, the Ministry of

¹⁰⁹ The Making of Nepal's Community Video Letter: Presenting a Picture from the Villae to Community Policy Makers, GreenCOM, 1998.

Population and Environment, and the National Planning Commission, and prepared a videotape on the production.

IR 5.2: Increased Advocacy Capacity of Selected Civil Society Groups at Community and Federation Level

It is important to examine gender concerns at the institutional and policy levels as well as in the sectoral programs at the community level. Policies and institutions are not gender blind. They are affected by the same socio-cultural influences that operate at the community level and result in differential distribution of resources and power.

- Survey the national associations to identify policies regarding gender and ethnic equality and attention to gender and ethnic diversity in their programs. Use these data to ensure that strong associations promoting gender equality are part of the pool and can serve to inform and influence other organizations.
- Include participatory gender sensitization activities in training and technical assistance to local and national groups. National groups that promote gender equality will be valuable resources for providing this support.
- Explore the feasibility of using participatory tools for public sector expenditure tracking developed by the World Bank.¹¹⁰
- Include gender equality and ethnic minority issues on the agenda for policy research and discussion fora. It is important to address gender and ethnic equality in relation to actual policy discussions, not simply in isolation as an abstract concept. For example, it would be useful to conduct policy research on the status of implementation of the 1999 Local Self Governance Act requirements for women and ethnic minority representation and development resources at VDC and DDC levels, and provide suggestions for improving the process.
- Include examples of strategies for increasing women's advocacy and coalition building (such as the WEP program) and the positive outcomes that these efforts have achieved in SO 5 best practices dissemination. Distribute the best practices using a wide range of media, targeted to specific groups, to ensure maximum outreach. For example, use Internet messages targeting NGOs, INGOs, and policy researchers. Encourage NGOs to incorporate the lessons learned into entertaining radio programs, street drama, and training. Prepare brief, clear summary documents targeting line ministry staff and DDC officials.

¹¹⁰ Accounting to the Poor: Experience in Public Expenditure Management, the World Bank Participation group.

IR 5.3: Increased Women's Participation

Given Nepalese women's very limited participation in decision-making and leadership in all spheres, it is important to highlight the need to redress this situation through IR 5.3. The activities under this IR need to be interlaced with those of the other IRs under SO 5. At the same time, it is important to ensure that a gender perspective is applied rather than a woman-only focus that can marginalize efforts to achieve gender equality. It is also important to stress that women constitute a diverse group due to ethnic, religious, cultural, economic, and generational differences among them. Another critical consideration is the heavy work load that women already bear. Worldwide, it is generally women who are expected to be the unpaid volunteers for community service. It is necessary to explore ways to reduce women's workload and share it with men so women can gain a political voice and participate in the democratic process. For this to happen, men need an awareness of the value of women's participation as decision-makers and income earners.

- Before training women political representatives or candidates, begin with a gender sensitization activity to help their male colleagues understand the value added by women's participation in decision-making and the need to recognize women's legal rights. Participants for gender sensitization would include male leaders in the community and district where the women are serving office or running for office, male political party leaders, and men in the families of the representatives and candidates.
- Include the community survey training that was provided in previous training of women political leaders after reviewing and adapting it to ensure that gender and ethnic differences are adequately addressed. The CARE POWER (Participation of Women Enabling their Real Representation) Project, funded by CIDA could be a useful resource for methods as well.¹¹¹
- Consider using a training of trainers (TOT) approach to the training for elected women representatives. This would build the knowledge and skills needed for the women representatives to train other VDC members upon their return. In addition to reinforcing what the trainees learn, this approach would produce a multiplier effect on the number of people reached by the training. It could also increase the status of the women representatives by enabling them to demonstrate their new knowledge and communication skills in a public forum. This has been a result of the training and responsibilities given to FCHVs, a number of whom have successfully competed for political positions. Women representatives could also provide civic education in the community, in collaboration with their male counterparts, to improve communication between the VDC and its constituency. The TOT approach would require increasing the length of the training activity to include training skills and practice in delivering training.

¹¹¹ CARE Nepal POWER (Participation of Women Enabling their Real Representation) Baseline Study, June 2001.

- In the literacy training, combine literacy with the content that the representatives and candidates need – such as rights and responsibilities, networking, bookkeeping/financial management and women’s legal rights. The WEP literacy materials on financial management and women’s legal rights could be adapted.

- In prevention and rehabilitation activities, as well as in strengthening the capacity of the government to tackle the trafficking problem, include gender sensitization of VDC and DDC male leaders, religious leaders, police, Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare (MOWCSW) anti-trafficking committees, emphasizing women’s legal and human rights, and the strengths and weaknesses of the 1997 National Policy and Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking.

- In microenterprise training for women at high risk of being trafficked or rescued victims, ensure that the skills developed have a market. Include marketing and financial management skills as well. The WEP village bank materials will provide a useful resource and provide literacy training essential to improve economic options for these young women. Also consider demand driven vocational training to develop skills that have a future in the changing Nepali workforce. The 2001 TAF/Population Council report, “Prevention of Trafficking and Care and Support of Trafficked Persons: in the Context of the AIDS Epidemic in Nepal” stresses that there is a need to move away from the paradigm of “rescue, rehabilitation, and repatriation” to one that protects and promotes the human rights of women both in countries of origin and destination. Rather than rehabilitation, these women need support and sustainable income. The report also urges moving beyond an income generation approach for the prevention of trafficking because it is not an adequate substitute for the economic opportunities in the city or across borders.

- Build on synergies with SO2: trafficking and HIV/AIDs, links between health (especially female community health workers) and population. For example, the TAF/Population Council report suggests that the HIV/AIDs policies and programs offer valuable lessons learned that are relevant for combating trafficking. In addition, coordinate with the family health program cooperator to develop scripts to include of anti-trafficking messages in PHN messages transmitted to the general public (radio soap operas, street drama’s etc.) drawing on the CEDPA assessment of messages most effective in raising awareness. At the same time it is important to heed the warning of the TAF/Population Council report that overemphasis on the HIV/AIDs risk can increase the stigma associated with migration and trafficking.

IR 5.4: Improved Performance of Selected Institutions

Strengthening institutions at the national and local level provides a valuable opportunity for gender sensitization at both levels.

- In strengthening the district level anti-trafficking committees established by MOWCSW, include gender sensitization about the ways that girls and women are tricked and coerced into prostitution and other forms of coercive labor against their will. Also discuss the TAF/Population Council report recommendation that there is a need to move away from a paternalistic welfare approach that focuses on protection of females and control of their migration to a women's empowerment approach that enables them to gain the knowledge and skills needed to improve their economic situation. It would be useful to include local police in these discussions.
- Monitoring and evaluation of trafficking interventions is one of the areas noted as weak in the in the TAF/Population Council 2001 trafficking report. Even though a great deal of anti-trafficking work is being done, most interventions have not been systematically documented or evaluated and are not being monitored on an ongoing basis. This an area that would benefit from closer collaboration between government anti-trafficking committee members and NGOs working at the grass roots.
- In radio campaigns to raise voter awareness of elections, include messages about women's legal rights and the importance of women's political participation, targeted to both women and men. Include information about the 1999 Local Self Governance Act requirement for representation of women and ethnic minorities. Use the behavior change through entertainment approach employed in PHN efforts, rather than didactic speeches by experts who tell the public what to do.
- In voter education training for civic/political leaders, include gender sensitization and training on women's legal rights and political participation. In addition to the WEP materials, the NDI Civic Education text developed for schools includes a chapter on women's rights and political participation. Ensure that women as well as men leaders have an opportunity to participate in this training, particularly women at the VDC level. Aim for 50 percent participation by women. Use a combination of mixed group and same sex group activities, to enable women to formulate ideas together and practice negotiating issues with men.
- Training, technical assistance, and other support to selected VDCs to enable them to be responsive to citizens' input, particularly on the allocation of local revenues could be coordinated with the training for women political leaders. The TOT approach proposed would be one mechanism to deliver this message to the VDCs. This could also be coordinated with the joint workshops involving NRM Groups, VDCs, DDCs, and line agencies, providing a venue to apply and hone listening skills. This could be coordinated with civic education for civic and political leaders as well. Include a participatory activity assessing the implementation of the 1999 Self Governance Act provisions for women and

ethnic minorities. The World Bank participatory tools for public expenditure tracking, noted under 5.2, could be useful in this training and technical assistance.

Suggestions for Strengthening Gender Integration in SO5 Performance Monitoring

Because women and ethnic minorities have had limited participation in NRMG decision making to date, and evidence suggests that women's NRMGs have access to much smaller forest areas, it is important to track the ethnic and gender composition of these groups, that is, the actual numbers of men and women from different ethnic groups. Although these detailed membership figures would not be reported as R4 indicators, they will enable monitoring for differential access to participation in forest user groups and forest area by gender and along ethnic lines. The current forest users group programs already collect these data. If significant disparities emerge, additional participatory, rapid appraisal studies could assess the causes of the disparities and identify solutions. Trends toward greater inclusion of women and ethnic minorities need to be reported in the “significant program achievements,” in the narrative of the R4. Consider adding an Annex on “Gender as a Cross-cutting Issue” to provide more details of the impacts of WEP Program and the EFEA Program, based on the studies conducted by the Microenterprise Office and CARE, respectively.

Indicator 5.1.2: Participant Satisfaction with Group Management Training Provided by USAID Trainers

This indicator needs to be disaggregated by gender and ethnic group on an ongoing basis to ensure that the needs of these groups are met. In the final impact assessment it will be valuable to interview a sample of the trainees, selected by gender and ethnicity, to see how they actually applied the training in their NRMGs.

This indicator is already gender-disaggregated. It will be very important in the phrasing of questions and the selection of the people conducting the survey to avoid any gender bias or elicitation of “politically correct” answers that do not reflect actual group dynamics. Periodic participant observation of NRMGs by the partners implementing the program and USAID staff could serve as a cross check on the accuracy of the survey.

This indicator needs to be disaggregated by mixed and women only groups. In the verification with ordinary members, it will be important to follow up with women and ethnic minority members individually to get their perspective of the process used. If the domination by elites using nontransparent spending procedures continues, additional participatory studies

may be needed to identify more effective ways to encourage the use of transparent, constitutional procedures.

The World Commission on Dams guidelines and the DOED draft “Manual for Public Involvement in the Environmental Impact Assessment Process of Hydropower Projects” recommend forming dam project stakeholder committees that function in a manner similar to natural resource user groups. If such groups are formed, it would be valuable to track the gender and ethnicity of members of these groups, and their use of constitutional procedures as a part of the tracking that will be done for the natural resource user groups under SO5. This would enable the Mission to assess the extent to which broadened stakeholder participation is occurring, along with strengthened community organizational and advocacy skills in areas affected by hydropower projects.

Indicator 5.2.2: Number of Advocacy Campaigns by Targeted Groups

This indicator is disaggregated by organization for R4 reporting. For Mission management purposes it would also be useful to monitor by types of campaigns (women’s human rights, transparency in government, etc.) to assess whose interests are being promoted in the campaigns and ensure that the disaggregation of organizations specifies those that promote gender equality.

It will also be important to closely compare the data from indicator 5.2.2 with that of indicator 5.3.2 (number of collective actions by targeted groups in USAID’s selected districts). Collective actions are defined as “social campaigns and physical activities taken by a group four or more women to improve their social, economic and political position and/or to address problems affecting women such as trafficking.”) There is the potential for under-counting (if women’s issues are left out of indicator 5.2.2) or double counting due to the partial overlap of the two indicators, particularly in areas such as anti-trafficking campaigns. Another option would be to incorporate 5.3.2 into 5.2.2 and focus measurement for 5.3 on women’s political participation.

Indicator 5.2.3: Percentage of Target Population with Knowledge of Advocacy Issues

This indicator also needs to be disaggregated by gender and ethnicity. In the case of natural resource management and hydropower projects, it is important to monitor whether women as well as men have knowledge of the issues. In the case of trafficking, it is important to track whether men as well as women have knowledge of the issues. Minority ethnic groups are generally those most disadvantaged by hydropower and most susceptible to trafficking so it is also important to track their awareness to ensure that programs are indeed reaching them, so that changes can be made in the programs if disparities emerge.

Indicator 5.3.1: Number of Women in Elected Leadership Positions in USAID's Targeted Districts

This indicator is defined as leadership positions in key elected offices in mixed CBRM user groups, other non state groups and local government bodies (VDC, DDC, and municipality). Consider breaking 5.3.1 into two indicators, separating the civil society from the politically elected positions. Also consider adding ward-level representation to the tally on the political leadership side. Whether or not the indicators are divided, it is important to change the unit of measurement to the ratio of women to men holding such positions in the target area. This indicator will give a clearer picture of progress toward gender equality.

Indicator 5.4: Increased Participation of HMG Officials in Anti-Trafficking Committees at the DDC Level

Disaggregate the number of HMG participants by gender. If the proportion of female HMG participants is very high, despite the small number of women working in HMG civil service, it may indicate that the issue is not being taken seriously by HMG or it is not viewed as an issue of male responsibility. A more equal balance of men and women would suggest that it is being taken more seriously.

For Mission program management purposes, it would be useful to go beyond the numbers of people attending meetings to the analysis of the actions proposed and actually taken, even though it is beyond the manageable interest of the Mission to report as an indicator in the R4. This could be accomplished through participatory workshops for members of the anti-trafficking committees to review actions planned against actions accomplished. Actions reported could be verified by informal interviews with NGOs. Such participatory evaluation could also provide incentives to take action.

Suggested Comparative Impact Study of the WEP Program and SO1 Natural Resource User Group Activities

The WEP Program merits an in-depth outside evaluation to assess the impact of what has been an innovative approach that can be adapted and replicated in other USAID/ Nepal Programs and other country programs in the region and potentially beyond. Because WEP and the SO1 NRMGs have taken different yet somewhat interrelated approaches to women's empowerment, and both SOs are closing out, this is a strategic time for a study that examines and compares both approaches. Although the Office of Microenterprise and PACT have conducted an impact study of WEP with valuable information and insights that will help guide the design of the proposed study, it is largely focused on the WEP savings-led microfinance model. There are many other important aspects that need to be examined such as the impact of the advocacy training and participation in collective actions. The findings of the SO2 study of volunteerism should also guide the study design, particularly the analysis of women's group activities, change agent roles of FCHVs and any indications of changing gender relations. The 2001 DHS, particularly the modules on Women's Status and Male

Involvement, may also raise broader issues regarding changing gender roles that should be considered in the study design. Pulling together the impacts and lessons learned in all of these studies, along with findings from the other assessments of SO3 and SO1 efforts, should provide the USAID/Nepal with a knowledge base of effective approaches that can be applied across the Mission programs to implement the Gender Action Plan.

Some Potential Study Questions that Apply to the Analysis of Existing Studies as Well as New Field Research Are as Follows:

- What was gained and what was lost by addressing women’s empowerment at the SO level?
- The speed at which WEP was able to mobilize women and bring about behavior change was striking. What factors accounted for this? Do they apply to the legal rights and collective action aspects as well? How does this mobilization compare with the NRMG groups and the FCHV program community activities?
- WEP’s integrated approach, combining literacy with microfinance, business skills, legal rights and advocacy appears to have been very effective. Are there other key elements such as women’s reproductive rights that might need to be added to the mix for women’s empowerment? Operations research on barriers to contraceptive use, conducted under SO2 might offer some useful insights
- WEP Self-guided Training Materials—what factors contributed to the high rate of retention? How literate did the majority of the women become? Did they depend on a few literate members? How much of a constraint was the Nepalese text to non Nepalese speakers? How did the NRMG literacy training materials compare with the WEP and HEAL materials?
- Who benefited from WEP? – did lower caste women participate actively in, savings groups, village banks, collective actions? Were they leaders? Were there differences in the changes in their lives and incomes based on caste/ethnicity? How does this compare with the beneficiaries of the NRMG and FCHV programs?
- How effective were the WEP and NRMG NGO facilitators? Did they receive adequate training at the outset? Did the WEP and NRMG facilitation approaches differ? How did they compare with the facilitation of mothers’ groups by FCHVs?
- Did the WEP and NRMG program indicators and methods of data collection adequately measure women’s empowerment resulting from these programs? Should they be refined or changed for future activities? To what extent has the FCHV program measured the empowerment of women that resulted from its programs? Could WEP and/or NRMG gender measures be adapted to the FCHV program to increase the capture of gender equality impacts?

- Did the limited interaction of WEP with the VDC until the end of the program make a difference either positively or negatively? How did the NRMG and FCHV program approaches compare?
- Did the WEP participants also participate in other USAID programs such as NRMGs or FCHVs? Was there synergy between the project activities as a result? Does it appear that the burden of community service is actually falling on a few women who are involved in several community service activities? Were any lessons learned about effective tactics to increase male responsibility for and contribution to community service?
- Sustainability – will the WEP and NRMG groups last? Assessments to date suggest that they will. It would be useful to revisit a sample of WEP village banks, advocacy groups, and horizontal networks 12 to 16 months after the project close out to see how they are operating and what kinds of impact they have had at that point. The same applies for the NRMGs. Have the FCHV mothers’ groups been sustainable?
- Replicability—are other donors or NGOs using part or all of the WEP model? How well is it working for them. Under what conditions are the WEP, NRMG, and FCHV program approaches likely to work in other countries or regions?
- Looking at the results of the proposed study and those of the Volunteerism Study, relevant operational research from SO, the CARE Study of women’s management of NRMGs, and the evaluations of the training of elected women representatives, are there similarities in approaches that worked well? Are there some differences that are sector specific? Are there other differences based on tactics that were not applied in other sectors? Are there any common lessons learned about empowering women and striving for gender equality? Are there additional opportunities or obstacles for synergy among SOs, regarding gender equality? What are the implications of this comparative analysis for addressing gender equality across all of the SOs.

SO5 Synergies with Other SOs

SO2

- Explore ways to collaborate on the link between population and environment. The IUCN street theater video on the subject could be a useful tool. Explore the potential for piggybacking natural resource messages as a part of PHN broadcasts.
- Coordinate on the shared theme of increasing VDC management capacity and responsiveness to public needs. Consider including health needs assessment in the training for women political leaders.

SO4

- SO5 provides the means to complement the SO4 ministry level technical assistance and guideline development for EIA/SIA with on-the-ground community level advocacy around hydropower development, particularly the mitigation plans and the sharing of benefits with the community and increasing women's participation in the EIA/SIA Process.

Performance Monitoring of Gender as a Cross-cutting Issue

The Agency's strategic planning and results reporting structure poses a great challenge to strategic planning, implementation, and results reporting that cross-cut SOs. This challenge became evident in the working session on increasing gender disaggregation of indicators in the performance monitoring plan (PMP). Agency requirements for consistency in reporting indicators over time, the already defined and approved results framework, and the issue of the manageable interest of the Mission limited the extent to which gender integration could be strengthened in the PMP. These constraints are clearly reflected in the Results Report and Resource Request (R4). Although the R4 captured the impressive results of the WEP program under SO3, it did not include all of the important contributions to women's empowerment made through the activities of SO1 and SO2 because women's empowerment was not among the intermediate results (IRs) and indicators supporting those SOs.

The Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination (PPC) made it very clear that Agency cross-cutting themes, such as gender, should not be reported on as cross-cutting SOs in the R4, creating a proliferation of indicators. Instead, they should be integrated into the existing SOs for R4 reporting. Despite this limitation, the R4 format does allow for special annexes that provide more detail than the R4 format allows. An annex on gender equality as a cross-cutting issue provides an opportunity to highlight the results reflected in the DHS, the study of volunteerism, the Microenterprise Office study of WEP, and the CARE studies of EFEA for the R4 that will be submitted in March 2003. In the following year, the results shown in the impact studies of SO1 and SO3, and a comparative analysis of those findings and studies of results and lessons learned for other SOs, could be included in such an annex in the following year. The R4 also requires the preparation of close-out reports for SOs that have been completed. The aim of these reports is to increase the Agency's knowledge base of lessons learned and best practices. The close out reports also provide an opportunity to document the significant results and lessons learned in the women's empowerment work of SO1 and SO3.

Discussions with Mission staff about addressing gender in performance monitoring and evaluation also included the distinction between the limited set of indicators monitored for reporting to Washington and more detailed data that are needed to manage Mission programs to ensure sustainable results. The indicators for R4 reporting are limited to those spelled out in the results framework, all of which are within the Mission's manageable interest. Those needed for program management require some detail that is not in the Mission's manageable interest to report to Washington. But they provide an early warning system to ensure that

programs activities are on track and benefiting women and girls and well as men and boys. A number of the suggestions for strengthening gender integration in performance monitoring and evaluation spell out the management uses of gender-disaggregated data that would not be reported in the R4.

Performance monitoring of gender equality to inform Mission management of programs is particularly important in Nepal where the limited economic and political participation, low literacy, and high mortality rates of females has long been recognized as an impediment to development. Experience has shown that Nepalese women can become important change agents when they gain access to economic opportunities, education, control over their own fertility, and political voice. Thus it can be argued that progress toward gender equality is an essential condition for economic growth and progress toward participatory democracy in Nepal. Hence it is very important to track this progress as an important part of the enabling environment for USAID/Nepal's programs. Thus it should have a place in the introductory section of the R4 every year.

ANNEX I
SCOPE OF WORK

SCOPE OF WORK

BACKGROUND

Nepal's per capital income of \$210 makes it the seventh poorest country in the world. Almost half of its citizens live in absolute poverty. A limited natural resource base, rapid population growth, environmental degradation, low levels of social development and widespread poverty present formidable development challenges.

Agriculture accounts for more than 40 percent of the gross domestic product and employs approximately 80 percent of the population. Only 30 percent of the land is arable. Rapid population growth has placed an enormous burden on the environment, economy, health care and other services. Nepal's population of 23 million will double in 29 years at its current growth rate of 2.4 percent. Nepal's overall literacy rate is about 40 percent—the literacy rate for women is about 28 percent.

In the nine years since it became a democracy, Nepal has made important advances in economic liberalization and in strengthening democratic governments at national and local levels. Elections have been free and fair and transitions between governments have been peaceful. Nepal has also formulated a market-driven sustainable agricultural growth strategy, and has made substantial progress in responding to the high demand for family planning services. Continued progress on these fronts is necessary to alleviate Nepal's poverty, and to maintain popular support for the new democracy.

USAID Program and Results

Since 1951, the U.S. has provided approximately \$500 million in economic assistance to Nepal. USAID's support built the first telecommunications systems and other essential infrastructure, controlled malaria, and trained many of Nepal's senior officials.

More recently, USAID provided critical support to Nepal's transition to democracy, including assistance for developing a new constitution, improving parliamentary decision making, increasing the political participation of women, and educating voters. USAID has also played a vital role in accelerating Nepal's transition to a viable market economy and improving the investment climate by taking the lead in privatizing public enterprises and introducing broad-based tax reform. USAID's health program interventions have resulted in a 50 percent reduction in child mortality rates in the last decade. Through Vitamin A supplementation, an estimated 30,000 child deaths have been averted annually.

Strategic Objectives

USAID/Nepal's new Country Strategic Plan for FY 2001 - 2005, which was approved in the fall of 2000, focuses on three key sectors: health, hydropower and the governance of key natural resources and selected institutions. In addition, the new USAID strategy for Nepal aims to improve the impact of its assistance by:

- # Focusing on critical improvements in governance of key resources (water, other natural resources and human resources including health and human rights);
- # Strengthening essential policy, institutional and decision-making mechanisms;
- # Targeting assistance to a few key sectors of manageable interest (health, hydropower, democracy and natural resources);
- # Leveraging assistance through coordination and collaboration with other donors;
- # Closely aligning USAID/Nepal programs with the overall USG priorities in Nepal; and
- # Integrating the bilateral program with USG and USAID regional and global initiatives.

The new strategy is comprised of three strategic objectives:

- # SO2—Reduced fertility and protected health of Nepalese families.
- # SO4—Increased private sector participation in environmentally and socially sustainable hydropower development.
- # SO5—Strengthened governance of natural resources and selected institutions.

In addition, the Mission will complete and close out two objectives early in the strategy period:

- # SO1—Increased sustainable production and sales of forest and high-value agricultural products.
- # SO3—Increased women's empowerment.

PURPOSE OF WORK

The purpose of this Scope of Work is to obtain the services of a Women-In-Development (WID) consultant (hereafter referred to as "consultant."). The consultant shall provide an assessment of the Mission's strategic plan, particularly the two new SOs: SO5 "Strengthening governance of natural resources and selected institutions," and SO4 "Increased private sector participation in environmentally and socially sustainable hydropower development." The consultant shall outline the main areas where gender issues are of greatest essence, and formulate detailed recommendations on how gender considerations can be integrated more systematically into USAID/Nepal's current and future strategic activities.

TASKS

The primary tasks of the consultant are to:

1. Carry out a Gender Assessment and, based on this, design a Gender Action Plan.
 - # Assess USAID/Nepal's present strategic framework, results framework, program, and activities and assess potential gender issues in the SO2, SO4, and SO5 areas.
 - # • Produce an assessment of possible entry-points for the incorporation of gender considerations into ongoing activities and potential new programs. The assessment is to be organized and shaped by:
 - # USAID/Nepal's framework.
 - # ANE's approach to mainstreaming gender.
 - # Newly revised Agency Strategic Plan (Gender as Crosscutting Theme).
 - # Based on this assessment, design a Gender Action Plan that lays out the steps for mainstreaming gender in Mission policies and activities.
 - # Should address both the operationalizing of gender from the perspective of technical offices and divisions, as well as of the overall Mission management, based on the analysis under Task 1 above, for a detailed USAID/Nepal Gender Action Plan to address fully the requirements of Agency Directives.
 - # It should include, *but not be limited to*, the following elements:
 - # The gender assessment described above.
 - # Technical advice on the USAID/Nepal's Strategic and Results Framework to reflect the key role of gender considerations in the achievement of USAID goals.
 - # Under each strategic objective, outline of the key role of gender in development.
 - # Gender indicators of program impact and approaches for the collection and analysis of sex disaggregated data.
2. Produce draft points for USAID/Nepal to mainstream gender issues.
 - The points should reflect:
 - # Procurement issues
 - # Reflecting the Agency ADS guidelines, standard provisions addressing gender to be included in RFPs, RFAs, etc.
 - # Outline of steps for evaluating gender components of proposals.
 - # Gender structure within the Mission to address operational and policy goals
 - # SO Teams
 - # Gender Committee—including draft “terms of reference” for the Committee.
3. Provide gender briefings for USAID/Nepal staff and their partners.
 - # Facilitate 2-3 briefing sessions for USAID/Nepal staff and their implementing partners. Each session will be from 45-60 minutes.
 - # Topics covered will include the importance of integrating gender and the background to the Agency (ADS) guidelines on gender integration.
 - # Participants will be all the activity managers of USAID/Nepal, SO team leaders, the program staff, and the major implementing partners.

Methodology

1. Prior to departure for Nepal, the consultant shall review documents from USAID/Nepal, G/WID, WIDTech, and, as appropriate, the ANE Bureau. These documents will include, but not be limited to: USAID/Nepal's policy and planning documents, such as the current Strategic Plan and R4s; background information on gender issues in USAID/Nepal and other in-country data; gender assessments and gender action plans from other countries or regions which can be used as models by the consultant; and USAID/M/OP procurement guidelines.
2. In carrying out the data collection phase of the work, the consultant shall interview the following and collect related information:
 - # Members of USAID/Nepal's SO Teams and the Program Office.
 - # A sample of USAID implementors, as identified by USAID/Nepal in advance (in order to facilitate appointments) and approved by the Mission.
 - # A small sample of USAID-funded NGOs, as identified by USAID/Nepal in advance (in order to facilitate appointments) and approved by the Mission.
 - # Major donors or other international organizations that have important gender programs in Nepal, as identified by the Mission in advance (in order to facilitate appointments) and approved by USAID/Nepal.
3. All work shall use the gender approach of the newly revised USAID Strategic Plan.

Deliverables

1. Gender Assessment & Action Plan:

The Gender Assessment and Action Plan will use the data from interviews and secondary sources to assess the appropriate technical areas for gender emphasis and make recommendations for future actions for gender integration, described above as the first task. The document will also be the basis for further technical assistance, provided by USAID/Washington.

- # A preliminary draft shall be submitted to USAID/Nepal upon completion of fieldwork, with electronic copies forwarded to USAID/Nepal and WIDTech. The recipients will provide written comments to the consultant electronically within 5 working days of receipt.
- # A revised draft Gender Assessment & Action Plan, incorporating USAID/Nepal and WIDTech comments shall be submitted to USAID/Nepal and WIDTech, not later than 5 working days after receiving the above comments. USAID/Nepal and WIDTech shall provide any additional written comments electronically within 5 working days of receipt of the revised draft.
- # The Final Gender Assessment & Action Plan will be submitted within 10 working days after receiving comments on the revised draft.

2. Mission Order:

Draft points for a Mission Order that mainstreams gender issues shall be submitted to USAID/Nepal and WIDTech, for consideration and comments not later than two weeks after the completion of the field work.

3. Gender Briefings:

Facilitate 2 to 3 sessions or meetings for USAID/Nepal staff and their implementing partners. Each session will be from 45-60 minutes. Topics covered will include why integrating gender will lead to more effective results and as well as Agency (ADS) procurement guidelines.

Estimated Level of Effort

It is anticipated that the services of a consultant will be required for up to 35 days. The consultant will have up to three days for preparation beforehand, four days for travel, 24 days in country, and 4 days at home to complete the draft and final documents. A six-day workweek will be authorized overseas to be used if necessary. Total LOE will be up to 35 days, including travel.

Performance Period

It is anticipated that this work will begin on/about June 7, 2001. The work will be completed by August 15, 2001.

Reporting Requirements

The consultant will work closely with Azza El-Abd, SO 4 Team Leader, in USAID/Nepal who will provide oversight while in country. Entry and exit meetings of the consultant with the Mission Director or her representative will be organized. WIDTech will provide overall direction as necessary. All TA deliverables will be provided for comment to USAID/Nepal and WIDTech.

ANNEX II

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN USAID STRATEGIC PLAN (2000)

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN USAID STRATEGIC PLAN (2000)

PREAMBLE

USAID is committed to full participation by men and women, particularly the poor and other disadvantaged groups in all sustainable development activities and to ensuring that sustainable development includes improvements in the lives of children.

USAID Goal: Broad-based Economic Growth

Women make significant contributions to broad-based economic growth and agricultural development in USAID recipient countries. In addition to their contributions in agriculture, export processing and other components of recorded national output, women make important unrecorded economic contributions through their household care and maintenance work (e.g. child rearing) and through their community management roles (pertaining to water, fuel, health care, education and other local public goods and services).

USAID Goal: Democracy and Good Governance Strengthened

Broad-based participation and democratic processes are integral elements of sustainable development. They encourage individuals and societies to take responsibility for their own progress, ensure protection of human rights, and foster informed civic participation. Sustainable democracies are built on the guarantee of human rights for all people, women as well as men.

USAID Goal: Human Capacity Built Through Education and Training

Basic education—which provides literacy and numeracy, along with problem solving and other core skills- is especially critical to development. Investments in expanded and improved basic education have been linked to faster and more equitable economic growth, reduction of poverty, and strengthened democracy and civil liberties. Expanded and improved basic education of women and girls also contributes to family health, lower fertility, and enhanced status of women.

USAID Goal: World Population Stabilized and Health Protected

When people can control the size of their families, resources are made available at the household, national and global levels for enduring improvements in quality of life.

Moreover, improved health status of women and girls plays a critical role in child survival, family welfare, economic productivity, and population stabilization.

USAID Goal: The World's Environment Protected for Long-Term Sustainability

Sustainable management of natural resources, energy, and urbanization builds public/private sector partnerships; increases public awareness through education and training; crosses gender, cultural, and class boundaries; stretches across the political spectrum; and strengthens civil society.

USAID Goal: Lives Saved, Suffering Associated with Natural or Man-Made Disasters Reduced, and Conditions Necessary for Political and/or Economic Development Re-Established

Crises, whether natural or man-made, destroy the resources individuals, families, or nations might otherwise commit to social and economic progress. Crises usually have their greatest impact on the poor, women and children.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Gender equality is an internationally recognized goal to which the United States subscribes.

Gender equality has significant implications for reasons having to do with efficiency and equity. It is important to maximizing the economic development potential of a society and to realizing individual human development potential and rights. On all international development target measures, females lag behind males. For all development targets, development progress that is gender-sensitive should result in narrowing the gap between women and men with absolute improvement for both.

Development programs are more effective when they take into account the contributions that both women and men can make and the impact that the programs will have on women, men and gender relationships. USAID's primary emphasis is on mainstreaming gender in all development regions and in all Agency goal areas and regions.

ANNEX III
ADS GENDER REQUIREMENTS

ADS GENDER REQUIREMENTS

This language is taken from *Revised Automated Directives System (ADS)*, 6 June 2001. The complete language can be found at <http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/>

ADS FUNCTIONAL SERIES 200 & 201—PLANNING & PROGRAMMING POLICY INCORPORATING GENDER ISSUES IN PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

201.3.4.11 Technical Analysis for Strategic Plans

a. Background

b. Requirements

The following mandatory technical analysis requirements apply to development of Strategic Plans:

Gender Analysis: Strategic Plans must reflect attention to gender concerns. Unlike other technical analyses described in this section, gender is not a separate topic to be analyzed and reported on in isolation. Instead, USAID's gender mainstreaming approach requires that appropriate gender analysis be applied to the range of technical issues that are considered in the development of a given Strategic Plan. Analytical work performed in the planning and development of Results Frameworks should address at least two questions: (1) how will gender relations affect the achievement of sustainable results; and (2) how will proposed results affect the relative status of women. Addressing these questions involves taking into account not only the different roles of men and women, but also the relationship and balance between them and the institutional structures that support them. For technical assistance and additional guidance, consult your Operating Unit or Bureau gender specialist or the USAID Guide to Gender Integration and Analysis.

ADS 201.3.4.13 Planning for Performance Management

a. The Performance Monitoring Plan

b. Performance Indicators

How Must Indicators and Evaluations Reflect Gender Considerations?

Men and women have different access to development programs and are affected differently by USAID activities. USAID seeks to understand these differences, both to improve the overall impact of its programs and to ensure that women, who traditionally

have less access to loans and other economic goods than do men, can obtain the resources they need to improve their lives.

One way to understand the effect of gender on our development efforts would be to disaggregate performance information by sex. In practice, however, this is not always feasible or cost effective. The following requirement has been developed to ensure due consideration in assessing the relationship between gender and our development efforts:

Performance management systems and evaluations at the SO and IR levels must include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data when the technical analyses conducted during the strategic planning stage demonstrates that:

- # The activity or its anticipated results involve or affect women and men differently
- # This difference is potentially significant for managing towards sustainable program impact

Such activities include, but are not limited to, humanitarian programs, micro-enterprise grants, and training programs. Where the people targeted by the activity cannot be easily identified (e.g., people who attend mass meetings, people who buy from social marketing program vendors, etc.), it may be too difficult to track and report sex-disaggregated data. In these cases, SO Teams are encouraged to refer to the “USAID Guide to Gender Analysis and Integration” for contextual indicators that may help them to assess gender impact indirectly.

It is highly recommended that SO Teams be aware that their activities may have significant differential effects by social group and watch to ensure that neither women nor men are disproportionately affected. For example, in a region where 8 of 10 farmers are women and there are certain social norms governing social relations between the sexes, the SO Team should weigh the benefits of using male versus female agricultural extension agents. Similarly, policy changes can often affect men and women differently, and SO Teams should look for unexpected effects that may need to be addressed. When gender technical expertise is not present in an Operating Unit, technical assistance is available from the Global Bureau’s Office of Women in Development.

ADS 201.3.6.2 Ten Steps in Activity Design

Step 3. Determine the Major Outputs Necessary to Achieve Each Intermediate Result

The major categories of USAID-financed outputs needed to achieve each Intermediate Result or group of Intermediate Results are identified along with a time frame for completion. This information will be incorporated later into various acquisition and assistance instruments.

Each output should be necessary to achieve the IR or group of IRs.

Various technical analyses may be necessary to make informed choices on the most

desirable outputs. A major focus of this analytical work is obtaining feedback and participation on the part of ultimate customers. Topics of analysis may include economic, social soundness, environmental, technical, administrative, institutional, and cost-benefit issues. Each type of analysis should specifically and appropriately address relevant gender issues. (See Additional Help document.)

SO Teams and the approving official determine the type and level of analysis needed. Much of the needed analytical work is normally carried out as part of the preparation of the Strategic Plan. (See ADS 201.3.4.11.)

On complex activities, additional, more detailed analytical work may be needed to meet pre-obligation requirements. Consideration of Agency policy guidance may also affect choice of outputs. Agency staff are encouraged to review past Agency and development partner experience, including alternative development approaches, best practices, evaluations, and other development literature in designing activities.

Agency staff can obtain access to this information by requesting an information search from CDIE's Research and Reference Service, which will provide the requester with a synthesis and selected experiential information appropriate to the user's need. USAID development experience, evaluations, and best practices information is also directly accessible as an Agency desktop information tool through PPC/CDIE OLine at <http://cdie.usaid.org>.

ADS 201.3.6.3 Pre-Obligation Requirements

Gender. Activities designed following approval of the Strategic Plan must address gender issues in a manner consistent with the findings of the analytical work performed during strategy development. (See **201.3.4.11 paragraph b, Gender Analysis**) Findings from gender analysis will help to determine how gender needs to be addressed in the activity. SO Teams should ensure that capacity of recipients to address the gender concerns identified during strategic and activity planning is duly considered before funds are obligated. For contracts and grants/cooperative agreements that are issued following a competitive process, this is accomplished by signaling in solicitation documents USAID's expectations regarding gender expertise and capacity, tasking offerors with proposing meaningful approaches to address identified gender issues, and placing appropriate emphasis on gender-related elements of technical evaluation criteria. The following steps must be completed to address this requirement:

- (1) For each activity subject to approval, the SO Team must, in one page or less, outline the most significant gender issues that need to be considered during activity implementation. These issues should reflect consideration of the following two questions:
 - (a) Are women and men involved or affected differently by the context or work to be undertaken?

- (b) If so, is this difference potentially significant for managing toward sustainable program impact?

The statement must describe how these concerns will be addressed in any competitive solicitations financed under the activity (i.e. Request for Proposal (RFP) for acquisition and Request for Assistance (RFA) or Annual Program Statement (APS). Note that procurements for goods and commodities are excluded from this requirement.) The text of this gender statement is included in the Activity Approval Document.

- (2) If the SO Team determines that there are no significant gender issues, it must provide a brief rationale to that effect in place of the gender statement in the Activity Approval Document.
- (3) The Approving Official for the activity is responsible for ensuring that the gender statement adequately responds to item #1 in this list. In cases where no gender statement is made (see #2), s/he must ensure as part of approving the activity that the rationale is adequate.
- (4) Before issuing or approving an RFP, RFA, or APS, the Contract or Agreement Officer will
- (a) Confirm that either the gender statement is incorporated into the resulting RFA, RFP, or APS requirements or that the rationale (#2) has been completed as part of activity approval; and
 - (b) Work with the SO Team so that the relative significance of gender technical capacity to the Statement of Work or Program Description is appropriately reflected in the technical evaluation criteria.

ADS FUNCTIONAL SERIES 300—ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE

INCORPORATING GENDER CONSIDERATIONS INTO EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR COMPETITIVE SOLICITATIONS, GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

USAID Direct Contracting (302.5.14)

Incorporate into the Request for Proposal (RFP) the statement outlining gender issues and include an appropriately weighted technical evaluation criterion addressing the gender considerations specified in the statement.

-OR-

Confirm that the Strategic Objective Team completed a brief rationale for not specifying gender issues as part of the Activity Approval Document (and, thus, not including evaluation criteria addressing gender considerations in the RFP).

Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations (303.5.5b)

Whenever gender issues are to be incorporated into the activity, the RFA or APS announcement must state the requirement in accordance to ADS 201.3.6.3 (see below) and include an appropriately weighted technical evaluation criterion addressing the gender considerations specified in the statement.

-OR-

Confirm that the Strategic Objective Team completed a brief rationale for not specifying gender issues as part of the Activity Approval Document (and, thus, not including evaluation criteria addressing gender considerations in the RFA).

REFERENCE

ADS 201.3.6.3: Pre-Obligation Requirements

“Activities designed following approval of the Strategic Plan must address gender issues in a manner consistent with the findings of the analytical work performed during strategy development. Findings from gender analysis will help to determine how gender needs to be addressed in the activity. SO Teams should ensure that capacity of recipients to address the gender concerns identified during strategic and activity planning is duly considered before funds are obligated.

For contracts and grants/cooperative agreements that are issued following a competitive process, this is accomplished by signaling in solicitation documents USAID’s expectations regarding gender expertise and capacity, tasking offerors with proposing meaningful approaches to address identified gender issues, and placing appropriate emphasis on gender-related elements of technical evaluation criteria. The following steps must be completed to address this requirement:

- (1) For each activity subject to approval, the SO Team must, in one page or less, outline the most significant gender issues that need to be considered during activity implementation. These issues should reflect consideration of the following two questions:
 - (a) Are women and men involved or affected differently by the context or work to be undertaken?
 - (b) If so, is this difference potentially significant for managing toward sustainable program impact?

The statement must describe how these concerns will be addressed in any competitive solicitations financed under the activity (i.e. Request for Proposal (RFP) for acquisition and Request for Assistance (RFA) or Annual Program Statement (APS). Note that procurements for goods and commodities are excluded from this requirement.) The text of this gender statement is included in the Activity Approval Document.

- (2) If the SO Team determines that there are no significant gender issues, it must provide a brief rationale to that effect in place of the gender statement in the Activity Approval Document.
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 - (a) Confirm that either the gender statement is incorporated into the resulting RFA, RFP, or APS requirements or that the rationale (#2) has been completed as part of activity approval; and
 - (b) Work with the SO Team so that the relative significance of gender technical capacity to the Statement of Work or Program Description is appropriately reflected in the technical evaluation criteria.”

ANNEX IV
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

USAID DOCUMENTS

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ANNEX V
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PERSONS CONTACTED

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Bhaktaraj Ranjit, Project Manager, Women's Empowerment Program
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PACT Washington DC

Traaer Sunley, Vice President, Communications

Save the Children US Himalayan Field Office

Keith Leslie, Director
Shova Lama, Advocacy Program Officer

World Education Nepal

Chij K. Shrestha, Vice President
Jon Silverstone, Country Director
Helen Sherpa, Program Coordinator

World Wildlife Foundation Nepal Program

Anil Manadar, Director of Programs, Conservation
Ghaha Gurung, Director of Programs and Sustainable Development
Yeshi Choden Lama, Program Officer

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DFID (Department for International Development, UK)

Dr. Rachel Hinton, Social Development Advisor
Lydia Richardson, Consultant Conducting Gender Audit

SNV, Netherlands Development Organization

Sriyani Perera, Gender Specialist

UNITED NATIONS

International Labor Organization

Bimal Rawal, National Project Coordinator, South Asian Sub-Regional Programme to
Combat Trafficking in Children
Nita Neupane, National Project coordinator, Expansion of Employment Opportunities for
Women

UNICEF

Anjali S. Pradhan, Project Officer/Gender Focal Point

UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women) Nepal Field Office

Aruna Thapa, National Project Manager
Sangeeta R. Thapa, National Programme Officer

HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL

Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare

Mrs. Ishwari Bhattarai, Under Secretary

NEPALI NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

ABC Nepal

Durga Ghimire, President

Samanta

Dr. Aruj Rana-Deuba
Pinky Singh-Rana

Nepali Women Leaders

Meena Acharya, General Secretary, Tanka Prasad Acharya Memorial Foundation Nepal.
Rita Thapa, Founder Dhaka Weaves Ltd, and TEWA(NGO)
Jamuna Kayastha, Managing Director, NFC Seed Company
Laxmi Sharma, Proprietor, Laxmi Wood Craft Udyog
Saraswati Shrestha, Executive Chairperson, Women Cooperative Society Ltd. Banking Office

Dhading Resource Management Project Farmer User Groups, United Mission to Nepal
(Field visits July 4)

DRMP Field Office

Bhakta Narayan Shrestha,
Srijana Shrestha,
Rishi Bastakoti

DFO Ranger

Nok Nath Lamsal

Forest User Groups

Deupuje Forest User Group
Patal Forest User Group
Bahrabhai Forest user Group

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM GROUPS (FIELD VISITS JULY 6-7)

Central Field Office, Bharatpur, Chitwan District

PACT Staff

Jaya Argal, regional Director
Ram Babu Acharya, Regional Program Assistant
Cheli Kumari Upadhya, Supervisor
Bishnu Brusal, Supervisor

TAF Staff

Nayan Bistra, Program Manager
Rakesh S. Maharjan, Regional Coordinator
Basu Chaudhary, Regional Advocacy Coordinator
Sunita Shresta, District Coordinator
Bupesh Kayastha, District Coordinator
Deepak Khatinada, Finance Coordinator

Chitwan District

Mahila Kalyan Samudayik Bank, in Krishnapur; Facilitating NGO: Samaj Bikas Kendra
Sagarmatha Mahila Bachat Samuha, in Birendranagar; Facilitating NGO: Samaj Bikas
Kendra
Chaudhary Mahila Samuha, in Bhandara; Facilitating NGO: Nepal Shikara
NGO Facilitators: Hema Chaudhary, Uma Devi Kandel

Nawalparasi District

Chhahari Savings Bank, in Dumkibas: Nava Prativa Community Development Center
Tamashpur Mahila Bachat Samuha, in Naya Belhani Tamaspur; Facilitating NGO: Nava Prativa Community Development Center
Santi Mahila Banchat Samuha, in Arungkhola; Facilitating NGO: Nava Prativa Community Development Center
NGO Facilitators, Laxmi Maya Thapa, Phampha Karki
ADRA Community Based Family Health Program, Kavre District (Field Visit 7/17)
Satish Pansey, Associate Country Director
Rajendra Gurure, Health Director
Chandishwein Tamreker, Project Director for Kavre District

Female Community Health Volunteers

Minivar Ruth Bhesu, volunteer for 11 years
Krishana David Manandar, volunteer for 2 years
Sharada Digdal, volunteer for 11 years
Mamju Dahal, volunteer for 8 years

OTHER CONTACTS

Jeffrey Ashe, Institute for Sustainable Development, Brandeis University
Lynn Bennett, the World Bank
Dr. Judith Justice, University of California, San Francisco

ANNEX VI

GENDER MAINSTREAMING SUGGESTIONS FROM PARTNERS

GENDER MAINSTREAMING SUGGESTIONS FROM PARTNERS

In addition to the collection of information about gender integration and women's empowerment strategies in development programs, interviews with Nepali NGOs, Foreign Service nationals working in USAID, International NGOs, and other donors included questions eliciting their suggestions about the most effective approaches to gender mainstreaming and gender equality as well as ways USAID could strengthen the gender integration in its programs. Two points emerged in nearly every conversation: the importance of female literacy and the need for male involvement in women's empowerment. Other key themes included the importance of decentralization, and the need to look at caste as well as gender. These and other suggestions are described below.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FEMALE LITERACY

There was wide agreement that female literacy and girls' education are essential if not the most essential keys to sustainable development and women's empowerment in Nepal. Most stressed the value of USAID's an integrated approach to literacy and the importance of combining literacy and numeracy with practical, tangible knowledge in skills important to people's lives such as business, safe motherhood, family planning, natural resource management, and advocacy.

MALE INVOLVEMENT IN WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The need for male involvement in women's empowerment was suggested for all levels from the national ministries to the household. People stressed that working with only women is not enough to change the power structure and agenda. They also noted a tendency to equate gender with women in Nepal. Some of the points raised included:

- # Help men and women understand that gender refers to both men and women.
- # Help men understand the importance of women's participation in development.
- # Use the economic rationale for women's participation because it is most persuasive to men.
- # Engage men in self-reflective participatory gender awareness activities that relate to their work.
- # Build the capacity of women in ministries to do gender advocacy.
- # Include men on the USAID gender committee.

DECENTRALIZATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR GENDER EQUITY

Another point stressed by many people in different ways was the importance of decentralization for the survival of democracy and sustainable development in Nepal .

Many viewed decentralization as a necessary condition for gender equity. The important roles for local government and civil society were stressed. Some insisted that NGOs and civil society were the vehicles to achieve gender equity because it was very difficult to work with the government because of corruption and that the competition for power and resources created obstacles.. Others felt that a more sustainable approach was through local government. One person suggested that it was necessary to work with the VDCs and DDCs to create a permanent institutionalization of gender equity because NGOs come and go. Still others felt that a public/private partnership was essential.

SNV and UNICEF have decentralized their own operations to promote decentralization and gender equity at the local level. UNICEF continues to support line ministries at the central level but channels program activities through the DDC level. This approach met resistance at the national level but was negotiated through the leadership of the Ministry of Local Government. SNV has field offices in Easter, Central and Western Nepal. Each regional office conducts its own gender capacity building training, develops a gender action plan, and holds biannual gender meetings. There are gender focal points at the local level.

CASTE AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION CROSS-CUT GENDER

A number of people stressed the importance of examining at caste as well as gender, that is ,recognizing that gender is not the only factor that affects women’s options. The same applies to males. Care and Save the Children have incorporated caste into their program goals. DFID is conducting a study to develop strategies for reaching socially excluded groups. Recent legislation outlawing the social category and associated restrictions for Untouchables and establishment of a Dalit Commission reinforces the need to address the issue of caste in development efforts.

Skills and Responsibility, Not Dependency

A number of people noted the negative effects of a welfare, spoon-feeding, approach to programs for women. One successful woman entrepreneur stressed the need to give women the skills and responsibility to develop their own ideas and the recognition that they can do anything if they have confidence. Women want to develop concrete skills that improve the quality of their lives rather than engage in vague capacity building. An INGO made a similar point stating that “attention to gender has to be action, not just talk.”

Hiring a Woman is Not Enough

One person noted that a common strategy for addressing gender equity is to put a woman in charge, or put a woman on a team. Not all women are gender sensitive or willing to

address women's issues just because they are women. It requires a team effort to address gender in a program.

Sector Expertise is Important for Gender Integration

One of the donor gender specialists stressed that gender specialists need technical knowledge about the sectors in which their organizations are working in order to weave gender into it effectively. General gender background is not enough. For example, it is important to understand irrigation systems and agricultural systems to take into account women and men's roles and responsibilities in those systems and ensure that there is equitable access to activities and benefits.

Capacity Building Needed for NGO Partners

Some of the people interviewed stressed the importance of greater up-front investment by USAID in the training of local NGOs implementing its programs.

Dialogue Among Implementers

Some people encouraged USAID to promote dialogue among its partners who are implementing USAID programs in the field.

A More Proactive Role for the Donor Gender Committee

Both donors and INGOs recommended a more proactive role for the donor gender committee. More specific suggestions included:

- # Play an advocacy role with line ministries, pressure government to address gender in policy and programs and to hire and train more women. The Asian Development Bank is including affirmative action as a condition for the next large loan.
- # Coordinate assistance to the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare to build the capacity of the staff and more strategically support the implementation of the national plan of action.
- # Coordinate microenterprise support because there appear to be conflicting models, introduced by different donors, that could be reducing women's participation. The Review of Microenterprise Development in Nepal, prepared to support the design of the new USAID/Nepal strategy, makes a similar point.
- # Draw more on the expertise of Nepali feminists, NGOs and INGOs by inviting them to give presentations at donor committee meetings.

ANNEX VII
TRAINING SESSIONS FOR MISSION STAFF

TRAINING SESSIONS FOR MISSION STAFF

MEETING I: GENDER CONCEPTS AND ADS REQUIREMENTS

Invitation

Subject: All-Mission Meeting On Mainstreaming Women's Empowerment

SO3 is hosting a meeting for all Mission staff on Wednesday July 18 from 14:30 pm to 16:pm in the conference room. Visiting WIDTECH consultant Mari Clarke will facilitate a discussion of the following topics:

- # USAID Requirements for Gender Mainstreaming
- # Maximizing Synergies between SOs to address Women's Empowerment
- # Gender Indicators for USAID/Nepal
- # Tasks/Roles for a gender/women's empowerment committee.

Your participation is very important to ensure that the Gender Action Plan reflects the ideas and experience of all the offices and SO teams in the Mission.

MEETING ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING JULY 18, 2001

Objectives:

- # Review key concepts in gender mainstreaming
- # Review USAID policy and requirements for gender mainstreaming
- # Discuss opportunities to maximize synergies between SOs to address women's empowerment
- # Discuss options for mainstreaming gender/equity women's empowerment indicators
- # Discuss potential participants, roles, and tasks for a gender/women's empowerment committee
- # Review key discussion outcomes
- # Discuss need/interest for additional working session on gender indicators for performance monitoring (on Friday at 2:30)

Materials Distributed:

- # Key Gender Concepts (incorporated in the section on "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment).
- # Gender Mainstreaming in USAID's Strategy (Annex II of this Assessment).
- # HMG Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare Responsibilities (below).
- # Gender Mainstreaming in HMG's 9th Long-Term Plan (below).
- # Highlights of USAID WID/Gender History (below).
- # Summary of USAID Gender Action Plan (below).
- # Opportunities for Creating Program Synergies Focusing on Women (below).

HMG MINISTRY OF WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Established in September 1995 as the Ministry of Women and Social Welfare

Functions:

- # Policy development for gender equality and women's empowerment
- # Program coordination
- # Research and documentation of women's issues
- # Serving as the focal point for women's issues

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN HMG NINTH PLAN (1997-2002)

The Ninth plan incorporates gender mainstreaming as the main policy approach for attaining gender equality and socioeconomic development in Nepal.

Specific Policies

- # To integrate women in the mainstream of national and sectoral development policies, targets and programs will clearly incorporate gender aspects.
- # The national accounting procedure will be reviewed for a proper evaluation of the contribution of women to the national economy.
- # For effective coordination and implementation of women's development activities, the institutional structure will be strengthened and expanded.
- # To monitor and evaluate integration of women in the mainstream of national development, appropriate indicators will be developed and monitored in a gender disaggregated manner.

HIGHLIGHTS OF GUIDE TO GENDER INTEGRATION AND ANALYSIS (ADS 200.5)

- # Gender should be mainstreamed and such mainstreaming may change the way the development problem itself is defined.
- # It should be assumed that gender is relevant and gender analysis should be applied to all uses. The burden of proof is on showing that gender considerations do not apply to a particular problem rather than proving that there are relevant gender issues.
- # Factors related to the differential opportunities, constraints, contributions and benefits of men and women must be considered as a part of the fabric of program planning, implementation and assessment. These factors cannot be ignored because they affect the results achieved and they are fundamentally linked to the inequities that development programs seek to change. At the same time, treating women as a special interest group apart from the core development agenda is ineffective. Both women and men are involved in the economic, social, political and environmental realms that are targets of USAID development programs.

SUMMARY OF ADS GENDER MAINSTREAMING REQUIREMENTS

ADS 200 SERIES

I. Technical Analysis for Strategic Plans (ADS 201.3.4.11)

Gender Analysis is a required component of all technical analyses undertaken during strategic planning and development of results frameworks.

II. Planning for Performance Management (ADS 201.3.4.13)

Indicators and evaluations must reflect gender considerations when analyses performed as a part of the strategic planning process indicate that (1) the activity or its anticipated results involve or affect women and men differently and (2) this difference is potentially significant for managing towards sustainable program impact.

III. Ten Steps in Activity Design (ADS 201.3.6.2)

When designing activities, technical analyses may be necessary to determine the most desirable outputs. Each analysis should specifically and appropriately address gender issues.

IV. Pre-Obligation Requirements (ADS 201.3.6.3)

- # Activity Approval documents must include a gender statement outlining the most significant issues and/or posing questions about gender issues relevant to the activity.
- # This gender statement must be incorporated into the competitive RFA, RFP, or APS.
- # If no significant gender issues have been identified, a brief rationale must be provided as a part of the activity approval process.
- # The Contract or Agreement Officer then works with the SO team to ensure that the relative significance of gender technical capacity is appropriately reflected in the technical evaluation criteria.

V. Model Checklist for Pre-obligation Requirements (ADS 201.5B)

The Model Checklist for Pre-Obligation Requirements has been revised to reflect the changes described in section IV.

ADS 300 SERIES

Criteria for Competitive Solicitations (ADS 302.5.14)

- # Incorporate into the RFP the statement outlining gender issues or confirm that the Strategic Objective Team completed the rationale for not specifying gender issues as a part of the activity approval
- # Include in the RFP appropriately weighted technical evaluation criterion addressing the gender considerations specified in the in the statement, if applicable.

Evaluation Criteria for RFA and APS (ADS 303.5.5b)

- # USAID policy requires that gender issues be addressed as appropriate in all USAID-funded activities. A statement outlining gender issues or the rationale for not including such a statement must be included in the competitive RFA or APS. The appropriateness of the statement or the rationale is determined by the Approving Official as a part of the pre-obligation requirements.
- # SO/RP team shall consult, to the extent necessary, with G/WID for guidance on structuring criteria to evaluate the plan's positive impacts on the socio-economic status of women, any differential impacts on women and men, and methods for measuring these impacts.

HIGHLIGHTS OF USAID WID/GENDER HISTORY

USAID /Washington	USAID/Nepal
1974 # Percy Amendment to Foreign Assistance Act (to integrate women in economies of developing countries. # WID Office established	
	1980 Women in Nepal Studies conducted
1981 WID Policy adopted	
1985 Nairobi UN Third World Conference on Women	1985 Nairobi UN Third World Conference on Women
	1988 Mission WID Action Plan adopted
	1989 WID Action Plan Updated
	1992 Gender/WID in Democracy TA
1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women	1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women Reengineering: Women's Empowerment SO3 designed using existing programs.
1996 Plan of Action adopted	
	1997 Phase II WEP Program funded Synergies: Focus on Women TA
2000 Revision of Strategic Plan and ADS, incorporating gender issues	2000 Strategy Revised : SO3 phased out
	2001 Gender Plan of Action mainstreaming WEP; Mission Order

SUMMARY OF USAID GENDER PLAN OF ACTION 1996

- # Modify the USAID Strategic Plan to reflect the central role of women in development.
- # Include indicators to measure impact on the social and economic status of women in the USAID “menu” of performance indicators.
- # Revise personnel policy to include responsibility for addressing gender issues in the position descriptions of program officers and project development officers.
- # Add “attention to gender issues” to performance rating criteria for civil service and foreign service personnel.
- # Provide USAID staff training, information, resources, and technical assistance on gender issues.
- # Include a technical requirement for addressing gender issues in statements of work for RFPs.
- # Incorporate requirements in the ADS for addressing gender issues in strategic planning, results, and reporting.
- # Require Missions to review and revise “Mission orders” to ensure that gender issues are considered at all appropriate points in the process of planning, achieving, and evaluating program results.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATING PROGRAM SYNERGY BY FOCUSING ON WOMEN

- # Increase information exchange within the Mission and among partners (**partner** profiles in consistent format on web site; cross-SO synergy meetings)
- # Maintain existing synergy in USAID and with partners (synergy committee identifies synergies and means to implement; develop protocol for new activities that identifies links with other SOs)
- # Maximize synergy in districts where SO activities overlap (map overlapping areas and use them strategically to coordinate)
- # Organize existing and coordinate new data collection on gender roles and relations across SOs (organize existing gender materials in one location; coordinate baseline, impact evaluation and special studies addressing gender issues; Add women's empowerment/gender equity indicators to performance data base).
- # Continue to support literacy due to its critical contribution to women's empowerment (Evaluate literacy components of SO3, SO2 and SO1 activity close outs, exploring potential for greater synergy for new strategy)
- # Emphasize group participation as an aspect of synergy and empowerment (evaluate empowerment of women through groups in SO3, SO2 and SO1 activity close outs)

(Adapted from recommendations proposed by Gretchen Bloom and Michael Paolisso in *Opportunities for Creating Program Synergy by Focusing on Women: Recommendations for USAID Nepal, WIDTECH, 1997.*)

INVITATION TO USAID/NEPAL STAFF MEETING ON GENDER INDICATORS

Subject: Meeting on Gender Indicators Today (Friday July 20th)

The Women's Empowerment Team is hosting an all Mission discussion of gender indicators on Friday July 20th at 2:30 pm in the conference room.

The group that met on Wednesday to discuss gender mainstreaming agreed that there was a need to meet again to identify a few indicators to use in the SOs:

- # to capture and report USAID Nepal's achievements in women's empowerment
- # to guide activity and program monitoring as well as management decisions for the new mechanisms for SO2, SO4, and SO5.

Some potential common indicators suggested on Wednesday included:

- # Increase in female literacy
- # Skills training for females (health, advocacy, income generation)
- # Community leadership by women (VDC elected and other positions)
- # Environment and social impact assessment for hydropower projects
- # Women's enterprises (earnings)
- # Reproductive choice (use of family planning)

Please join us in this meeting so that your SO and perspectives will be reflected in the Gender Action Plan. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Materials distributed (attached in the following pages):

- # Indicators Group Task.
- # Criteria for Assessing Performance Indicators.
- # Options for Genderizing Existing Performance Indicators and adding New Gender Sensitive Performance Indicators.

INDICATORS GROUP TASK

- # Read the suggestions for possible changes in the indicators for the SO assigned to your group. Examine both the sex disaggregation of existing indicators and suggestions for addition/modification of indicators.
- # Discuss the existing and suggested indicators using the guidelines for gender disaggregation listed on the SO Indicator sheets and the CDIE guidelines for assessing performance indicators (handout provided).
- # Discuss the feasibility of adding indicators to the SO to capture women's empowerment (literacy, political participation, economic participation, reproductive choice). Some of these types of indicators have been suggested for each of the SOs. Is it feasible and useful to do this? Would other indicators be more appropriate?
- # Develop a revised realistic set of "genderized" indicators based on your discussions.
- # Discuss possible sources and cost effective methods for collecting the data for these indicators, and how frequently the data would be collected. If needed, revise your indicators again based on the data discussion.

Select a group member to present:

- C Your proposed gender-sensitive indicators
- C Reasons for selecting them
- C Suggested cost effective methods/sources for the data
- C frequency of data collection

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- # **Direct:** measures as closely as possible the result it is intended to measure. It should be pegged at the same level as the result being measured.
- # **Example:** *Contraceptive prevalence rate is a direct measure of increased use of family planning methods.*
- # **Objective:** clearly defines what is to be measured and measures only one thing at a time to ensure general agreement on interpretation of results.
- # **Example:** *“Number of successful mothers’ groups” is ambiguous. “Number of mother’s groups that have implemented community health improvement plans in the last year” is more objective.*
- # **Adequate:** uses only as many indicators to define a result as is necessary to provide the information needed to make sound management decisions, taking into account complexity and level of resources involved. Avoid using too many indicators.
- # **Quantitative where possible, complemented with qualitative as appropriate:** Numerical indicators are more precise. Qualitative indicators (descriptive observations) are less precise but can capture complex processes and provide context for assessing the significance of changes in numerical indicators.
- # **Disaggregated where appropriate:** Breaking out program results by gender, age, caste, location and other dimensions is important because development activities often require different approaches for different groups and affect those groups in different ways. Disaggregating data enables tracking whether or not specific groups participate in and benefit from the activities intended to improve their lives.
- # **Practical:** Can be obtained in a timely way at a reasonable cost.
- # **Reliable:** Provide sufficiently reliable data for the type of decision to be made. Use costly sample surveys only when statistically significant data are required. Don’t expect a low cost rapid appraisal to provide statistically significant data.

(Adapted from CDIE Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Tips No. 6, “Selecting Performance Indicators”, 1996).

OPTIONS FOR “GENDERIZING” EXISTING SO 2 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND ADDING NEW GENDER-SENSITIVE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

General Guideline: gender and caste disaggregate people level indicators when:

- # Technical reviews and other data suggest that there is a strong possibility that females and/or lower caste groups may be excluded from or have limited access to development activity participation and benefits.
- # Technical reviews and other data suggest that there may be different impacts on men and women.
- # The management (monitoring and impact assessment) benefits of data collection justify the costs, given resources and data availability.

Please note that:

1. People level IRs and indicators are in **bold type**
2. Suggestions for gender disaggregation of existing indicators are also in **bold type** and in **[brackets]**
3. Suggestions for adding indicators are in *bold and italic type* and in *[brackets]*

SO 2: REDUCED FERTILITY AND PROTECTED HEALTH OF NEPALESE FAMILIES

IR 2.1 Increased Use of Quality Family Planning Services

Indicators

- 2.1. Total fertility rate
 - 2.1.1 Modern contraceptive prevalence rate
 - 2.1.2 Annual couple years of protection for MOH and USAID-supported programs
 - 2.1.3 Number of district stores stocking a three month supply of contraceptives
 - 2.1.4 **Number of health workers trained to competency as family planning specialists [disaggregated by gender and caste]**
 - 2.1.5 Number of service delivery points certified for contraceptive services [*NEW: number of FCHVs and Mothers' Group Members who can read and communicate family planning information to community members*]

IR 2.2 Increased Use of Selected maternal and Child Health Services

Indicators

- 2.2 Under-five mortality rate
 - 2.2.1 **Percentage of children receiving vitamin A supplementation on a regular basis [gender disaggregate a sample of VDCs on a trial basis to determine if this is a necessary/significant measure of girls access to nutritional supplements provided by USAID program]**
 - 2.2.2 **Percentage of children with pneumonia symptoms given appropriate treatment in intervention districts [gender disaggregate a sample of VDCs on a trial basis to determine if this is a necessary/significant measure of girls' access to health services provided by USAID program]**
 - 2.2.3 Use of oral rehydration therapy in recent diarrheal episodes in children
 - 2.2.4 Number of births attended annually by a skilled provider in target areas [*NEW: number of FCHVs and Mothers' Group Members who can read and communicate child health information to community members*]

IR 2.3 Increase in Percent of HIV/STI Prevention and Control Practices by High Risk Groups in Target Areas

Indicators

- 2.3 Increase in percent of consistent condom use and last condom use reported by commercial sex workers and male target group
 - 2.3.1 **Increase in percent of consistent condom use and last condom use reported by commercial sex workers and male target group [already gender disaggregated]**
 - 2.3.2 Number of high-risk individuals screened for syphilis in target areas [disaggregate by gender and caste]
 - 2.3.3 Number of times sero-prevalence results and HIV prevalence estimates are used by HMG in annual national planning exercises.

IR 2.4 Strengthened HMG Capacity and Pilot Community Programs to Control Selected Infectious Diseases

Indicators

- 2.4 Vector Borne Disease Research and Training Center produces accurate and comprehensive reports on vector borne diseases on a timely basis
- 2.3.1 Percent of agreement in identity of isolates and susceptibility of results relative to the reference laboratory
- 2.3.2 Number of reports on vector borne diseases produced by the Vector Borne Disease Research Center which meet the criteria of accurate, comprehensive and timely
- 2.1.6 TBD indicator on the impact of VBD interventions to be developed following a pilot study in April or May.

[NEW: Possible “Halo Effect” Indicators

- # Number of community actions organized by mothers groups
- # Number of FCHVs elected to political office
- # Increased economic activity by mothers groups
 - C Number of groups with savings and loan services
 - C Number of new or expanded enterprises by group members]

OPTIONS FOR “GENDERIZING” EXISTING SO 4 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND ADDING NEW GENDER-SENSITIVE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

General Guideline: gender and caste disaggregate people level indicators when:

- # Technical reviews and other data suggest that there is a strong possibility that females and/or lower caste groups may be excluded from or have limited access to development activity participation and benefits.
- # Technical reviews and other data suggest that there may be different impacts on men and women.
- # The management (monitoring and impact assessment) benefits of data collection justify the costs, given resources and data availability.

Please note that:

1. People level IRs and indicators are in bold type
2. Suggestions for gender disaggregation of existing indicators are also in bold type and in [brackets].
3. Suggestions for adding indicators are in *bold and italic type* and in [brackets]

SO 4: INCREASED PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTALLY AND SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE HYDROPOWER DEVELOPMENT

SO Level Indicators

Private financial commitments for hydropower projects
Number of private firms participating in projects of one megawatt or greater

IR 4.1 Improved Enabling Environment for Equitable and Sustainable Hydropower Development

Indicators

- 4.1.1 Private sector projects progressing toward financial closure
- 4.1.2 Royalties distributed to affected communities according to policy
[NEW: number of enterprises started or expanded as a result of hydropower development, disaggregated by gender and caste]

IR 4.2 Strengthened Environmental and Social Assessment Procedures with Broadened Stakeholder Participation

Indicators

- 4.2.1 Number of approved Environmental/Social Impact Assessments for hydropower proposals that meet or exceed international guidelines.
[NEW: number of EI/As that include a plan for stakeholder participation that includes outreach to women and lower castes]
- 4.2.2 Public hearings for hydropower conducted **with local stakeholders and affected communities**
[NEW: number of men and women by caste attending public hearings on Hydropower]
- 4.2.3 **Number of professionals trained in reviewing Environmental/Social Impact Assessments (tentative)** [Disaggregated by gender and caste]

OPTIONS FOR “GENDERIZING” EXISTING SO 5 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND ADDING NEW GENDER-SENSITIVE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

General Guideline: gender and caste disaggregate people level indicators when:

- # Technical reviews and other data suggest that there is a strong possibility that females and/or lower caste groups may be excluded from or have limited access to development activity participation and benefits.
- # Technical reviews and other data suggest that there may be different impacts on men and women.
- # The management (monitoring and impact assessment) benefits of data collection justify the costs, given resources and data availability.

Please note that:

1. People level IRs and indicators are in **bold type**
2. Suggestions for gender disaggregation of existing indicators are also in **bold type** and in **[brackets]**.
3. Suggestions for adding indicators are in *bold and italic type* and in *[brackets]*

SO 5: STRENGTHENED GOVERNANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND SELECTED INSTITUTIONS

IR 5.1 Increased Management Capacities of NRM User Groups

Indicators

- 5.1.1 Amount of biomass harvested annually from active forest management
- 5.1.2 Percentage of levied water users’ fees collected
- 5.1.3 ~~Participant satisfaction with group management training provided by USAID partners. [disaggregated by gender and caste].~~
[NEW: number of participants who learn group management techniques in training provided by US partners, disaggregated by gender and caste]
[NEW: Number of CFUGs with group saving and credit services, disaggregated by male, female and mixed groups]

Sub IR 5.1.1 Increased Technical Management Skills [add in selected community organizations and local governance]

Indicators

5.1.1.1 Percentage of community forests actively managed (sub IR indicator)

Sub IR 5.1.2 Strengthened Organizational Governance Skills

Indicators

5.1.2.1 **Perception of democratic participation in decision process [disaggregated by gender and caste] [ADD at the VDC or whatever level is appropriate]**

5.1.2.2 **Percentage of user groups following constitutional procedures for allocating** accumulated funds in CFUG account [disaggregated by women's men's and mixed groups]

IR 5.2 Increased Advocacy Capacity of Selected Civil Society Groups At Community and Federation Levels)

Indicators

5.2.1 Increase in community based organizations member ship in apex organizations [disaggregated by men's, women's and mixed groups]

5.2.2 Number of advocacy campaigns by targeted groups [disaggregated by men's, women's and mixed groups]

5.2.3 Percentage of target populations with knowledge of advocacy issues [disaggregate by gender and caste]
[number of members of targeted groups who can read and use information for advocacy, disaggregated by gender and caste]

IR 5.3 Increased women's participation [ADD "in local governance"]

Indicators

5.3.1 Number of women in elected leadership positions in targeted districts

5.3.2 Number of collective actions by women[**ADD's groups**] in selected districts
[ADD increased women's literacy in targeted districts]

IR 5.4 Improved Performance of Selected Institutions

Indicators

- 5.4.1 Increased participation of HMG officials in anti-trafficking committees at the DDC level
[ADD: number of men/women who understand the negative effects of trafficking in target areas
ADD: Number of trafficked women who received counseling and skills training in target areas

REFERENCE FOR "GENDERIZING" PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

SO 3: INCREASED WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

SO Indicator: Influence over household decision-making by targeted women

SO indicator: Targeted households spending more on family well being

SO indicator: Collective actions for social change by targeted groups

IR 3.1 Increased women's literacy

3.1.1 Women who are literate at a basic level (IR indicator)

IR 3.2 Increased women's legal rights awareness and advocacy (IR)

3.2.1 Women who know their basic legal rights (IR indicator)

IR 3.3 Increased Women's Economic Participation (IR)

3.3.1 Women becoming active members of savings and credit groups (IR indicator)

3.3.2 Women savings and credit group members who begin/expand microenterprises (IR indicator)

GENDER RESOURCE MATERIALS PROVIDED

(Complete citations are listed in Annex IV: Documents Reviewed)

GENDER AND PARTICIPATION MANUALS

Working with Community-Based Conservation with a Gender Focus, WIDTECH, Mary Rojas (electronic file).

Guide for Incorporating Gender Considerations in USAID/s Family Planning and Reproductive Health RFPs and RFAs IGWG. (electronic file).

Mainstreaming Gender in Monitoring and Evaluation: A Practical Tool for Reproductive Health and Nutrition Programming.

UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Learning and Information Pack (Electronic Files)

- Gender Mainstreaming
- Project and Program Cycle Entry Points
- Developing Country Office Mainstreaming Strategy
- Information, Communication, and Knowledge Management
- Process Management and Advocacy Skills

FAO Participatory communication and adult learning for rural development (electronic file).

Draft Gender Chapter, World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Handbook(hard copy).

World Bank Toolkit on Water and Sanitation (hard copy).

DAC Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development (electronic file)

DAC Sourcebook on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality (electronic file)

World Conservation Union ORMA Modules Toward Gender Equity (electronic file)

NEPAL GENDER DOCUMENTS
(COLLECTED DURING INTERVIEWS)

Creating Opportunities For Program Synergy by Focusing on Women, WIDTECH (hard copy)

CARE Nepal POWER Project Baseline Report (hard copy)

CARE Nepal Social Analysis Workshop Report (hard copy).

Diversity Audit: Gender and Caste Equity in Programs in Care Nepal (hard copy).

Genderizing SNV/Nepal (hard copy).

Evaluation of the Project “Enhancing SNV’s Capacity to Deal with Gender.”(hard copy).

Trafficking Girls in Nepal with Special Reference to Prostitution: A Rapid Assessment, Tibhuvan University. (hard copy).

Mainstreaming Gender Considerations into National Development [Nepal], UNIFEM, (Hard Copy).

GENDER ACTION PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Gender Action Plan (GAP) lays out the programmatic and organizational road map for integrating gender equality into USAID/Nepal's program activities, including planning, procurement, implementation, and performance monitoring. It also spells out the organizational roles and responsibilities, capacity building, and lines of communication needed to carry out the programmatic actions on gender equality. The GAP is based on the Gender Assessment of USAID/Nepal's strategic plan, program portfolio, performance monitoring plan, and program activities.

The GAP begins with Programmatic Actions. The program activities are the quintessential entry points for mainstreaming gender equality into development efforts. It is important to address gender equality throughout the strategic planning and results package design process and in solicitations for competitive bids, as well as program implementation, performance monitoring, and evaluation. After a summary of ADS gender mainstreaming requirements that pertain to programmatic actions, the GAP summarizes the points of intervention suggested for each SO in the Gender Assessment. Gender resource documents and web sites for each SO are listed as well as a summary of the actions to increase synergy on gender equality among SO programs, suggested in the Gender Assessment.

Attention to gender equality issues in monitoring and evaluation is essential to ensure that gender analysis has been translated into action and has produced program results that benefit everyone, not just a select few. Performance monitoring data provides an important early warning system to identify gender inequalities in program activities so that action can be taken to change them. Requiring relevant gender disaggregated reporting also emphasizes the importance of taking gender equality seriously in program implementation.

However, the Agency's strategic planning and results reporting structure poses a great challenge to strategic planning, implementation, and results reporting that cross-cut SOs, such as gender equality. These constraints are clearly reflected in late USAID/Nepal's Results Report and Resource Request (R4) which captured the impressive results of the WEP program under SO3. But the R4 could not include all of the important contributions to women's empowerment made through the activities of SO1 and SO2 because women's empowerment was not among the intermediate results (IRs) and indicators supporting those SOs. In the case of Nepal, it can be argued that progress toward gender equality is an essential condition for economic growth and progress toward participatory democracy. Hence it is very important to track this progress as an important part of the enabling environment for USAID/Nepal's programs and discuss it in the introductory section of the R4 and in a gender annex every year.

It is also important to keep in mind the distinction between the limited set of indicators monitored for reporting to Washington and the more detailed set of data needed to manage Mission programs to ensure sustainable results. The latter are needed to provide

an early warning system to ensure that programs activities are on track and benefiting women and girls and well as men and boys. Suggestions for strengthening gender equality integration in performance monitoring and evaluation, spell out the program management uses of gender disaggregated data that would not be reported in the R4.

Procurement is an extremely important entry point for ensuring that gender equality issues are addressed in Mission programs. For this reason, the ADS lays out a four-step process that is required before issuing solicitations for all contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements. This includes a mandatory Gender Statement in the Activity Approval Document and gender technical capacity criteria for the technical review of proposals.

In order to implement the programmatic actions required for gender equality mainstreaming, it is necessary to have an organizational structure of people with specific responsibilities. Experience in USAID and other donor and partner organizations has demonstrated the critical importance of strong senior management support for gender mainstreaming. It is very important for the Mission Director to establish clear Mission policy for gender equality mainstreaming in procurement, program activities, performance monitoring, and future strategic planning. It is also vital to ensure that Mission staff have the skills, resources, and incentives to carry it out.

It is necessary for a team of people, representing the various SOs and the program and contracts offices in a Mission, to share the responsibility of implementing gender equality mainstreaming in USAID programs, along with the gender advisor. A Gender Equality Team can serve as a resource and coordination group for gender integration and the promotion of gender equality within program activities, special studies, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as in communication with partners, and in donor coordination. It is valuable to include Foreign Service Nationals and partners, both men and women, on the team. USAID experience has shown that, in most cases, the Program Office has proved to be the most effective base for gender advisors because that office deals with the overall country program strategy and results reporting.

The GAP lays out specific gender equality mainstreaming responsibilities of the Mission Director, the Gender Specialist, the Gender Equality Team, the Program Office Director, the SO Teams, the Contracts Officer, the Contracts Office Gender Equality Team Member, the Personnel Office Director, the EXO Director, and USAID/Nepal's Partners (implementers of USAID grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts).

USAID and other donors have used gender training for multiple purposes:

- Generating support for WID/gender policies.
- Providing staff with a common framework and vocabulary to facilitate discussion and policy implementation.
- Developing specific staff skills to use in program design and implementation.

For USAID/Nepal, gender equality training is an important investment in staff capacity to implement the Gender Plan of Action. Suggested activities include: a briefing on the Mission Order on Gender Equality Mainstreaming by the Mission Director, participatory workshops for Mission staff on gender concepts and the draft GAP implementation timeline, orientation sessions for new partners, training of trainers for the Gender Equality Team, and sector-specific and function-specific training for SO teams, the Program Office, and the Contracts Office.

Good gender information, strategic networking, and continuous learning and sharing of information with development partners are critical aspects of gender equality mainstreaming. This information sharing and networking role becomes increasingly important as USAID/Nepal reduces its programmatic implementation role in women's empowerment activities and moves into the role of a catalyst to mobilize ideas, efforts, and resources of development partners and the private sector to achieve common objectives in gender equality mainstreaming. USAID/Nepal's Gender Equality Team will play an important role in networking and information dissemination about gender integration and gender equality in USAID and other programs in Nepal. If resources permit, it also would be very useful for USAID/Nepal to incorporate a gender equality resources web page into its web site to promote collaboration and capacity building with and among partners.

Donor coordination is widely recognized as essential to ensure that support for developing countries is synergistic and does not place conflicting demands on the host country government. Donor coordination is also a valuable means of leveraging scarce resources, sharing significant lessons learned, and strengthening the capacity of government agencies to mainstream gender equality. USAID has provided leadership for the Women and Development Donor Coordination Group for several years in Nepal and will continue to do so in the future. Given the number of significant changes since the group was formed and with the tenth five-year development plan now in process, it is a good time for a participatory re-examination of the group's mandate to ensure that it best serves the needs of the donor members and is in line with changes in the development environment.

I. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This Gender Action Plan (GAP) lays out the programmatic and organizational road map for integrating gender equality into USAID/Nepal's program activities, including planning, procurement, implementation, and performance monitoring. It also spells out the organizational roles and responsibilities, capacity building, and lines of communication needed to carry out the programmatic actions on gender equality. The GAP is based on the Gender Assessment of USAID/Nepal's strategic plan, program portfolio, performance monitoring plan, and program activities. The Gender Assessment identifies gender issues, documents accomplishments, and recommends points of intervention. In contrast, the GAP is an action-oriented document that lays out what needs to be done, by whom, and by when. It includes resources for the gender integration of each SO and a draft timetable for implementation of the GAP. The GAP also addresses the gender mainstreaming requirements of the Agency's Automated Directives System (ADS).

ORGANIZATION

The GAP begins with Programmatic Actions. After a summary of ADS gender mainstreaming requirements that pertain to programmatic actions, there is a summary of the points of intervention suggested for each SO in the Gender Assessment. This is followed by resource documents and web sites to help in implementing the interventions. Suggested actions to increase synergy on gender equality among SO programs are summarized as well. A discussion of performance monitoring and evaluation of gender equality is followed by the ADS requirements for mainstreaming gender in procurement actions.

The next section discusses the organizational roles, and responsibilities needed to carry out the programmatic gender equality actions. This includes roles of the Mission Director, the Program Office, SO teams, the Gender Specialist, the Gender Equality Team, the Contracts Officer, EXO and the Personnel Office, as well as the partners implementing USAID/Nepal's programs. This is followed by a discussion of the gender equality training needs of USAID/Nepal. The terms of reference for the Gender Equality Team are located in Annex I.

The next topic is the lines of communication needed to better integrate gender equality into the Mission's programs, inform the SO teams about best practices, and foster synergy among partners implementing USAID Nepal's programs. This is followed by a discussion of donor coordination and suggestions for enhancing its use to leverage resources, to share lessons learned, and to enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare. A timetable for implementing the GAP concludes the report. Annex II provides a draft Mission Order for Mainstreaming Gender Equality in USAID/Nepal.

II. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIONS

The program activities are the quintessential entry points for mainstreaming gender equality into development efforts. It is important to address gender equality throughout the strategic planning and results package design process and in the RFAs, RFPs, and APSs as well as program implementation, performance monitoring, and evaluation.

ADS GENDER MAINSTREAMING REQUIREMENTS

ADS 201.3.6.2 (Ten Steps in Activity Design) Step 3 states that various technical analyses may be necessary to make informed choices on the most desirable outputs. A major focus of this work is obtaining feedback and participation on the part of ultimate customers. Each type of analysis should specifically and appropriately address relevant gender issues.

The ADS guidance for strategic planning provides important questions that need to be addressed in the development of the Mission's strategy that are important to keep in mind in activity design as well.

ADS 201.3.4.11 (Technical Analysis for Strategic Plans) states that gender is not a separate topic to be analyzed and reported on in isolation. Analytical work performed in the planning and development of results frameworks should address at least two questions: (1) how will gender relations affect the achievement of sustainable results; and (2) how will proposed results affect the relative status of women? Answering these questions involves taking into account not only the different roles of women and men, but also the relationship and balance between them and the institutional structures that support them.

ADS 201.3.6.3 (Pre-obligation Requirements) states that activities designed following the approval of the Strategic Plan must address gender issues in a manner consistent with the findings of the analytical work performed during strategy development. Solicitation documents should signal USAID's expectations regarding gender capacity and expertise, task offerors to propose meaningful approaches to address identified gender issues, and place appropriate emphasis on gender-related elements of technical evaluation criteria.

POINTS OF INTERVENTION IN PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The Gender Assessment of USAID Nepal provides detailed suggestions organized by strategic objectives (SOs) and intermediate results (IRs). However, in many instances the same recommended action applies to more than one IR. For that reason, the action summaries for SOs provided in the GAP are "streamlined" to provide only the major actions required to support each SO. The Gender Assessment provides a reference for SO

Teams on the detailed IR-specific suggestions and the sector specific gender issues that provide the rationale for the actions and can guide future activity design.

Actions for SO2

- Ensure that the work plan for the new bilateral program builds on the gender sensitive work of the current program and is guided by the “Strategies to Facilitate a Gender Perspective in Population and Health,” proposed by the Interagency Gender Working Group (IGWG).
- Also use the IGWG strategies in the design of new results packages in the future as the Mission continues to consolidate SO2 activities.
- Integrate gender issues into in-service and pre-service MCH/FP training, adapting the WHO training materials on “Gender and Reproductive Health.”
- In the new work on adolescents’ reproductive health, analyze the socio-cultural context and the power relations between boys and girls, adults and youth to inform new activities to give youth, particularly girls, the right to make decisions in this area.
- Consider conducting training on health assessment for FCHVs and VDC members, similar to the training provided for women elected representatives. This should help strengthen VDC capacity to assess and manage local health needs.
- Make the WEP training materials available to FCHVs and mothers’ groups. Encourage them to promote gender equality in their work.
- Continue gender sensitive operations research, IEC/BCI radio broadcasts, the Safe Motherhood Network, and male animators working with males and use these channels of communication to promote women’s equality.
- Analyze the data from the 2001 DHS to identify changes in gender relations and the relative status of females and males in health, education, and other issues. Also examine the gender issues findings from the volunteerism study. Incorporate these findings in a gender annex in the R4. Share them with other SO teams and public officials and discuss the implications for the implementation of programs.
- Promote increased opportunities for women to enter into paid, decision-making positions in the health system.

Gender Resources for SO 2

For the overall SO2 program, the Interagency Working Group (IGWG) is a major resource for tools and strategies on gender Equality in population and health programs. IGWG is a network of NGOs and the USAID Center for Population, Health, and Nutrition (PHN). IGWG maintains an Internet listserve and four sub committees that are developing gender equality resource materials in: gender and policy, program implementation, men and reproductive health, and research and indicators. The Web Site address is: www.measurecommunication.org/igwg. The IGWG Coordinator in the PHN Center is Diane Prieto (dprieto@usaid.gov).

- Guide for Incorporating Gender Considerations in USAID Family Planning and Reproductive Health RFAs and RFPs, IGWG, October 2000.
- Mainstreaming Gender in Monitoring and Evaluation: a Practical Tool for Reproductive Health and Nutrition Programming, IGWG, Draft, August 2001.
- "Training in Gender in Reproductive Health," Progress in Human Reproductive Research, No. 50, 1999, UNDP, UNFPA, WHO Special Program of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction.
- Human Health and Dams, prepared by the World Health Organization for the World Commission on Dams, November 1999.
- Training materials developed for the Women's Empowerment Program, and CEDPA's Youth Development and Reproductive Health.
- Office of Women in Development web site [www.usaid.gov/wid] which includes an excellent set of links to other gender web sites.

Actions for SO4

- Conduct gender awareness training for DOED staff, explaining why it is important to include women and lower caste groups in the EIA/SIA process and building skills for this outreach.
- Develop guidelines for addressing gender as a cross-cutting issue in the EIA/SIA scoping matrix and specify the type of information that needs to be collected on "gender issues."
- Revise the draft "Manual for Public Involvement in the Environmental Impact Assessment for Hydropower Projects" to add tactics for involving women and lower caste groups such as outreach by local FCHVs, women's groups, and other female leaders.
- Apply the following World Commission of Dams "Guidelines for Good Practice" in technical support and training to develop procedures to improve public awareness, disclosure and public participation in EIA/SIA: a gender and caste sensitive

participation plan, use of gender analysis in social baseline construction, and gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation.

- In the development of standards for accrediting EIA/SIA professions, include a requirement for skill in gender analysis.

Gender Resources for SO 4

- Socioeconomic and Gender Analysis Programme Field Handbook, FAO, Chapter 2, “Preparing for Participation” and Chapter 3, “Working in the Field,” February 1999.
- “Participatory communication and adult learning for rural development,” FAO communication for Development Group Extension, Education and Communication Research, Extension and Training Division, in The Journal of International Communication (Vol. 7 no. 2, 2001).
- Chapter 9 “Criteria and Guidelines,” World Commission on Dams Report, November 2000.
- Working with Community-based Conservation with a Gender Focus, by Mary Rojas, WIDTECH, July 1999.
- World Bank Technical Note 1: Engendering Participation, In the Gender Chapter of the PRSP Handbook, April 2001.
- “Human Health and Dams,” prepared by the World Health Organization for the World Dam Commission, November 1999.
- Office of Women in Development web site [www.usaid.gov/wid] which includes an excellent set of links to other gender web sites.
- The World Bank Participation Sourcebook, June 1995. (www.worldbank.org/wbi/sourcebook/)
- World Bank Participation Web Site, with Links to other participation sites.

Actions for SO5

- The development of the work plan for the new agreement to support SOP will be an excellent opportunity to ensure that activities take a gender approach in promoting women’s opportunities.
- Begin the technical capacity and organizational skill building activities with gender awareness training for male leaders in the VDC, local religious leaders, local representatives of line ministries that deal with natural resources, and male members of natural resource management groups.
- Provide gender awareness training for police and anti-trafficking committees.
- Adapt WEP training materials for use in microenterprise development, literacy, and bookkeeping training.
- In the documentation of best practices, include strategies for increasing women’s participation, leadership, and benefits from NRMG participation.

- Increase the understanding of women’s human rights through the adaptation of some of the effective behavior approaches applied in PHN.
- In the work with civil society groups, survey national associations to identify policies regarding gender and ethnic equality and attention to gender and diversity in their programs. Use the data to ensure that strong associations that promote gender quality are among the groups involved and can serve to inform and influence other organizations.
- Include gender and ethnic equality on the agenda for policy research and discussion fora. For example, assess the status of the implementation of the 1999 Local Self Governance Act requirements for women and ethnic minorities.

Gender Resources for SO 5

- Socio-economic and Gender Analysis Program Field Handbook, February 1999 [www.fao.org/sd/seaga].
- Working with Community Based Conservation with a Gender Focus: A Guide, prepared by Mary Rojas, WIDTECH, July 1999.
- “Participatory communication and adult learning for rural development,” FAO, in The Journal of International Communication (Vol. 7 no. 2, 2001).
- World Conservation Union (IUCN) Modules “Toward Gender Equality,” 2000.
- UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Learning and Information Package on Process Management and Advocacy Skills.
- Technical Note 1: “Engendering Participation,” The World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Handbook, April, 2001.
- Accountability to the Poor: Experiences in Public Expenditure Management, the World Bank Participation Group, Social Development Department. [www.worldbank.org/participation].
- Forest Management by Nepali Communities, GreenCOM, 1997.
- The Making of Nepal’s Community Video Letter: Presenting a Picture from the Village to Community Policy Makers, GreenCOM, 1998.
- Women on the Move Success Stories, CEDPA Nepal, 1997 and 2000.
- Standing Proud: Stories of Ten Women Candidates for the 1997 Local Elections, NDI Nepal 1998.
- Training materials developed for the Women’s Empowerment Program.
- Office of Women in Development web site [www.usaid.gov/wid] which includes an excellent set of links to other gender web sites.
- GreenCOM web site [www.usaid.gov/environment/greencom].

- Consider using a training of trainers approach in training elected women representatives to build the skills they need to train other VDC members.
- In radio campaigns to raise voter awareness about elections, include messages about women's legal rights and the importance of women's political participation.
- Conduct and compare impact studies of the WEP program, and the NRMG programs. Also examine the gender-related findings of the 2001 DHS and the study of volunteerism in health. Analysis and comparison of findings in all of these studies will provide a valuable knowledge base to guide implementation of the Gender Action Plan.

Actions to Enhance Gender Equality Synergies between SOs

- Coordinating the integration of gender and fostering synergies among the new project start ups for SO2, SO4, and SO5.
- Encouraging active participation of women previously trained through WEP and HEAL as well as FCHVs and NRMG members activities to promote gender equality in new program activities.
- Adapting the HEAL and WEP training materials for use in other SOs.
- Assessing the health impacts of dams and pointing out the links between population, health, and environment.
- Training women leaders, FCHV, and NRMGs about the population, health, environment links and health assessment.
- Complementing the macro policy approach of SO4 EIA/SIA with the grass roots advocacy training of SO5.
- Adding messages about women's rights, gender equality, and participation in hydropower projects to PHN broadcasts on health and family planning.
- Coordinating HIV/AIDs prevention activities with counter-trafficking activities, taking into account the need to avoid further stigmatizing returning trafficking victims in their communities.
- Preparing an annex for the R4 that focuses on gender as a cross-cutting issues in all SOs, drawing on the studies conducted as well as program reports.

III. MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIONS

Attention to gender equality issues in monitoring and evaluation is essential to ensure that gender analysis has been translated into action and has produced program results that benefit everyone, not just a select few. Performance monitoring data provides an important early warning system to identify gender inequalities in program activities so that action can be taken to change them. Requiring relevant gender disaggregated reporting also emphasizes the importance of taking gender equality seriously in program implementation.

ADS REQUIREMENTS

ADS 201.3.4.13 (Planning for Performance Management) states that indicators and evaluations must reflect gender considerations when analyses performed as a part of the strategic planning process indicate that (1) the activity or its anticipated results involve or affect men and women differently, and this difference is potentially significant for managing towards sustainable program impact.

CHALLENGES IN PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Agency's strategic planning and results reporting structure poses a great challenge to strategic planning, implementation, and results reporting that cross-cut SOs. Agency requirements for consistency in reporting indicators over time, the already defined and approved results framework, and the issue of the manageable interest of the Mission limit the extent to which gender integration can be strengthened in performance monitoring plans after the results framework has been approved. These constraints are clearly reflected in USAID/Nepal's Results Report and Resource Request (R4) submitted in March 2001. Although the R4 captured the impressive results of the WEP program under SO3, it did not include all of the important contributions to women's empowerment made through the activities of SO1 and SO2 because women's empowerment was not among the intermediate results (IRs) and indicators supporting those SOs.

Agency policy requires that Agency cross-cutting themes, such as gender, should not be reported on as cross-cutting SOs in the R4, to avoid creating a proliferation of indicators. Instead, cross-cutting issues should be integrated into the existing SOs for R4 reporting. In the case of Nepal, it can be argued that progress toward gender equality is an essential condition for economic growth and progress toward participatory democracy. Hence it is very important to track this progress as an important part of the enabling environment for USAID/Nepal's programs and discuss it in the introductory section of the R4 every year.

In addition, the R-4 format does allow for special annexes that provide more detail than the R-4 format allows. An annex on gender equality as a cross-cutting issue provides an opportunity to highlight the results reflected in the DHS, the study of volunteerism, the

Microenterprise Office study of WEP, and the CARE studies of EFEA for the R4 that will be submitted in March 2002. In the following year, the results shown in the impact studies of SO1 and SO3, and a comparative analysis of those findings and studies of results and lessons learned for other SOs, could be included in such an annex.

Dissemination of the gender annex to partners and policy makers will provide useful means to promote dialogue about progress toward gender equality in Nepal.

The R-4 also requires the preparation of close-out reports for SOs that have been completed. The aim of these reports is to increase the Agency's knowledge base of lessons learned and best practices. The close out reports also provide an opportunity to document the significant results and lessons learned in the women's empowerment work of SO1 and SO3. These close out reports can also be useful best practices documents for dissemination and discussion with partners.

It also is important to keep in mind the distinction between the limited set of indicators monitored for reporting to Washington and the more detailed set of data needed to manage Mission programs to ensure sustainable results. Those needed for program management require some data that the Mission will not report to Washington. But they are needed to provide an early warning system to ensure that programs activities are on track and benefiting women and girls and well as men and boys. Gender equality monitoring to inform Mission management is also important to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment as a cross-cutting theme remains front and center in USAID Nepal program activities even though development funds have diminished.

A number of the suggestions for strengthening gender equality integration in performance monitoring and evaluation, presented in the Gender Assessment, spell out the management uses of gender disaggregated data that would not be reported in the R4. Below is a summary of those suggestions.

MANAGING FOR GENDER EQUALITY RESULTS AT THE MISSION LEVEL

Indicator	Program Management Uses of Disaggregated Data
2.2: Under five mortality.	Because of the gender disparity in child mortality rates, it is important to monitor this indicator by sex and by region to inform program managers where the most at risk girl children are located. This will enable targeting of special measures to reach them.
2.2.2: Children with pneumonia symptoms given appropriate treatment in intervention districts.	Given the higher mortality rates of girls under five and their more limited access to health services, it would be valuable to gender disaggregate this data for a sample of the population in order to monitor where gender differentials in health access are occurring. This will enable targeting of special measures to reach these girls.
4.2.1: Number of approved environmental impact	Include the following international criterion: mitigation plans address impoverishment risks to women and lower caste

Indicator	Program Management Uses of Disaggregated Data
assessments that meet or exceed international guidelines.	groups and/or define hydropower benefits they will receive. This will enable the Mission to track whether benefits are targeted to women as well as men. Requiring this criterion will also place emphasis on the importance of taking women and lower caste groups into account.
4.2.2. Public hearings for hydropower projects conducted with local stakeholders and affected communities.	Ask the SO4 program contractor to help DOED and the developer to record public meeting participation and concerns expressed by gender and caste and to report to the Mission on that documentation. This information will enable the Mission and the contractor assess the extent to which women and lower caste people are being included in the EIA process and identify any need for additional targeted technical assistance on community participation. This reporting will also emphasize the importance of taking into account women's and lower caste views.
4.2.3: Number of professionals training in reviewing EIA/SIA.	The DOED Manual for Public Involvement in EIA/SIA for Hydropower projects recommends including social scientists and a woman on the team. It is important to track the extent to which this is being implemented through training. The target for females should be no lower than 30 percent and preferably 50 percent.
5.1.: Participant satisfaction with group management training provided by USAID trainers (by gender and ethnicity).	It is important to disaggregate this indicator to monitor the extent to which the needs of women and lower caste groups are being met
5.1.2.2: Percentage of user groups following constitutional procedures for allocating accumulated funds in CFUG account (by mixed and women-only groups).	Disaggregation of this indicator by mixed and women-only groups will be useful to determine the extent to which mixed groups continue to be dominated by male elites and identify measures to encourage the use of transparent, inclusive procedures. It will also enable a comparison of procedures of female and mixed groups that may suggest the need for technical assistance and/or documentation of best practices.
5.2.3: percentage of target population with knowledge of advocacy issues (by type of campaign).	It would be useful to monitor this indicator by types of campaigns to assess whose interests are being promoted in the campaigns. This could also suggest potential synergies with SO2 or SO4.
5.4: increased participation of HMG officials in anti-trafficking committees at the DDC level.	If the proportion of female participants is very high, despite the small number of women working in the GON civil service, it may indicate that the issue is not being taken seriously by HMG and/or it is viewed as a "woman's concern" for which men are not responsible. A more equal balance of women and man would suggest that it is being taken more seriously. The numbers will indicate whether or not additional awareness raising is needed for men in the HMG who should be working in this area.

IV. PROCUREMENT ACTIONS

Procurement is an extremely important entry point for ensuring that gender equality issues are addressed in Mission programs. Once agreements are signed it is too late to request partners to address gender equality in their programs. For this reason, the ADS lays out a four-step process, described below, that is required before issuing solicitations for all contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements. This includes a mandatory Gender Statement in the Activity Approval Document and gender technical capacity criteria in the evaluation of proposals. Fulfillment of this requirement necessitates close collaboration between SO Teams and the Contracts Officer and Contracts Office Staff.

ADS REQUIREMENTS

ADS 201.3.6.3 (Pre-obligation Requirements) states that SO teams should ensure that the capacity of funding recipients to address the gender concerns identified in the strategic and activity planning is duly considered before funds are obligated. For contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements, solicitation documents should signal USAID's expectations regarding gender capacity and expertise. They should task offerors to propose meaningful approaches to address identified gender issues, and place appropriate emphasis on gender-related elements of technical evaluation criteria. The following steps must be completed to address this requirement:

- (1) For each activity subject to approval, the SO team must, in one page or less, outline the most significant gender issues that need to be considered during activity implication. These issues should reflect consideration of the following two questions: (a) Are women and men involved or affected differently by the context or work to be undertaken? ; (b) If so, is this difference potentially significant for managing toward sustainable program impact? The statement must describe how these concerns will be address in any competitive solicitations financed under the activity (Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Assistance (RFA) or Annual Program Statement (APS). The text of this gender statement is included in the Activity Approval Document.
- (2) If the SO team determines that there are no significant gender issues, it must provide a brief rationale to that effect in the place of the gender statement in the Activity Approval document.
- (3) The Approving Official for the activity is responsible for ensuring that the gender statement adequately responds to items (1) or (2) in this list.
- (4) Before issuing or approving an RFP, RFA, or APS, the Contract or Agreement Officer will: a) confirm that either the gender statement is incorporated into the resulting RFA, RFP, or APS requirements or that the rationale has been completed as a part of activity approval, and b) work with the SO team so that the relative

significance of gender technical capacity to the Statement of Work or Program Description is appropriately reflected in the technical evaluation criteria.

ADS 302.5.14 (USAID Direct Contracting): Incorporate into the Request for Proposal (RFP) the statement outlining gender issues and include an appropriately weighted technical evaluation criterion addressing gender considerations specified in the statement or confirm rationale for not specifying gender issues as a part of the Activity Approval Document.

ADS 303.5.5b (Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations): Whenever gender issues are to be incorporated into the activity, the RFA or APS announcement must state the requirement in accordance with ADS 201.3.6.3 and include an appropriately weighted evaluation criterion addressing the gender considerations specified in the statement or confirmed that the Strategic Objective Team completed a brief rationale for not specifying gender issues as part of the Activity Approval Document.

V. ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIONS

In order to implement the programmatic actions required for gender equality mainstreaming, and organization structure of people with specific responsibilities is needed. Experience in USAID and other donor and partner organizations has demonstrated the critical importance of strong senior management support for gender mainstreaming. It is very important for the Mission Director to establish clear Mission policy for gender equality mainstreaming in procurement, program activities, performance monitoring, and future strategic planning. It is also vital to ensure that Mission staff have the skills, resources, and incentives to carry it out.

In the past, many USAID Missions placed the responsibility for gender mainstreaming on a gender advisor who was often a junior person with little authority to hold Mission staff accountable for gender equality mainstreaming. One individual could not address all of the gender issues in all of the SOs, respond to data requests from Washington and other donors, conduct training, and respond to other demands. Efforts of persons at higher levels (Deputy Mission Directors, Program Office Directors) to take on the role of gender advisor often produced bottlenecks because of the many other responsibilities of those individuals.

It has become evident that it is necessary for a team of people, representing the various SOs and the program and contracts offices in a Mission, to share the responsibility of implementing gender equality mainstreaming in USAID programs, along with the gender advisor. The team approach is also important to provide sector-specific support to SO teams on enhancing gender equality in their programs. Experience in USAID and other programs has shown that general training and technical support on gender issues is useful but not adequate to strengthen programs. A full understanding of the sector and sector-specific gender issues is essential. The Gender Assessment of USAID/Nepal, which points out key gender issues for the sectors in which the Mission is currently working, should be a useful resource for this work.

A Gender Equality Team can serve as a resource and coordination group for gender integration and the promotion of gender equality within program activities, special studies, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as in communication with partners, and in donor coordination. It is valuable to include Foreign Service Nationals, both men and women, on the team to ensure that cultural nuances are adequately taken into account and to benefit from their valuable institutional memory. It is also important to include partners (grantees, cooperators, and contractors) on the team, to participate in meetings that are not procurement sensitive, in order to draw on their practical field implementation experience and to emphasize transparency and collaboration on the part of USAID with its partners.

USAID/Nepal staff stressed that newly formed committees and teams tend to dissolve if they lack a clear mandate or incentives for participation, as was the case with the Synergy Committee that met one time in 1997. The Mission Director can play a significant role in

keeping the Gender Equality Team energized by empowering the team members to carry out their roles and responsibilities. This requires a clear policy mandate to the entire Mission and incentives for team participation. The G-Team needs to report progress and any problems encountered directly to the Mission Director and other senior staff on a regular basis.

USAID experience has shown that, in most cases, the Program Office has proved to be the most effective base for gender advisors because that office deals with the overall country program strategy and results reporting. The new gender specialist, hired by USAID/Nepal, is currently working in the General Development Office and reporting to the leader of the Women's Empowerment Team. Before SO3 closes out, it would be very strategic for the Mission to explore mechanisms to move that position to the program office. It is even more important to ensure that this position becomes a permanent one.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The lists below outline the roles and responsibilities of the Mission Director, the Gender Specialist, the Gender Equality Team, the Program Office Director, the SO Teams. The Contracts Officer, the Contracts Office Gender Equality Team Member, the Personnel Office Director, the EXO Director, and USAID/Nepal's Partners (implementers of USAID grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts) in the integration of gender equality in USAID/Nepal's program activities.

The Mission Director

The Mission Director's support and leadership is essential for successful gender equality mainstreaming. The following are the key responsibilities required to provide this leadership:

- Establish Mission policy through a Mission Order on gender equality mainstreaming that reflects overall Agency policy.
- Ensure that Mission Staff comply with the Mission gender equality mainstreaming policy.
- Actively promote gender equality mainstreaming in staff meetings, donor meetings, and meetings with Ministry Officials.
- Ensure that the gender specialist and gender equality team have sufficient resources and staff support to carry out their gender equality mainstreaming responsibilities and to establish and maintain a gender equality web page.
- Encourage and inspire innovation and synergy in addressing gender equality in all SOs.

- Provide incentives to all staff for outstanding performance in gender mainstreaming. This could include: teas or lunches during the Gender Equality Team briefings for the Mission Director, an annual reception for International Women’s Day—celebrating women’s vital role in development and the need for gender equality—and award certificates, or other appropriate forms of recognition.
- Widely distribute synopses of reports, studies, the gender annex in the next R4 and other documents that demonstrate USAID/Nepal’s approach and progress toward gender equality. Use these findings, where appropriate, in policy dialogue.

The Gender Specialist

The Gender Specialist is a catalyst, a facilitator, and a technical resource to Mission staff on gender equality issues. The overall mandate of the gender specialist is to provide gender expertise, guidance, and training to Mission staff on gender analysis and the integration of gender issues during the planning, achieving and assessing/learning stages of Mission programs across sectors. More specifically, the responsibilities of the gender specialist are as follows:

- Coordinate the Mission Gender Equality Team.
- Orient staff on gender policy, procedures, and gender analysis.
- Update the Mission Gender Action Plan annually.
- Provide sector focused gender training for each SO team.
- Guide members of the gender equality team (in coordination with their SO team leaders) in the development and/or refinement of gender-sensitive indicators and the monitoring of program gender equality impact. This includes the design of approaches for collection and analysis of data by gender and ethnicity.
- In coordination with the Gender Equality Team, facilitate the integration of gender issues and results in briefing papers, performance reports, and other key documents submitted to USAID/Washington.
- Assist the program office (in coordination with other members of the Gender Equality Team) in the preparation of gender data for the R4 (including a gender annex)and other reports shared with Washington and other donors.
- Serve as a member on all SO teams and provide gender expertise and resources on addressing gender in each SO sector.
- Assist the SO teams and the Program Office in ensuring that USAID/Nepal’s programs, activities, and reporting documents explicitly address gender issues, actively engage women in programs and report results in gender equality mainstreaming.

- Communicate regularly and share information with the ANE Gender Advisor, G/WID, the Interagency Working Group on Gender, and PPC/CDIE.
- Keep Mission staff apprised of current Congressional mandates and Agency policy, evaluations, and analyses related to gender issues.
- Design and continue to update a gender equality mainstreaming resources page on the USAID/Nepal Web Site, in coordination with the gender equality team.
- Assist in the design of impact or post-project sustainability studies for SO 3 and SO 1 program activities, to ensure comparability and synergy between the studies. Compare the findings of these studies with those of the health sector volunteerism study, the 2001 DHS and other relevant recent studies addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in USAID/Nepal's programs. Based on this comparative analysis, develop a set of lessons learned/best practices to guide Mission programs.
- Advise the program office on the most effective use of the new geographic information system (GIS) to map out activities to ensure synergy between SOs on women's empowerment and gender equality.
- Represent USAID/Nepal in local meetings and events addressing gender and women's issues. Articulate USAID Nepal's gender policy to local leaders, women's organizations, and NGOs.
- Liaise with the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare and other appropriate gender focal points in other ministries and monitor USAID/Nepal's gender efforts to ensure that they are consistent with GON policies and priorities.
- Conduct a customer survey of the women and development donor group and actively participate in the group meetings and activities.
- Assist with the workplan and calendar for the gender donor coordination group.

THE GENDER EQUALITY TEAM

The Gender Equality Team serves as a network of gender equality advocates who have sector, program, or contracts expertise and who assist and advise the gender specialist. At the same time, they assist their SO teams or operational offices to incorporate a gender equality perspective. They also ensure that gender analysis and the integration of gender issues are an integral part of Mission operations in the planning, achieving and assessing/learning stages of Mission SO programs, in line with ADS requirements. Below are the key responsibilities of the Gender Equality Team:

- Report to the Mission Director quarterly or more frequently if needed, on the status of gender equality mainstreaming in the Mission's programs.

- Assist the Gender Specialist in the preparation of an annex for the R4 addressing gender equality as a cross-cutting issue.
- Assist SO teams in implementing the synergy recommendations of the Gender Action Plan.
- Coordinate joint field trips by different SO team members to promote synergy on gender equality and discuss at staff meetings the insights gained and the collaborative actions identified as a result of these experiences.
- Carry out active networking, information exchange, and collaboration on gender issues with USAID program implementers, NGOs, INGOs, sector networks, and other donors and share the information with USAID management and staff.
- Provide input on key gender issues and lessons learned for the various sector-based donor coordination committees and GON ministries.
- Assist the gender specialist in compiling the information for and updating a gender equality resources web page on the USAID/Nepal web site to facilitate exchange of information about gender focused activities, lessons learned, issues, and events. This will facilitate continuous learning within the Mission and among partners.
- Review and provide input into the design of impact or post project sustainability studies of SO1 and SO3 as well as other Mission studies that should address gender equality and women's empowerment issues.
- Organize at least one annual event with partners celebrating progress toward women's equality, such as International Women's Day.

These responsibilities are spelled out in greater detail in the Terms of Reference for the Gender Equality Team in Annex I.

The Program Office Director

The Program Office plays a pivotal role in the integration of gender equality in Mission programs because of its overview of the entire country program and its central role in performance monitoring and management. The following are the key responsibilities of the Program Office Director

- Ensure that gender data are appropriately included in R4 reporting, in accordance with the gender mainstreaming requirements in the ADS 200 series. Include discussion of critical gender issues in the introductory narrative ("Significant program achievements" and "Country factors that have most influenced progress") as well as gender disaggregated data where appropriate. Prepare a special annex on "gender as a crosscutting issue," that details USAID/Nepal's progress toward gender equality in all its SOs.

- Ensure that any revisions of the country strategy and performance monitoring plan, or new results packages, aim to increase gender equality mainstreaming by addressing key gender issues in intermediate results and activities and disaggregating people level indicators where appropriate.
- Invite an office member to participate on the gender equality team.

The Strategic Objective (SO) Teams

SO teams are vital to gender integration in their roles in designing, procuring, managing the implementation, and performance monitoring of country program activities. The SO team leader plays a particularly important role. For this reason the responsibilities listed below are broken into those of the team leader and those of the other team members:

SO Team Leaders

- Ensure that SO activities and reporting integrate gender considerations as appropriate.
- Invite a person to participate on the gender equality committee.
- Promote coordination and collaboration on gender equality among implementers supporting the SO and with those supporting other SOs.
- Ensure that SO contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment are reflected in the R4 introductory section, gender annex, and the SO section when it fits within the limitations of R4 reporting requirements.
- Ensure that the close out reports for SO1 and SO3 provide a thorough summary of the contributions of these activities to women's empowerment and gender equality, as well as the lessons learned and best practices.

SO Team Members

- In collaboration with the Gender Equality Team member for the SO team, identify key gender issues, accomplishments, and lessons learned for sector(s) involved in their team's SO.
- Collaborate with the Gender Specialist in the design of sector specific gender training for the SO team.
- Ensure that gender issues are addressed in all new results packages, activity implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.
- Inform the Gender Equality Team member of the SO team about significant events, donor coordination initiatives, GON initiatives, NGO, INGO and other activities that addressing gender equality issues in the SO sector(s).

Contracts Officer (in Dhaka)

The Contracts Officer in Dhaka and the Contracts Office in Kathmandu play important roles in ensuring that all competitive contract, cooperative agreement, and grant procurement actions conform to ADS requirements for gender mainstreaming cited in the GAP discussion of “Procurement Actions” (*ADS 201.3.6.3 (pre-obligation requirements)*; *ADS 302.5.12 (direct contracting)* and *305.5b (grants and cooperative agreements)*).

Contracts Office (in Kathmandu)

- Ensure that all competitive contract, cooperative agreement, and grant procurement action documents, submitted to the contracting officer, conform to ADS requirement for addressing gender issues described in the section on procurement (*ADS 201.3.6.3 (preobligation requirements)*; *ADS 302.5.12 (direct contracting)* and *305.5b (grants and cooperative agreements)*).
- Invite an office member to participate on the Gender Equality Team.
- Work with the SO team so that the relative significance of gender technical capacity to the Statement of Work or Program Description is appropriately reflected in the technical evaluation criteria.

The Personnel Office Director

Human resources is an important area for gender mainstreaming in any organization. The Personnel Office plays a key role. It is important to ensure that USAID/Nepal hiring practices continue to reach out to identify qualified Nepali women candidates for new or vacant positions and provide employment opportunities for Nepali women. It is also important to offer training to Nepali female as well as male staff to enable them to increase their skills and knowledge regarding gender issues and gender equality.

The EXO Director

Ensure that the Mission Order on gender mainstreaming is issued to all Mission staff, and provided to new staff.

USAID/Nepal’s Partners (implementers of grants, cooperative agreements and contracts)

USAID/Nepal's partners, who implement the Mission's programs, and their local NGO partners, who work at the grass roots level, provide an extended network of potential gender equality advocates. They can play significant roles in ensuring that gender equality mainstreaming takes place on the ground and not just on paper. Some key responsibilities for partners include:

- Ensure that the implementation of USAID funded activities conforms to USAID/Nepal's gender equality policy.
- Provide gender integration capacity building training where needed to staff and NGO partners.
- Ensure that gender equality activity results, lessons learned, resource materials, and schedules for related training and other events are shared frequently with the USAID Gender Equality Team members.
- Provide USAID data disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, as is relevant for the program activities, as a part of annual or semiannual reporting requirements.
- Provide advice to the USAID gender equality committee on successful strategies for increasing women's participation and roles in decision-making in program activities, based on field experience.
- Provide field-based electronic information for the USAID gender mainstreaming web page.

VI. TRAINING ACTIONS

USAID and other donors have used gender training for multiple purposes:

- Generating support for WID/gender policies.
- Providing staff with a common framework and vocabulary to facilitate discussion and policy implementation.
- Developing specific staff skills to use in program design and implementation.

Agency-wide basic gender courses were a first step in building support for gender equality goals. What is needed now is more tailored capacity development that addresses specific sectors or functions of specific staff. Earlier efforts to turn staff into “gender experts” in a short period of time were not effective. They underestimated the skills required to work on gender equality issues. Developing these skills requires ongoing training and technical assistance by the gender advisor. Targeting training to staff needs is best achieved when it is guided by a staff training needs assessment to identify general and specific needs.

For USAID/Nepal, gender equality training is an important investment in staff capacity to implement the Gender Plan of Action. The first step needs to be a briefing by the Mission Director on the Mission Order on Mainstreaming Gender Equality. By taking the lead in this briefing, the Mission Director signals to Mission staff that this is a priority issue that requires action and not simply a “politically correct” response to USAID/Washington requirements.

The next step is a one-day retreat for the Gender Equality Team, held off site in a home or other no cost facility. Led by the Gender Specialist, the retreat will give the G-Team an opportunity to review their terms of reference and the timetable for the GAP implementation, revise them if needed, and plan for the gender training needs assessment. It will also be useful to do some team building activities and begin an ongoing process of gender training for the team.

To ensure that everyone in the Mission is “on the same page,” it would be useful to begin with a general two-hour participatory workshop led by the Gender Specialist, with activities that enable staff to apply the concept of gender equality to their own work. This will provide a good opportunity to develop a common vocabulary and dispel the notion that gender means “women” or the idea that gender mainstreaming means fitting women into the existing development agenda. There is ample participatory gender training talent in Kathmandu if extra hands are needed. A second two-three hour workshop should examine the tasks, responsibilities, and timetable presented in the GAP. This will ensure that everyone understands what needs to be done by whom to implement the Gender Action Plan and when tasks need to be done. Prior to the workshop, the G -Team members need to meet with their SO teams to review the gender issues and

recommendations in the Gender Assessment that apply to their team as well as the revised timetable.

The next priority in training is an orientation session for new partners to ensure that they understand the concepts of gender equality and the importance of integrating it into their programs. This also provides an opportunity to begin exploring ways to build synergies between the programs in the areas suggested in the section on Programmatic Actions, and to capture any new areas of synergy that might emerge in the discussion. This orientation needs to be the beginning of an ongoing dialogue among the partners and between the partners and USAID. As the programs evolve, additional workshops will provide learning experiences for USAID staff regarding strategies that work and do not work in pursuing gender equality in specific sectors.

If resources allow, it would also be useful to provide training of trainers to the Gender Equality team, drawing on local talent in Nepal. In addition, the Gender Specialist will need to provide ongoing training to her team to help them develop skills that they can share with their SO Teams or functional offices and their partners. The members of the G Team start out on the same footing as the rest of the Mission staff; they are not gender specialists. Over time they will develop the necessary skills and train others how to promote gender equality.

It is also important to conduct sector and function-specific training for SO teams and their partners, the program office, and the contracts office. For example, this could include topics such as gender issues in hydropower for SO4 or gender issues in monitoring and evaluation for SO team leaders and the program office. The training needs assessment will be the best guide for the focus of this training. The Gender Specialist and the Gender Equality Team as a whole will need to continue to provide training and technical assistance to Mission staff and partners to build skills and mobilize interest in gender equality in program implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as procurement.

It will be important to host briefings or workshops with partners and policy makers for discussion of Mission reports that have implications for gender equality, such as the 2001 DHS, the volunteerism study, the proposed impact and post-project sustainability studies of the SO3 and SO1 programs, and other relevant studies. Such events provide opportunities to promote gender equality with policy makers and exchange best practices among partners.

VII. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Good gender information, strategic networking, and continuous learning and sharing of information with development partners are critical aspects of gender equality mainstreaming. The basic functions of information and communication in organizations include:

- Improving internal communication and information exchange both in the field office and between the field office and headquarters.
- Locating and bringing external knowledge resources into the organization.
- Strengthening the collaboration and networking efforts of the organization's staff with people in other organizations.
- Promoting and disseminating the organization's activities, outputs, and impacts within the organizations and with partners.
- Increasing transparency to enhance successful cooperation with partners.

To accomplish these goals, an organization needs to reorient perspectives and, if necessary, policies in the following areas:

- Share knowledge assets by moving from the traditional role of program delivery agent to a more organic entity that consolidates and brokers knowledge assets.
- Develop knowledge sharing strategies to identify organizational knowledge assets, key customers and their information needs and the role of the World Wide Web and other information communication technologies as vehicles for change
- Facilitate organizational learning and reflection by building a vision, a strategy and enabling networks to provide the organization and its partners with information for better decision-making.
- Embrace collaboration to enable development partners to share knowledge and interact at more equal levels of influence.

This information sharing and networking role becomes increasingly important as USAID/Nepal reduces its programmatic implementation role in women's empowerment activities and moves into the role of a catalyst to mobilize ideas, efforts, and resources of development partners and the private sector to achieve common objectives in gender equality mainstreaming. This is in line with USAID's Global Development Alliance "pillar" initiated in May 2001.

USAID/Nepal's Gender Equality Team will play an important role in networking and information dissemination about gender integration and gender equality in USAID and other programs in Nepal. If resources permit, it also would be very useful and strategic for USAID/Nepal to incorporate a gender equality resources web page into its web site to promote collaboration and capacity building with and among partners. Initially it would be valuable to provide links to other web sites with gender resources and a common location for key Mission gender documents.

Due to aggressive archiving of documents in the past, some key gender documents were packed away in boxes and placed in a storage room where they are not accessible. In addition, each SO has its own library of documents thus limiting cross-fertilization of gender equality best practices across SOs. A web page would overcome these obstacles and provide easy access to documents. A two-hour orientation to the web site for Mission Staff and partners, along with a list of key documents and links on the site can help ensure that people know how to take advantage of this resource.

In the longer term, it will be important to design a user-friendly page with easy access to information by including a comprehensive index. Setting up a gender mainstreaming listserv can also provide a vehicle for ongoing discussion about key gender equality issues and initiatives.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES TO INCLUDE ON A GENDER EQUALITY WEB PAGE

- USAID gender mainstreaming policy (Agency, ANE Bureau and USAID/Nepal, including ADS summary sheet and USAID/Nepal Gender Action Plan).
- Gender mainstreaming policy, new legislation, and new initiatives in Nepal.
- Key reports, manuals, studies and other materials addressing gender that have been produced for all of the SOs, such as HEAL and WEP reports and manuals.
- Profiles of partner gender mainstreaming policies and activities.
- Email address book of partners' gender focal points (GON, cooperators, contractors, grantees, other NGOs and INGOs, donors).
- Hyperlinks to local partner web sites.
- Hyperlinks to gender equality mainstreaming sites and manuals such as: USAID/WID, CDIE and Interagency Gender Working Group, FAO Social Dimensions, gender pages within UNDP, ILO, UNIFEM, UNICEF, World Bank, OECD/DAC, Asian Development Bank, INGO, bilateral and University Web sites with materials pertinent to Nepal and South Asia.

- Electronic files for key resource materials to support implementation of the GAP for each SO.
- Brief summary of Women and Development Donor Committee notes.

VIII. DONOR COORDINATION ACTIONS

Donor coordination is widely recognized as essential to ensure that support for developing countries is synergistic and does not place conflicting demands on the host country government. Different donor policies and reporting systems often make this coordination challenging. Donor coordination is also a valuable means of leveraging scarce resources, sharing significant lessons learned, and strengthening the capacity of government agencies to mainstream gender equality. USAID has provided leadership for the Women and Development Donor Coordination Group for several years in Nepal and will continue to do so in the future.

Given the number of significant changes since the group was formed and with the tenth five-year development plan now in process, it is a good time for a participatory re-examination of the mandate of the group to ensure that it best serves the needs of the donor members and is in line with changes in the development environment.

- Conduct a customer survey of current donor committee members to get feedback on questions such as:
 - Do members feel the need to review and update the committee’s mandate in line with the Tenth Plan process and other developments?
 - Should the name of the group be changed to reflect a gender equality and women’s empowerment emphasis?
 - What are the most appropriate ways to engage INGOs and NGOs?
 - How can the group best assist in capacity building for GON focal points?
 - Should meeting locations be rotated or remain at USAID?
 - How frequently it is necessary to meet?
 - What types of information exchanges can be handled by email rather than meeting?
- Based on the outcome of the customer survey, conduct a gender and development donor group workshop, to set priorities and develop a simple work plan and meeting schedule for the coming year that includes assignment tasks and specific deadlines.
- Follow up with the individuals responsible for specific tasks to see if they need help in carrying out their tasks.
- Host at least one social/networking event that includes Nepalese entertainment and involves the wider community engaged in gender mainstreaming/women’s empowerment.

IX: DRAFT TIMELINE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GAP

The following timeline chart presents the essence of the GAP as a planning and implementation tool. It spells out eight key action areas, the tasks required, and the persons responsible:

- Establish Mission policy on gender equality mainstreaming.
- Establish the organizational structure to implement the GAP.
- Provide gender training/capacity building.
- Strengthen integration of gender equality in programs.
- Strengthen gender integration in monitoring and evaluation.
- Increase lines of communication.
- Increase attention to gender equality in procurement.
- Update the Women in Development Donor Coordination Group Action Agenda

It is important to stress that this is a draft timeline for discussion, revision, and updating by the Gender Specialist in consultation with Mission staff through the Gender Equality Team efforts and the workshop to discuss the actions, tasks, and timeline. It is important to ensure that it reflects Mission time realities and deadlines and assigns tasks to the appropriate people.

**Draft Gender Action Plan Timeline
FY 2002-2004**

Recommended Action	Specific Tasks/ Person Resp.	Time to be Completed								
		2002				2003				2004
		1 st Qtr.	2 nd Qtr.	3 rd Qtr.	4 th Qtr.	1 st Qtr.	2 nd Qtr.	3 rd Qtr.	4 th Qtr.	1 st Qtr.
<i>Establish Mission Policy on Gender Equality</i>	Finalize Mission Order (Program office)	By Jan.								
	Issue Mission Order		Jan.							
	Brief Staff (Mission Dir.)		Jan.							
<i>Establish Organizational Structure to Implement GAP</i>	Appoint team members (G-Team Leaders, Office Directors)		Jan.							
	Mtgs w/SO-Teams program & contracts offices to review responsibilities (Gender Specialist)		Jan.							
	Qtrly. Briefings for Mission Directors		Mar. 28	Jun. 28	Sept. 30	Dec. 30	Mar. 20	Jun. 27	Sep. 30	Dec. 30
	Establish Gender Specialist as an ongoing position in the program office				Sep.					
<i>Provide Gender Training/Capacity Building</i>	Retreat/team building workshop for G-Team (Gender Specialist)		Mid Jan.				Mid Jan.			
	Conduct training needs assessment (G-team)		Mid-late Jan.							
	Conduct general gender equality training for Mission staff (Gender Specialist)									
	Conduct a gender equality briefing and coordination session for new partners		Late Jan.							

Recommended Action	Specific Tasks/ Person Resp.	Time to be Completed								
		2002				2003				2004
		1 st Qtr.	2 nd Qtr.	3 rd Qtr.	4 th Qtr.	1 st Qtr.	2 nd Qtr.	3 rd Qtr.	4 th Qtr.	1 st Qtr.
	(Gender Specialist w/support from G-Team)									
	Conduct a TOT for G-Team (Gender Specialist)		Late Jan.				Late Jan.			
	Conduct sector specific training for each SO team and their partners (Gender Specialist w/support from G-Team)			By Jun.	Ongoing training and TA by G-Team					
	Conduct training on Gender Analysis of data and data use in program mgmt. for SO-Team Leaders and program office as well as reps. from contracts office (Gender Specialist)		Feb				Feb.			
<i>Strengthen Gender Equality in Programs</i>	Review and implement actions recommended in GAP for each SO. (SO-Team with support from G-Team)						By Jan.			
	Review program progress and update the GAP (Gender Specialist with support from G-Team)						Completed by Mar. 28			
	Meet with partners to discuss gender equality strategies, studies etc.(SO-Team & G-Team)	Ongoing								
	Technical support to SO-Teams (Gender Specialist)	Ongoing								

Recommended Action	Specific Tasks/ Person Resp.	Time to be Completed								
		2002				2003				2004
		1 st Qtr.	2 nd Qtr.	3 rd Qtr.	4 th Qtr.	1 st Qtr.	2 nd Qtr.	3 rd Qtr.	4 th Qtr.	1 st Qtr.
<i>Strengthen Gender Integration in Monitoring and Evaluation</i>	Integrate Gender Equality results in introduction to R-4. (Program Office Gender Specialist)		Mid Mar.				Mid Mar.			
	Prepare a Gender Annex for the R-4 (Gender Specialist with support from G-Team)		Mar.	Dissemination/Discussion			Mar.	Dissemination/Discussion		
	Design & Conduct study of SO1 SO3 gender equality outcomes (Gender Specialist with support from GWID)			Design completed by Jun.		Study completed by Dec. 30				
	Conduct comparative analysis of recent gender-related studies (Gender Specialist)						Completed by Mid-Feb. & incorporated in R-4 in Mar.	Dissemination/Discussion		
<i>Increase Lines of Communication</i>	Design and put in place a gender equality web-site (Gender Specialist & Web Expert)			By May						
	Maintain/update web page (Gender Specialist)	Ongoing								
	Organize gender equality networking events (Gender Specialist w/G-Team)									
	Annual celebration of Gender Equality (G-Team & Mission Director)		To be scheduled by Mission Director				To be scheduled by Mission Director			

Recommended Action	Specific Tasks/ Person Resp.	Time to be Completed								
		2002				2003				2004
		1 st Qtr.	2 nd Qtr.	3 rd Qtr.	4 th Qtr.	1 st Qtr.	2 nd Qtr.	3 rd Qtr.	4 th Qtr.	1 st Qtr.
<i>Increase Attention to Gender Equality in Procurement</i>	Distribute and review AIDS gender mainstreaming requirements (pre-deligation) (Contracts Office & G-Team)		By Mid-Jan.							
	Ensure that a gender statement is included in the Activity Approval Documents (Contracts Office)	As Needed								
	Work with SO-Teams to ensure that the evaluation criteria include properly integrated gender technical capacity criteria (Contracts Office & Gender Specialist)	As Needed								
<i>Update Women in Development Donor Coordination Group Action Agenda</i>	Conduct customer survey (Gender Specialist)			Apr.						
	Organize a work planning meeting (Gender Specialist & Mission Director)			May						
	Host a social networking event w/entertainment (Logistics by Gender Specialist)	Date to be set by WID Donor Coordination Group								

ANNEX I: DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE GENDER EQUALITY TEAM

BACKGROUND

In the past, many USAID Missions placed the responsibility for gender mainstreaming on a gender advisor who was often a junior person with little authority to hold Mission staff accountable for gender equality mainstreaming. One individual could not address all of the gender issues in all of the SOs and respond to data requests from Washington and other donors, conduct training, and respond to other demands. Efforts of persons at higher levels (Deputy Mission Directors, Program Office Directors) to take on the role of gender advisor often produced bottlenecks because of the many other responsibilities of those individuals.

It has become evident that it is necessary for a team of people, representing the various SOs and the program and contracts offices in a Mission, to share the responsibility of implementing gender equality mainstreaming in USAID programs and donor coordination, along with the gender advisor. The team approach is also important to provide sector-specific support to SO teams on enhancing gender equality in their programs. Experience in USAID and other programs has shown that general training and technical support on gender issues is useful but not adequate to strengthen programs. A full understanding of the sector and sector-specific gender issues is essential.

PURPOSE

The Gender Equality Team serves as a network of gender equality advocates who have sector, program, or contracts expertise and assist and advise the gender specialist. At the same time, they assist their SO teams or operational offices to incorporate a gender equality perspective. A Gender Equality Team can serve as a resource and coordination group for gender integration and the promotion of gender equality within program activities, special studies, monitoring, and evaluation (in line with ADS requirements), as well as in communication with partners, and in donor coordination.

SELECTION OF GENDER EQUALITY TEAM MEMBERS

The Gender Specialist serves as the coordinator for the Gender Equality Team. Other members of the G-Team need to be supporters of gender equality but they are not expected to be gender specialists themselves. Their work on the G-Team will enable them to develop skills in this area. The team members should include men and women representing all three SO Teams, the Program Office, the Contracts Office, and the Personnel Office. It is always valuable to include Foreign Service Nationals, both men and women, on the team to ensure that cultural nuances are adequately taken into account and to benefit from their valuable

institutional memory. Including men as well as women on the team makes it clear that gender equality is a development issue, not simple a “women’s issue.”

It is also important to include partners (grantees, cooperators, and contractors) on the team, to participate in meetings that are not procurement sensitive, in order to draw on their practical field implementation experience and to emphasize transparency and collaboration on the part of USAID with its partners. To expand the G-Team experience and training opportunities to as many people as possible, one option is to rotate new team members in at the end of each fiscal year or every two years, while the Gender Specialist remains the same for continuity.

TASKS

- Report to the Mission Director quarterly, or more frequently if needed, on the status of gender equality mainstreaming in the Mission’s programs. Initially it will be necessary to meet with the Mission Director to identify a list of key items for each quarterly briefing. The last item on that agenda needs to be the planned activities for the next quarter, including any resources or policy support needed from the Mission Director to carry them out. It also will be useful for the gender specialist to send a summary of the briefing to all Mission staff and appropriate partner contacts via e-mail.
- Assist the Gender Specialist in the preparation and dissemination of an annex for the R4 addressing “gender equality as a cross-cutting issue.” G-Team members can provide valuable input on the results accomplished in their SOs. They can also offer suggestions for making the document interesting and relevant for partners. The Gender Specialist has responsibility for drafting the gender annex in coordination with the Program Office.
- Assist SO teams in implementing the synergy recommendations of the Gender Action Plan. Review the synergy suggestion in the GAP with the SO Team Leaders and revise if required. During the briefing for new partners, ask them to review and discuss the synergy recommendations and offer additional suggestions. Before the end of the session, develop a list of concrete actions to be taken to implement the recommendations, including the names of the people responsible for carrying them out. The G-Team member from each SO needs to follow up with the partners periodically to see if they need help in carrying out the actions they volunteered to implement.
- Coordinate joint field trips by different SO team members to promote synergy on gender equality. The policy of including individuals from different SOs on field trips, established by the Mission Director, provides an excellent opportunity to promote synergy in the Mission. With the added help of the G-team to ensure that a representative of each SO team participates in each field trip where possible, this can be a powerful tool for promoting synergy and helping to implement the gender synergy recommendations. In staff meetings, G-Team members need to share the insights gained and the collaborative action identified as a result of these trip experiences. When appropriate, also share these insights with partner gender contacts.

- Carry out active networking, information exchange, and collaboration on gender issues with USAID program implementers, NGOs, INGOs, sector networks, and other donors and share the information with USAID management and staff. The Gender Specialist needs to maintain an electronic calendar of key gender-related events and ensure that a G-Team member attends them or briefs the SO team member attending. Inputs from G-Team members about such events will be very valuable. From time to time it will also be necessary to prepare an event-specific gender briefing for the Mission Director when the events are high-level. The Gender Specialist needs to put significant information about the outcomes of these events on the Gender Equality Web site and send emails to appropriate Mission staff and partners as well.
- Provide input on key gender issues and lessons learned for the various sector based donor coordination committees and GON ministries. While the Gender Specialist provides support to the WID donor committee, other G-Team members can raise gender equality issues with other donor committees in which they participate or brief other SO team members who attend the donor meetings. These fora also provide opportunities to disseminate summaries of USAID/Nepal gender-related studies and evaluations and to gather gender-equality resources for the web page. These events need to be included on the gender events calendar maintained by the Gender Specialist, who can also assist G-Team members in briefing other SO team members.
- Review and provide input into the design of impact or post project sustainability studies of SO1 and SO3 as well as other Mission studies that should address gender equality and women's empowerment issues. Because of their sectoral experience and regular interaction with partners, the G-Team members will bring a valuable practical perspective to the design of these studies that will help ensure that they will serve the program management needs of the SOs and the Mission as a whole. The Program Office G-Team member will be a valuable resource for the overall Mission program perspective as well as methodology. The G-Team will also help in the dissemination and discussion of the study findings as well as the incorporation of key findings in the R-4. Most important, G-Team members can ensure that the gender related findings are incorporated into program activity management.
- Assist the gender specialist in compiling the information for and updating a gender equality resources web page on the USAID/Nepal web site to facilitate exchange of information about gender focused activities, lessons learned, issues and events for continuous learning within the Mission and with partners. The G-team members can assist the gender specialist in defining the gender information needs of staff and partners. They can also help identify key local web links and contacts in partner and other organizations. When the page is up and running, they can assist the Gender Specialist in providing technical assistance to Mission Staff and partners on how to use it. Equally vital is the role of the G-Team in continuing to gather new information and up date old information for the web page.
- Organize at least one annual event with partners celebrating progress toward women's equality, such as International Women's Day. Celebrations are important occasions to raise awareness of the importance of gender equality, and recognize the excellent work of

Mission staff and partners. Participatory planning with partners will enhance the awareness raising and strengthen lines of communication outside of the Mission. While the Gender Specialist will be responsible for the overall program and logistics, under the guidance of the Mission Director, the G-Team can offer advise on the program planning and lend a helping hand on other aspects of the event, particularly the outreach to partners. The celebration is also a good opportunity to honor individuals within the Mission and partner organizations who have provided outstanding contributions toward gender equality. The G-Team needs to work with the Mission Director to establish criteria and a transparent process for identifying the people who should be recognized and given certificates or other appropriate forms of recognition.

DELIVERABLES FOR FY 2002-2003

- Quarterly briefings for the Mission Director.
- Annual update of the GAP (Gender Specialist with G-Team support).
- Annual Gender Annex for the R-4 (Gender Specialist with G-Team support).
- Design for the post-project studies for SO1 and SO3 (Gender Specialist with G-Team support).
- Comparative analysis of recent gender studies (Gender Specialist with G-Team Review).
- Gender Equality Web page (Gender Specialist with G-Team support).

RESOURCES

- The Gender Assessment of USAID/Nepal, December 2001, presents key gender issues for each SO that can be used in working with SO team members and partners to strengthen gender equality in the program activities.
- The Gender Action Plan for USAID/Nepal provides lists of sector-specific and other gender manuals, guides, and web sites for each SO. These will be useful tools for the Gender Specialist to use in training the G-Team. G-Team members can use them as they help the Gender Specialist provide support to SO Teams, other offices, and partners.
- Some of the partner organizations have gender specialists and/or gender expertise in their corporate headquarters (for example: CEDPA, CARE, Save the Children). They can be very valuable resource people on field strategies. They may also be able to assist in gender training and share lessons learned from their own efforts in gender training and women's empowerment.

- The WID Donor group also includes gender experts from other donor organizations. They can be valuable resource people on the organizational strategies, training, and field implementation experiences of their organizations.

ANNEX II: DRAFT MISSION ORDER

SUBJECT: Gender Equality Mainstreaming

ORDER NO:

AUTHORITY: ADS 201.3.4.11, ADS 201.3.4.13,
ADS 201.3.6.2, ADS 201.3.6.3
ADS 201.5B, ADS 302.5.14
ADS 303.5.5b

EFFECTIVE DATE:

SUPERSEDES:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Mission order is to establish the policy and organizational framework for the mainstreaming of gender equality in USAID/Nepal's programs, in line with the Agency Strategic Plan and the Automated Directives System (ADS) requirements for gender mainstreaming. This Mission Order designates the Gender Action Plan (GAP) for USAID/Nepal as the working document to guide the Mission in gender equality mainstreaming. The GAP will be updated annually, including the timetable for its implementation, to reflect the changing conditions in Nepal. The Mission Order also establishes a Gender Equality team, coordinated by a gender specialist, to lead the Mission in implementing the GAP.

II: THE USAID/NEPAL PHILOSOPHY ON GENDER EQUALITY MAINSTREAMING

It is widely recognized that social processes and institutions create inequalities between men and women that are costly to development as a whole. Hence these are societal and development issues, not simple "women's concerns." The Organization for Economic Development Cooperation and Development Donor Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) "Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation" state the need to reshape development programs and processes to reflect the visions and needs of women as well as men and to support gender equality. USAID's strategic plan identifies gender as a key cross-cutting issue and presents gender equality as an important internationally recognized goal. In the case of Nepal, it can be argued that progress toward gender equality is an essential condition for economic growth and progress toward participatory democracy. The socio-economic indicators for Nepal clearly demonstrate that the low status of women in all spheres is an impediment to sustainable economic development and democratic governance. Hence, it is very important to promote and track progress toward gender equality as an important aspect of the enabling environment for USAID/Nepal's programs.

III: MISSION POLICY ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING

A. Programmatic Mainstreaming

Program activities are the quintessential entry points for mainstreaming gender equality into development efforts. It is important to address gender throughout the strategic planning and results package design process as well as the content of RFAs, RFPs, and APSs, program implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The Gender Action Plan is the operational road map for doing this.

Attention to gender equality issues in monitoring and evaluation is essential to ensure that gender analysis has been translated into action and has produced program results that benefit everyone, not just a select few. Performance monitoring data provides an important early warning system to identify gender inequalities in program activities so that action can be taken to change them. Requiring relevant gender disaggregated reporting also emphasizes the importance of taking gender equality seriously in program implementation.

Procurement is an extremely important entry point for ensuring that gender equality issues are addressed in Mission programs. Once agreements are signed it is too late to request partners to address gender equality in their programs. For this reason the ADS lays out a four-step process that is required before issuing solicitations for all contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements. This includes a mandatory Gender Statement in the Activity Approval Document and including gender integration capacity in the evaluation criteria for proposal review.

ADS Gender Mainstreaming Requirements

ADS 201.3.4.11 (Technical Analysis for Strategic Plans)

Strategic plans must reflect attention to gender concerns. Unlike other technical analyses described in this section, gender is not a separate topic to be analyzed and reported in isolation. Instead, USAID's gender mainstreaming approach requires that appropriate gender analysis be applied to the range of technical issues that are considered in the development of a given Strategic Plan. Analytical work performed in the planning and development of the Results Frameworks should address at least two questions: (1) how will gender relations affect the achievement of sustainable results; and how will the proposed results affect the relative status of women. Addressing these questions involves taking into account not only the different roles of men and women but also the relationship and balance between them and the institutional structures that support them

ADS 201.3.4.13 (Planning for Performance Management)

Indicators and evaluations must reflect gender considerations when analyses performed as a part of the strategic planning process indicate that (1) the activity or its anticipated results involve or affect men and women differently, and this difference is potentially significant for managing towards sustainable program impact.

ADS 201.3.6.2 (Ten Steps in Activity Design)

Various technical analyses may be necessary to make informed choices on the most desirable outputs. A major focus of this work is obtaining feedback and participation on the part of ultimate customers. Each type of analysis should specifically and appropriately address relevant gender issues.

ADS 201.3.6.3 (Pre-obligation Requirements)

Activities designed following the approval of the Strategic Plan must address gender issues in a manner consistent with the findings of the analytical work performed during strategy development. For contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements, solicitation documents should signal USAID's expectations regarding gender capacity and expertise. They should task offerors to propose meaningful approaches to address identified gender issues, and place appropriate emphasis on gender-related elements of technical evaluation criteria. The following steps must be completed to address this requirement:

- (1) For each activity subject to approval, the SO team must, in one page or less, outline the most significant gender issues that need to be considered during activity implication. These issues should reflect consideration of the following two questions: (a) Are women and men involved or affected differently by the context or work to be undertaken? ; (b) If so, is this difference potentially significant for managing toward sustainable program impact? The statement must describe how these concerns will be addressed in any competitive solicitations financed under the activity (Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Assistance (RFA) or Annual Program Statement (APS)). The text of this gender statement is included in the Activity Approval Document.
- (2) If the SO team determines that there are no significant gender issues, it must provide a brief rationale to that effect in the place of the gender statement in the Activity Approval document.
- (3) The Approving Official for the activity is responsible for ensuring that the gender statement adequately responds to item #1 in this list.
- (4) Before issuing or approving an RFP, RFA, or APS, the Contract or Agreement Officer will: a) confirm that either the gender statement is incorporated into the resulting RFA, RFP, or APS requirements or that the rationale has been completed as a part of activity approval, and b) work with the SO team so that the relative significance of gender technical capacity to the Statement of Work or Program Description is appropriately reflected in the technical evaluation criteria.

ADS 302.5.14 (USAID Direct Contracting) and ADS 303.5.5b (Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations) reinforce ADS 201.3.6.3 by repeating the key requirements.

B. ORGANIZATIONAL MAINSTREAMING: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

An organizational framework with roles and responsibilities for mainstreaming gender equality is essential to carry out the programmatic actions. It is necessary for a team of people to share the responsibility of implementing gender equality mainstreaming in USAID/Nepal programs and donor coordination, along with the gender advisor. The team also provides sector-specific support to SO teams on enhancing gender equality in their programs. Below is a brief summary of these roles and responsibilities. The Gender Action Plan is the operational document for roles and responsibilities for gender equality mainstreaming because it provides a more detailed account that will be updated annually.

The Mission Director's support and leadership is essential for successful gender equality mainstreaming. The Mission Director needs to actively promote gender equality mainstreaming in staff meetings, donor meetings, and meetings with Ministry Officials. It is also important to ensure that the gender specialist and gender equality team have sufficient resources and staff support to carry out their gender equality mainstreaming responsibilities and provide incentives to gender equality team members and all staff for outstanding performance in gender mainstreaming.

The Gender Specialist is a catalyst, a facilitator, and a technical resource to Mission staff on gender equality issues. The overall mandate of the gender specialist is to provide gender expertise, guidance, and training to Mission staff on gender analysis and the integration of gender issues during the planning, achieving and assessing/learning stages of Mission programs across sectors. The Gender Specialist needs to coordinate the Mission Gender Equality Team, train staff on gender policy, procedures, and gender analysis, and update the Mission Gender Action Plan annually. It is also important to assist the program office with gender data for the R4 and other reports shared with Washington and other donors, to liaise with the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare and other appropriate gender focal points, and support the WID donor group.

The Gender Equality Team serves as a network of gender equality advocates who have sector, program, or contracts expertise and assist and advise the gender specialist. At the same time they assist their SO teams or operational offices to incorporate a gender equality perspective. They also ensure that gender analysis and the integration of gender issues are an integral part of Mission operations in the planning, achieving and assessing/learning stages of Mission SO programs, in line with ADS requirements. The G-Team needs to report to the Mission Director quarterly, on the status of gender equality mainstreaming in the Mission's programs, assist the Gender Specialist and SO teams and carry out active networking, information exchange, and collaboration on gender issues.

The Program Office plays a pivotal role in the integration of gender equality in Mission programs because of its overview of the entire country program and its central role in performance monitoring and management. The Program Office Director needs to make certain that gender data are appropriately included in R4 reporting, ensure that any revisions of the country strategy and performance monitoring plan, or new results packages, aim to increase gender mainstreaming.

The SO Teams are vital to gender integration in their roles in designing, procuring, managing the implementation, and performance monitoring of country program activities. The SO team leader plays a particularly important role. The SO Team needs to address gender equality issues in all new results packages, activity implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting and promote coordination and collaboration on gender equality among partners.

The Contracts Officer in Dhaka and **the Contracts Office** in Kathmandu play an important role in ensuring that all procurement actions are in line with the ADS requirements for gender mainstreaming. The following are key responsibilities:

The Personnel Office plays a key role on the human resources side of gender mainstreaming in any organization. It is important to ensure that USAID/Nepal hiring practices continue to reach out to identify qualified Nepali women candidates for new or vacant positions and provide employment opportunities for Nepali women. It is also important to offer training to Nepali female as well as male staff to enable them to increase their skills and knowledge regarding gender issues and gender equality.

USAID/Nepal's partners who implement the Mission's programs and their local NGO partners who work at the grass roots level provide an extended network of potential gender equality advocates who can play significant roles in ensuring that gender equality mainstreaming takes place on the ground and not just on paper. Partners need to ensure that the implementation of USAID funded activities conforms to USAID/Nepal's gender equality policy. They also need to share gender equality activity results, lessons learned, resource materials and schedules for related training and other events with the USAID gender equality team members, and provide USAID data disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, as is relevant for the program activities.

C. GENDER EQUALITY TRAINING

For USAID/Nepal, gender equality training is an important investment in staff capacity to mainstream gender equality into its programs. Agency-wide basic gender courses were a first step in building support for gender equality goals. What is needed now is more tailored capacity development that addresses specific sectors or functions of specific staff. Earlier efforts to turn staff into "gender experts" in a short period of time were not effective. They underestimated the skills required to work on gender equality issues. Targeting training to staff needs is best achieved when it is guided by a staff training needs assessment. Developing these staff skills requires ongoing training and technical assistance by the Gender Specialist.

D. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Good gender information, strategic networking, and continuous learning and sharing of information with development partners are critical aspects of gender equality mainstreaming in any development organization. This includes the following functions:

- Improving internal communication and information exchange.
- Bringing external knowledge resources into the organization.
- Strengthening the collaboration and networking efforts of the organization's staff with people in other organizations.
- Promoting and disseminating the organization's activities, outputs, and impacts within the organization and with partners.
- Increasing transparency to enhance successful cooperation with partners.

The information sharing and networking role becomes increasingly important as USAID/Nepal reduces its programmatic implementation role in women's empowerment activities and moves into the role of a catalyst to mobilize ideas, efforts, and resources of development partners and the private sector to achieve common objectives in gender equality mainstreaming. USAID/Nepal's Gender Equality Team will play an important role through networking and information dissemination. Pending available resources, USAID/Nepal also will incorporate a gender equality resources web page into its web site to promote collaboration and capacity building with and among partners.

E. DONOR COORDINATION

Donor coordination is widely recognized as essential to ensure that support for developing countries is synergistic and does not place conflicting demands on the host country government. Donor coordination is also a valuable means of leveraging scarce resources, sharing significant lessons learned, and helping to strengthen the capacity of GON ministries to address gender equality in their work. USAID has provided leadership for the Women and Development Donor Coordination Group for several years in Nepal and will continue to do so in the future.