

# **Update on the Gender Plan of Action**

**Background Paper**

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## Executive Summary

The commitment to promote gender mainstreaming is set out in the Bank's Gender policy adopted in 2001. To fulfill its commitment effectively, the Bank adopted the Gender Plan of Action (GPOA) for the years 2004-2007.

This paper responds to the request of the Deputies for an update on the GPOA, which was made in the context of ADF-11 replenishment negotiations. It provides a brief report on progress made in four key areas of activity, namely:

- the development of gender mainstreaming tools;
- gender mainstreaming in programming and particularly in priority sectors;
- human resource development; and
- networking.

Considering that the GPOA has been under implementation in the last three years, the update focuses not on gender equality results but rather on the potential of Bank interventions to achieve the intended impact due to the quality of design of its programmes and projects in Regional Member Countries (RMC).

Based on the findings of a recent assessment, the paper shows that, first, the implementation of the GPOA has positively influenced the way gender issues are addressed across the Bank. Impressive strides have been made in revising and developing new staff policies and in appointments of women to management positions. In addition, high quality gender analysis in the social sector projects (education and health) and gender analysis best practices have been demonstrated in about one-third of all Bank projects. While the adoption of gender tools has led to concerted efforts to integrate gender equality in Bank-funded interventions, its application has yet to be consistent across all priority areas, particularly in poverty reduction programmes, line of credit and infrastructure projects. Thus, although actions taken across the board indicate an encouraging trend, some challenges still remain both at Bank and RMC levels.

The paper also discusses the way forward, and outlines several measures including the need to build gender mainstreaming capacity within the Bank and in RMCs to more effectively mainstream and implement gender elements in Bank-funded interventions, as well as advocacy and policy dialogue. Another important measure presented in the paper, is enhancing capacity to generate gender disaggregated data which will be undertaken in concert with other development partners.

As the term for the current GPOA lapses in 2008, the paper defines some strategic thrusts for the 2008-2011 GPOA which take into account the significant developments in the corporate environment of the Bank Group and at the RMC level. These include:

- the importance to advance the gender equality goal within the international agenda on Harmonization and Alignment and Managing for Development Results; and
- the Bank Group's new strategic orientations which accord greater emphasis to infrastructure, private sector, governance and fragile states.

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## **UPDATE ON THE GENDER PLAN OF ACTION**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The African Development Bank Group's (the Bank) commitment to promote gender mainstreaming<sup>1</sup> as a means of fostering poverty reduction, economic development and gender equality on the continent is set out in its Gender policy adopted in 2001. The policy specifies a broad scope for gender mainstreaming spanning five priority areas, namely education, agriculture and rural development (including infrastructure), women's poverty, health and governance. Its implementation is anchored in five core principles namely: i) the application of gender analysis; ii) the need to foster co-operative relations between women and men; iii) recognizing that women's economic empowerment is key to sustainable development; iv) addressing diversity among women; and v) judicious application of the twin track strategy embracing gender mainstreaming and targeted interventions for women's empowerment.
- 1.2 To fulfill its commitment, the Gender Plan of Action (GPOA) was adopted by the Bank in 2004. The GPOA specifies four key areas of activity, and actions as well as performance indicators to monitor progress. The key focus areas are:
- the development of gender mainstreaming tools;
  - gender mainstreaming in programming particularly in priority sectors;
  - human resource development; and
  - networking.
- 1.3 In the context of ADF-11 replenishment negotiations, the Deputies requested management to submit an update on the GPOA. This paper responds to that request and provides first, a brief report outlining areas where progress has been achieved, challenges and the way forward. Secondly, the paper outlines the strategic thrusts of the updated GPOA for 2008-2011. Following this introduction, Section 2 discusses the experience gained in implementing the GPOA and highlights some key achievements and challenges at the institutional and RMC levels. Section 3 outlines the strategic thrust of the 2008-2011 updated GPOA.

### **2. Progress in the Implementation of the GPOA**

#### ***Update on Progress***

- 2.1 This update on progress examines measures taken by the Bank to implement its GPOA and deliver on its policy commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Given that 2004 to date are the initial years of implementation, the focus is not on measuring outcomes, since that requires a long gestation period for such an impact to be determined. Rather, the focus is on whether Bank interventions are more likely to achieve the intended impact due to the application of gender mainstreaming tools and the quality design of its policies and development interventions (quality at entry) in Regional Member Countries (RMCs). In this context, experience has shown that an intervention designed to be gender responsive has greater potential to contribute to gender equality results in the long run and ultimately to higher degree of development effectiveness.

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<sup>1</sup> Gender Mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy that situates gender equality at the centre of broad policy decisions, institutional structures and resource allocations. It seeks to include men's and women's views and priorities with regard to decision-making on development goals and processes. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach and a means to achieve the ultimate goal of gender equality.

### **Performance Assessment**

- 2.2 Overall, the assessments<sup>2</sup> that have been conducted with a view to improving Bank's efforts and to generate lessons and best practice that can be replicated, indicate that first, the implementation of the GPOA has positively influenced the way gender issues are addressed across the Bank in general. Secondly, the actions taken, though encouraging, point to areas of weakness. The implementation of the GPOA in the four focus areas mentioned above indicates a number of achievements and challenges as outlined below:
- 2.3 **Tools.** The Bank has put in place a number of tools to strengthen the ability of the Bank to effectively mainstream gender into its interventions in RMCs. These tools include:
- *Guidelines and a checklist for the Results-Based Country Strategy Papers (RBCSP), to ensure that CSPs articulate a business case for gender equality issues in member countries, and that the Bank plays an advocacy role in policy dialogue with RMCs ;*
  - Twelve (12) *Gender Profiles* to equip staff with the data to integrate country specific gender analysis in Bank interventions;
  - *Seven (7) Gender Training Modules* based on a needs assessment to build staff capacity to design and implement gender sensitive development interventions;
  - Knowledge and upgraded skills of about 80 Bank staff, to better apply gender analysis throughout the project cycle and effectively play an advocacy role;
  - Two (2) published *research projects* to enhance knowledge on gender equality in the private and education sectors;
  - Gender perspectives have been integrated into major Bank thematic policy frameworks developed during the last three years, such as policies on poverty reduction, environment and micro-credit.
- 2.4 Although substantial progress has been noted in this area, work is ongoing to develop the following additional tools:
- *Gender Guidelines/Checklists* to guide Bank staff to mainstream gender throughout the priority sectors identified in the Gender Policy through an extensive consultative process to ingrain attitudinal change and to ensure that the tools are effectively utilized;
  - *A Report on Gender Budget Initiative* - the mechanism to track the resources dedicated to contribute to gender equality results. The report is under discussion to ensure management and staff buy-in, ownership and commitment; and
  - *A revised Operations Manual and the Environment and Social Assessment Procedures (ESAP Tools)*, which are critical for improved gender analysis and promoting gender equality results at all stages of the programming/project cycle stage. In the envisaged revisions, the salient gender issues will be integrated.

### **Programming and Priority Sectors**

- 2.5 The assessment of the Bank funded program and sector projects shows that there is great potential for generating some gender equality impacts at RMC level. It also indicates that a serious attempt has been made to apply the gender tools enumerated above as demonstrated in Bank program and projects.
- 2.6 **Programming level: Result Based Country Strategy Papers (RBCSPs).** Considerable improvements have been noted in the treatment of gender dimensions. Some RBCSPs, for example i) integrate gender concerns as a cross cutting issue in the pillars of focus such as Equity and Poverty Reduction, Social Inclusion and Public Sector Management; ii) highlight the failure of some Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) to identify gaps, constraints and challenges in setting targets across relevant sectors for reducing poverty amongst women; iii) identify the need for the Bank to enter into dialogue with the government

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<sup>2</sup> ORPC. 2005. Report on the Bank Group's Quality at Entry Assessment; and ORPC. 2007. Draft Mid Term Review of the Gender Plan of Action.

particularly on issues of public sector management, building human resources and gender equality iv); and highlight the important role of women economic actors, their lack of access to productive resources and acknowledge that promoting growth through agriculture means promoting women's right to land, property and inheritance. These encouraging trends notwithstanding, inadequate gender skills in the Bank still impede the comprehensive integration of gender issues. In many RBCSPs, for example, gender issues appear as an "add-on" to an already developed document and limited use is made of gender analysis to establish a strategy for gender equality in 'pro-poor growth' strategies. Poverty analysis does not include how women and men are differently affected by poverty, except in cases of female-headed households.

2.7 **Project level.** A quality at entry review of several project appraisal reports illustrates an improved capacity in the Bank to assist RMCs to design projects geared to achieve gender equitable and sustainable development. Achievements in this area include a demonstration of:

- Gender analysis best practices in about one-third of all Bank projects in conformity with the GPOA specified requirements for project design (see Box 1);

- High quality gender analysis particularly in the social sector projects (education and health) which use gender disaggregated data, spell out appropriate strategies and activities and specify cost allocations. Almost all projects in this category delineate objectives that are normally aligned to MDGs and other development goals. Many educational projects seek to promote girl's participation in vocational trades usually the domain of men and in disciplines such as math and the sciences, among other objectives;

<p><b>Box. 1 Design Requirements for Gender Sensitive Project Appraisal Reports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Application of gender analysis</li> <li>✓ Use of gender disaggregated data</li> <li>✓ The statement of objectives with a gender focus</li> <li>✓ Participation of women in designing the intervention</li> <li>✓ Identification of specific actions to empower women</li> <li>✓ Dedicated project resources for gender issues in cost tables</li> <li>✓ Specification of gender sensitive impact indicators</li> </ul>
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- A satisfactory level of gender analysis in some agriculture and infrastructure projects, which has led to the identification of activities that enhance the participation of women in various non-traditional roles, such as project managers, treasurers, executives, and decision-makers. Some of these projects have also integrated emerging best-practices in adopting gender sensitive participatory processes, which encourage women to freely articulate their needs;
- Projects in which men have become sensitized to render the necessary support for actions aimed at enhancing the empowerment of women (see example of a Niger project in Box 2); and
- The potential for the role that the private sector can play in women's economic empowerment. Recognizing that access to finance is one of the barriers to business start up and growth especially for women entrepreneurs, the African Women in Business Initiative (AWIB) in the Private Sector and Microfinance Department (OPSM) launched in 2004, a strategy that seeks to empower women entrepreneurs, in particular women-owned SMEs, through better access to finance. In this respect, OPSM has developed integrated financing programs for women's entrepreneurship development in order to first, enhance their contribution to economic development, and second, assist successful women-owned SMEs to grow their enterprises. Currently two programs to promote growth oriented women enterprises are operational in Kenya and Cameroon (the Bank's support for women entrepreneurship in Cameroon is given in Box 3).

## Box 2. Examples of Best Practices in Gender Mainstreaming

**Agriculture: Uganda Farm Income Enhancement and Forest Conservation Project** (ADF Loan UA 31.57 million and an ADF Grant of UA 9.85 million approved in 2004). The sector goal is to contribute to poverty reduction through improvements in incomes, rural livelihoods and food security. Although the document contains limited gender-disaggregated data in the analysis, the Project specifies clear targets for women in the log-frame. While 50% of project beneficiaries will be women, 30% of women will benefit from new technologies and 30% of extension and forestry officers will be women to obviate cultural barriers.

**Infrastructure: Drinking Water Project in Benin** (ADF Loan UA 11 million approved in 2004). The project has many excellent gender sensitive design features, including: indicators such as shorter distances to drinking water, number of women trained as water point managers; gender balance in the recruitment process; and the inclusion of women in planning and implementation committees.

**Targeted interventions: Niger Gender Equity Reinforcement Project** (ADF Grant UA 3 million, approved in 2004). This project entails a novel approach in terms of its concept and scope. It seeks to address the strategic interests of women by working with men, especially male leaders, to promote the empowerment of women. The project's strategy is to create an environment that is more conducive to gender equality, through: i) improving the legal framework; ii) building the capacities of the state and state agencies and private sector organizations for the promotion of gender dimensions (iii) improve perception of gender issues among opinion leaders; iv) supports the formulation of the persons and family code in order to provide some solutions to the problems arising from the three sources of law and v) promote the dissemination of the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

## Box 3: Cameroon – Growth-Oriented Women Enterprises Development Program

Although Small and medium enterprises have to grapple with major obstacles in order to gain access to appropriate and flexible financial services, these problems are accentuated for women-owned enterprises in particular due to constraints in the socio-cultural environment and the lack of appropriate instruments in the financial market. Noting that growth-oriented women's enterprises need adequate support in the form of financial and non-financial services in order to develop, this project supports active women SMEs to mobilize financial and technical resources needed for the growth of their businesses.

The two important components of the program are: i) a partial guarantee to commercial banks amounting to 10 millions for the benefit of target women's enterprises which exhibit a strong growth potential finance their growth in all the eligible sectors authorized by the Bank. The principal portion of these loans will be covered by a 50% partial guarantee and ii) technical assistance to key beneficiaries to upgrade their capacities through training and technical advisory services.

2.8 Although significant strides to mainstream gender in projects are being made, some weaknesses have been observed in that some projects contain limited gender strategies, activities, outcomes and indicators to address gender gaps ensuing from the gender analysis. Several projects also adopt a gender blind approach and data is provided in gender neutral terms with no reference to the gender identities of who has access, ownership and control. In several projects, log frames contain wide estimations, e.g., "30 per cent beneficiaries will be women" but the basis for these figures is not well substantiated through a detailed gender analysis. While poverty reduction programs usually contain no gender analysis of targeted populations, many Line of Credit projects also do not recognize constraints women face in accessing collateral based lending.

2.9 **Human Resource Issues.** Several measures have been taken to ensure a gender sensitive policy environment within the Bank and to establish a more gender balanced workforce at all levels: (i) The Presidential Directive on Establishing Rules and Procedures for Dealing with Harassment in the Bank which was approved in 2006, for example, addresses the right of all staff to be treated with dignity and respect, and emphasized issues of sexual harassment; (ii) The Human Resource Strategy (HRS), which was approved in 2007, the Bank seeks to strengthen diversity, in terms of several aspects including gender. In the recent recruitment exercises for managerial staff, women represent 33 per cent of the newly appointed senior staff (as compared to 11% previously); (iii) Two of the five Vice Presidents, are now women; and iv) the Bank has also just revised its administrative regime governing installation

allowance among other aspects with a view to rationalizing the administration of these benefits, which previously discriminated against single parents, most of whom are women.

- 2.10 **Networking.** The Bank has shared its work and contributed to the development agenda through its participation at various international/regional conferences and workshops including Beijing +10 and the Multilateral Development Bank Group on Gender, OECD and the UN. During the first Bank Symposium on Gender held in conjunction with the Bank's Annual Meeting which took place in Kampala in 2004, the Bank provided a high-level forum for decision-makers in key financial and economic positions in governments, commercial and investment banks as well as non-governmental organizations to identify and discuss key issues related to bridging the gender gap in order to achieve economic growth and sustainable development in Africa. At the decade review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Bank, in addition to contributing to the plenary sessions, also participated in a high level side event and presented a paper on "Women in Least Developing Countries and the Right to Development". Early this year, the Bank was represented at the international conference on "Women's Economic Empowerment as Smart Economics", which was hosted by the German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, in cooperation with the World Bank Group, among others. The key issue at the conference was how best to increase the productivity and earnings of women producers, their access to formal financial services and to essential infrastructure services, particularly transport, water and energy.

### **Challenges**

- 2.11 As can be seen above, the Bank has taken some important steps to become a more gender-responsive and gender-balanced institution. The adoption of the GPOA has proved to be highly significant in the evolution of gender issues and in making some modest gains. However, even though the tools are in place, their translation into activities in general and sector activities in particular show some weaknesses. The key challenges to the full and effective implementation of the GPOA are due to a combination of interlinked factors operating at the Bank and RMC levels as outlined below:

- *Need for stronger commitment to gender issues at RMC level.* Perceptions in the Bank on gender issues have been influenced, in part, by the demonstration of low commitment to gender equality in RMCs. Questions have been raised on how equality can be integrated into the RBCSPs and be successfully implemented at project level when RMC governments' own concrete engagement with gender equality fall short of their formal commitment to international conventions and declarations;
- *Limited Bank capacity and resistance* also contribute to unsystematic application of gender tools and unevenness in the quality of design. Many Bank staff still lack understanding of the link between gender equality and development effectiveness and view the pursuit of gender equality as disruptive of the status quo both internally and within client countries. Too few Bank staff see themselves as creative agents of change in terms of promoting gender equality;
- *Limited gender disaggregated data.* The identification of gender disparities has sometimes proved difficult due to lack of adequate gender-disaggregated data. Many African countries do not have systems to conduct systematic surveys necessary for equipping national statisticians, economists and policy makers with adequate baseline data;
- *Limited capacity in economic policy analysis and policy development.* Within the Bank as well as in RMCs, there is inability to identify measures that will lead to the attainment of gender equality (for example, a taxation policy that would encourage production and distribution of low cost high efficiency fuel serving stoves would save time on fetching fuel wood, an activity usually undertaken by women);
- *Limited capacity for gender analysis.* In the Bank, and in many RMCs limited attention is accorded to gender issues in poverty reduction interventions, agriculture and infrastructure as well as the broader issues pertinent to gender equality, such as women's limited access to productive sources of land and measures against gender based

violence; and

- *Paucity of gender resources.* Although the presence of staff with gender expertise increases the potential for addressing gender equality issues systematically, the dearth of gender specialists in the Bank and RMCs poses a major constraint to the enhancement of such outcomes.

### **The Bank's Response**

- 2.12 The Bank is aware of the above mentioned challenges and is committed to not only addressing them fully, but also to comprehensively tackle areas that remain and strengthen its work in the new strategic areas.

### **Administrative Measures**

- 2.13 The following administrative actions are or will be implemented.

- *Upgrading gender skills.* Measures will be taken to create a critical mass of Bank staff and RMC officials, through the enhancement of knowledge, analytical capability and skills for gender mainstreaming throughout the programming and project cycle and conducting gender sensitive dialogue, negotiation and participatory facilitation;
- *Refining, developing and contributing to new tools.* The training modules, gender profiles and program tools are continually updated in conformity with developments in the global, RMC and Bank environment;
- *Revision of the Operations Manual and the Environment and Social Assessment Procedures (ESAP).* As stated above, the on-going revision of the Operations Manual and the planned stocktaking of the operationalization of ESAP provide a good opportunity to guide staff on how to integrate gender issues more concretely;
- *Staff recruitment and retention.* Policies and strategies are being put in place to attract, recruit, retain and promote capable women in the Bank;
- *Business processes.* To ensure gender equality results, new business processes have introduced more vigor in improving quality at entry, increasing task manager's accountability, improving quality of log-frames and monitorable result matrices and deepening management engagement in operations; and
- *Budget.* The decentralized internal budget process has given individual managers greater flexibility to deploy resources and demand greater responsibility for results. In addition, management and staff sensitization is on-going to enable buy in, ownership and commitment to the application of the mechanism for tracking gender resources and gender equality results emanating from Bank investments.

### **Measures to Promote Gender Equality Results in RMCs**

- 2.14 *Gender Equality Indicators:* Within the ADF Result Based Framework, sector specific result-based indicators to ensure that each policy and program will include clear result statements related to gender equality will be developed:

- *Stakeholder and beneficiary involvement.* Participatory rural appraisals and other project level tools are increasingly being used to involve target populations more effectively in the project in order to understand how their needs can be effectively met by the project; and
- *Gender disaggregated data.* In order to provide support for the collection and analysis of gender related data, capacities for engendering concepts, methods and frameworks for generating gender disaggregated statistics at HQ's, country offices and RMCs will be enhanced;

## **3. Strategic Thrusts of the 2008-2011 GPOA**

- 3.1 *Salient elements of the new GPOA.* As stated above, the weaknesses, challenges and activities that remain unimplemented or partly implemented, constitute the unfinished

business that will be addressed as part of the updated GPOA for 2008-2011. The update will define a year to year work-plan with specific activities, timelines, allocation of responsibilities, monitorable targets and end results, implementation arrangements and budgetary implications. While the actions to be implemented will be aligned with the new strategic orientation of the institution, they will be underpinned first, by the developments in the aid effectiveness agenda particularly those related to harmonization, alignment and managing for development results and second, by changes in the corporate environment of the Bank.

3.2 In sum, the updated GPOA will: i) address the unfinished business emanating from the implementation of the 2004-2007 GPOA; ii) pay attention to gender equality issues in strategic priorities and iii) adopt a results oriented approach.

3.3 **Addressing the Unfinished Business.** The update will, as outlined above, specify several actions to address the weaknesses and challenges identified and will refine and develop new tools, and ensure their full and effective application. A key activity in this regard will be the continuous actions to sharpen staff gender competence thus ensuring the realization of the objectives of ADF-11 as well as the Bank's Results Based Management agenda.

3.4 **Gender in the Focus Areas.** The Bank is committed to mainstream gender within the traditional sectors, namely, agriculture, education and health. However, in conformity with the Bank's new strategic orientations, particular emphasis will be placed on infrastructure, governance, private sector and fragile states as described below:

- **Infrastructure.** Infrastructure projects offer many opportunities for women as participants and beneficiaries of development through i) reduction in drudgery ii) increase in incomes through, for example, better access to markets; iii); increased safety and promotion of the enrolment of girls in educational institutions and iv) increase in the number of visits to health care facilities leading to a reduction in maternal and child mortality rates, among other benefits.
- **Governance.** Rights of ownership, use of property, and a life free from violence are critical to equality between women and men and are therefore emphasized in international agreements and conventions on equality to which most African governments are committed. The Bank's emphasis in this area will aim to i) assist efforts to harmonize national laws with international legal instruments; ii) promote strategies for effective implementation of internationally accepted norms and standards on women's rights; iii) promote policy and law reforms that aim to remove barriers to the economic participation of women – particularly those that relate to land rights, asset holding, inheritance, credit, and labor; iv) promote measures to increase legal literacy; and v) support reforms within RMC judicial systems including capacity enhancement particularly of the judiciary and the police for the promotion of the respect for women's human rights.
- **Private Sector.** As the majority of women in Africa experience extreme socio-cultural constraints in participating and accessing finance, the Bank's support to private sector will aim to support RMC efforts to i) create an enabling environment entailing legal and policy reforms that will contribute to the elimination of gender inequalities in property rights and women's ownership; ii) designing comprehensive approaches to increase the productivity of women's activities; iii) support to broadening the range of skills and the options for women's entrepreneurial skills; and iv) formation of strong groups for mutual support.
- **Post-conflict and Fragile States.** Gender inequality can constitute an important feature of state fragility and measures to address gender issues in such challenging contexts require the engagement of women in developing the national framework for participation of women in the peace, the rehabilitation and the reconstruction process. This was the case in Liberia where women from all walks of life, participated in developing priorities under its recovery and reconstruction plan. The Bank strategy in this regard will focus on: i) policy dialogue and Stakeholder Participation between national governments, CSO partners and multilateral institutions; ii) support to domestication and enforcement of international and regional conventions on women's rights such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and iii) promotion of

gender analyses<sup>3</sup> for assisting the generation and collection of gender/sex-disaggregated data.

3.5 **The adoption of a results based approach.** The Bank’s commitments to promote the achievements of the MDGs and development effectiveness contain the basis for paying particular attention to gender equality results within the context of its interventions in RMCs. Thus in concert with development partners in client countries, the ADF Results Measurement Framework will be strengthened to ensure clear result statements on gender equality at program and sector levels. Currently this framework contains only a minimum number of indicators for women’s empowerment comprised of traditional gender indicators such as: health (proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel and HIV prevalence of pregnant women (15-49), and education (ratio of girls to boys in primary school and tertiary education). The *repertoire* of gender equality results indicators need to be enlarged to take into account a wide range of elements (as summarized in Box 4 below). A key requirement in this process will be the collection of gender disaggregated statistics that will be instrumental in improving knowledge on the actual situation of women and men in society, providing an unbiased basis for policies, inspiring measures for change and promoting the monitoring and evaluation of national and international goals.

<b>Box 4: Framework for Assessing Gender Equality Results</b>		
<b>Corporate result</b>	<b>Elements of this result (assessment categories)</b>	<b>Examples of the way in which a project could contribute to gender equality results</b>
<p><b>Economic Power -</b> Reduced inequalities between women and men in access to and control over resources and benefits of development.</p> <p><b>Political power – Decision-making:</b> More equal participation of women with men as decision makers in shaping the sustainable development of their societies.</p> <p><b>Social power - Rights:</b> Women and girls more able to realize their full human rights.</p>	<p><b>Livelihoods and productive assets.</b> Increased control by women over productive assets</p> <p><b>Women’s participation at all decision-making levels:</b> Increased representation of women in parliament, members of local councils, employers association, heads of NGOs and CSOs)</p> <p><b>Legal system:</b> Strengthened promotion and protection of the human rights of girls and women in law and the actions of law makers, police, prosecutors, judges and courts</p> <p><b>Institutional capacity:</b> Increased capacity to design and implement projects, that reflect the priorities and interests of both women and men</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ increased incomes of women</li> <li>✓ More equitable access by women to productivity-enhancing inputs and services (extension, skills training, technology, infrastructure).</li> <li>✓ More equitable access by women to land ownership, e.g. rural/urban plots/ houses.</li> <li>✓ Strengthened knowledge or skills (in e.g. advocacy, negotiation, management);</li> <li>✓ Strengthened women’s organizations or networks;</li> <li>✓ Sensitization of male elders to support the empowerment of women</li> <li>✓ Increased application of CEDAW;</li> <li>✓ Formulation of legislation on key gender equality issues: e.g. land rights, violence, and discrimination in employment.</li> <li>✓ Elimination of legal barriers to equality (through specific legislation, or as part of legal reform).</li> <li>✓ Increased awareness of rights violations (early marriages, female genital mutilation, gender based violence, etc.)</li> <li>✓ Strengthened capacity and systems to collect and analyze gender disaggregated data.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> It is important to conduct a sophisticated analysis of each development context that includes an examination of the power and gender relations, and social and political tensions that are often at the root of weak governance and violent conflict in general and gender based violence in particular. This will lead to the development of country, area, and household-specific strategies that take into account local culture. The end result should be an agenda that aims to contribute to the reduction in social disparities and do away with gender inequalities and their attendant social, economic and political problems.

3.6 ***Institutional arrangements.*** The Bank's new GPOA will elaborate measures that are already in train and those planned to promote gender equality. Such measures include:

- *Decentralization* - Owing to their proximity to other development partners, field offices will be made more effective partners for clients and the office of the resident representatives will be provided with gender resources to enable it to monitor the inclusion of gender issues in RBCSPs, the joint assistance strategies, the performance assessment frameworks and to strengthen its capacity for coordinated action.
- *Staffing* – until adequate capacity and proficiency is developed, sufficient expertise both at headquarters and in resident missions to provide hands-on support and assistance necessary to strengthen the Bank's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment will be enhanced; and
- *Awards* - The President's Award for Change and Excellence would be used to reward and recognize staff who exemplifies the Bank's values including the commitment to gender equality in project design and implementation.

3.7 ***Budget Implications.*** The budgetary resources shall be examined in the course of updating the GPOA, with a view to securing and increasing budgetary allocations for the identified initiatives therein. Similar to other institutions, the Bank will invite bilateral donors interested in resourcing gender mainstreaming activities to explore the possibility of instituting a pooled fund comprised of matching contributions from the Bank and interested bilateral donors<sup>4</sup>. This multi-donor umbrella facility will promote gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa and assist Bank to accelerate implementation of its Gender Policy and related Gender Plan of Action 2008-2011. It will also enable the Bank to place gender issues more centrally through supporting innovative and strategic work on gender equality in areas such as capacity building, development of gender equality results framework, development of sector specific monitoring and evaluation indicators, among other things.

## 4. Conclusion

4.1 This paper has outlined the progress made in addressing gender issues in the Bank. These issues include concrete steps to strengthen the Bank's own internal capacity for gender mainstreaming on one hand, and to provide effective support to its RMCs on the other. The general trend in addressing gender issues is encouraging. Nevertheless, much needs to be done to improve the quality of gender mainstreaming across the board.

4.2 The paper has also outlined the way forward and the strategic thrusts of the Bank's updated GPOA for the period 2008-2011, which will be adopted by the end of March, 2008. The GPOA demonstrates management's full commitment to not only ensuring that the current GPOA is implemented in full but also that all the necessary measures will be taken to meet the challenges arising out of the development effectiveness agenda and the corporate environment of the Bank. The Bank is aware that the enhancement of gender competence for Bank staff and RMC officials, in particular, is a prerequisite for attaining development effectiveness and an intrinsic element for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Bank will therefore scale up its work in enhancing these capacities in order to attain the stated objectives.

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<sup>4</sup> This approach will be similar to the one adopted by the World Bank's and the Asian Development Bank in which bilateral trust funds were made available to encourage gender mainstreaming activities. The trust fund was designed to support work on gender equality, with a strong focus on poverty reduction and an emphasis on activities that would produce good results and could be replicated.