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Promoting opportunities for all

Gender equality and women's empowerment

Thematic Strategy November 2011



AusAID's Thematic Strategies

The fundamental purpose of Australian aid is to help people overcome poverty. Australia's aid program is guided by five strategic goals, as set out in *An Effective Aid Program for Australia: Making a real difference – delivering real results*.

The strategic goals of the aid program are:

- > saving lives
- > promoting opportunities for all
- > sustainable economic development
- > effective governance, and
- > humanitarian and disaster response.

Australia works with governments of partner countries, mostly in the Asia-Pacific region, civil society organisations and multilateral agencies to achieve these goals. Funding decisions are guided by individual countries' development priorities, an assessment of poverty, Australia's capacity to make a real and measurable difference and our national interest.

The thematic strategies provide further detail to inform program decisions in particular sectors.

Summary



The Australian Government has committed to remaining a firm and persistent advocate and practical supporter of gender equality, and has identified gender equality as a critical cross-cutting theme across the aid program. Three of the ten development objectives of *An Effective Aid Program for Australia* specifically address gender equality and the empowerment of women. These are: empowering women to participate in the economy, leadership and education; saving lives of poor women through provision of quality maternal health care services; and enabling more girls to attend school.

Gender equality is central to economic and human development and to supporting women's rights. Equal opportunity for women and men supports economic growth and helps to reduce poverty.

To deliver real results and improve the lives of women and men, their families, and their communities, Australia will organise the work on gender equality and women's empowerment around four pillars:

1. Advancing equal access to gender-responsive health and education services.
2. Increasing women's voice in decision-making, leadership, and peace-building.
3. Empowering women economically and improving their livelihood security.
4. Ending violence against women and girls at home, in their communities, and in disaster and conflict situations.

Australia will continue to invest strongly in improving gender equality across the aid program with a focus on what works, is effective aid and achieves results. This will include a more strategic and targeted focus in the areas where progress has been slow: women's economic empowerment, women's leadership, and ending violence against women. We expect the highest levels of expenditure in countries with the most severe gender gaps and constraints, including fragile states and conflict-affected countries.

Purpose

The fundamental purpose of Australia's aid program is to help people overcome poverty. To achieve this, we will be guided by five strategic goals – saving lives, promoting opportunities for all, sustainable economic development, effective governance and humanitarian and disaster response – and ten development objectives. Empowering women to participate in the economy, leadership and education because of the critical untapped role of women in development is one of these ten development objectives of the aid program. Separate objectives relate to saving lives of poor women through provision of quality maternal health care services and enabling more girls to attend school. This thematic strategy outlines Australia's strategic approach to gender equality and women's empowerment which contributes to helping people overcome poverty. The Australian Government has identified gender equality as a critical cross-cutting theme of the aid program and committed to remaining a firm and persistent advocate and practical supporter of gender equality.

The aid program has a significant focus on gender equality and women's empowerment¹ mainly through the health, education, governance, and rural development sectors. The Australian Government's significant investment in gender equality provides both the opportunity and the challenge to achieve stronger results and improve the lives of women. This thematic strategy provides a framework that will help to target more strategically and visibly, to deliver on the development objectives and maximise the impact of the aid program on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Context



Gender equality is central to economic and human development. Equal opportunity for women and men supports economic growth and helps to reduce poverty. Yet there is no country in the world where gender inequality does not exist. In most cases, gender inequalities result in opportunities for women or girls lagging behind those of men and boys.

- > Two thirds of the 774 million illiterate adults worldwide are women.²
- > Nearly 3.9 million women are missing each year including 1.4 million missing girls who are never born³, and 350,000 women who die each year from complications during pregnancy or in childbirth⁴.
- > Women make up just over 19 per cent of parliamentarians worldwide⁵, and only 2.3 per cent in Pacific countries⁶.
- > Women farmers produce more than half the world's food⁷ – and between 60 to 80 per cent in developing countries – but have far less access to land and resources than men farmers⁸.
- > One in three women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.⁹

Significant progress in health and education has been made in the last two decades but there are still some countries, and groups of women within countries – especially those facing other forms of exclusion such as poverty, ethnicity, or disability – who have not shared in this progress. Some dimensions of gender inequality continue to persist, regardless of progress in health and education, and of the positive impacts of growth and development. These include inequalities in economic opportunity, and participation in decision-making in the household, the community and in politics.¹⁰ The overall situation for women and girls tends to be worst in fragile states and conflict-affected countries. Since more than half of the aid program is delivered to these countries, specific attention and responses to gender issues is needed in these situations.

The most destructive effect of unequal gender relations and power distribution is violence against women which is pervasive and persistent throughout the world.

Rationale for investing in gender equality and women's empowerment



Gender inequality denies individuals their human rights. The international community has recognised gender equality as an important human rights issue and has collectively made commitments to promote and protect the rights of women and girls.¹¹ Gender inequality also imposes costs on families, communities, and states. At a national level, for example, gender inequalities cost the Asia and Pacific region up to USD47 billion every year.¹² In an increasingly globalised world, gender inequality makes countries less competitive, and the cost of not reducing gender inequality is rising (Box 1).¹³

Gender equality is a development objective in and of itself as recognised in Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 3 and 5: to promote gender equality and empower women, and to improve maternal health respectively.¹⁴ It is also critically important to achieving other development objectives, and to improving efficiency of efforts to reduce poverty and support economic growth. The benefits are not just for today's women and men, their families, and their communities, but for all generations to come.

- > When girls are educated it lowers fertility rates, reduces maternal mortality, and improves the health of their children.
- > When both women and men have access to economic opportunity it helps their families prosper, and the country's economy grow.
- > When both women and men participate in policy formulation and decision-making it leads to more responsive policies and decisions, and improved distribution of services.
- > When the safety and security of women and girls is guaranteed, they can more effectively contribute to better outcomes for their families, communities, and countries.

At the program level, designing initiatives that respond to and take account of the different needs and roles of women and men makes them more effective and sustainable.

Box 1: World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development (World Bank)

The World Development Report 2012 on Gender Equality and Development highlights persistent challenges in achieving gender equality and empowering women and recommends policy reforms to remove barriers and constraints:

Main findings:

This World Bank report finds that greater gender equality can enhance economic efficiency and improve development outcomes, and provides evidence to show that:

- > misallocating women's skills and talent comes as a large (and rising) economic cost (eliminating barriers that discriminate against women could increase productivity by 25 per cent in some countries)
- > women's endowments, opportunities and the ability to make effective choices and influence decisions (agency) shape those of the next generation
- > increasing women's individual and collective agency produces better outcomes, institutions, and policy choices.

Development has reduced gender gaps in a number of areas such as educational enrolment, life expectancy and labour force participation. But gaps persist in many areas including excess female mortality, disparities in educational outcomes, women's lack of access to economic opportunities and their limited voice in household and society.

Recommendations:

Action is needed to reform policies to:

- > reduce excess deaths of girls and women by improving delivery of clean water and sanitation, and increasing maternal health services
- > shrink persisting education gaps by improving access to education for girls and young women when poverty, ethnicity, or remoteness excludes them
- > narrow the disparities in earnings and productivity by removing women's time constraints, improving women's access to resources including land and credit, and tackling information problems and institutional biases that work against women
- > reduce gender difference in voice in household and society by increasing women's control over household resources and enhancing women's ability to accumulate assets including through laws, increasing women's voice in society by introducing quotas, and fostering leadership
- > limit reproduction of gender inequality across generations by reaching adolescents and young women.

Australia's approach to gender equality and women's empowerment



Gender equality and women's empowerment is an overarching objective of the aid program. Effective and sustainable changes will be driven from within partner countries. As a result, these principles will guide how we will work. Australia will:

- > *focus strategically within country programs* to address specific barriers and constraints to gender equality where we can make a meaningful contribution, and take pride in the contributions we make to gender equality and women's empowerment as a goal in itself
- > *support programs* to address specific priority issues where mainstream programs may not be the most effective way of reaching women and girls, for example in fragile states and conflict-affected countries
- > *work with government and civil society in partner countries* to help them put in place and achieve their own gender equality goals and objectives, and protect women's rights
- > *work with our partners* in civil society, multilateral agencies, managing contractors and research institutions to contribute to, influence, or add value to their work to maximise impacts on gender equality and women's empowerment
- > *help collect evidence* to contribute to formulation of policies promoting gender equality and empowering women, and to understand the different impacts of other policies on women and men, girls and boys
- > *participate in the global debate* on gender equality and support global efforts, including through UN Women, to meet international commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment
- > *raise awareness of gender issues internationally*, including through the appointment of a Global Ambassador for Women and Girls, and raising the issue in high level forums.

Three of Australia's ten key development objectives relate specifically to gender equality and women's empowerment:

- > saving the lives of poor women and children through greater access to quality maternal and child health services (for example, skilled birth attendants and midwives), and supporting large-scale disease prevention, vaccination and treatment (development objective 2)



- > enabling more children, particularly girls, to attend school for a longer and better education so they have the skills to build their own futures and, in time, escape poverty (development objective 3)
- > empowering women to participate in the economy, leadership and education because of the critical untapped role of women in development (development objective 4).

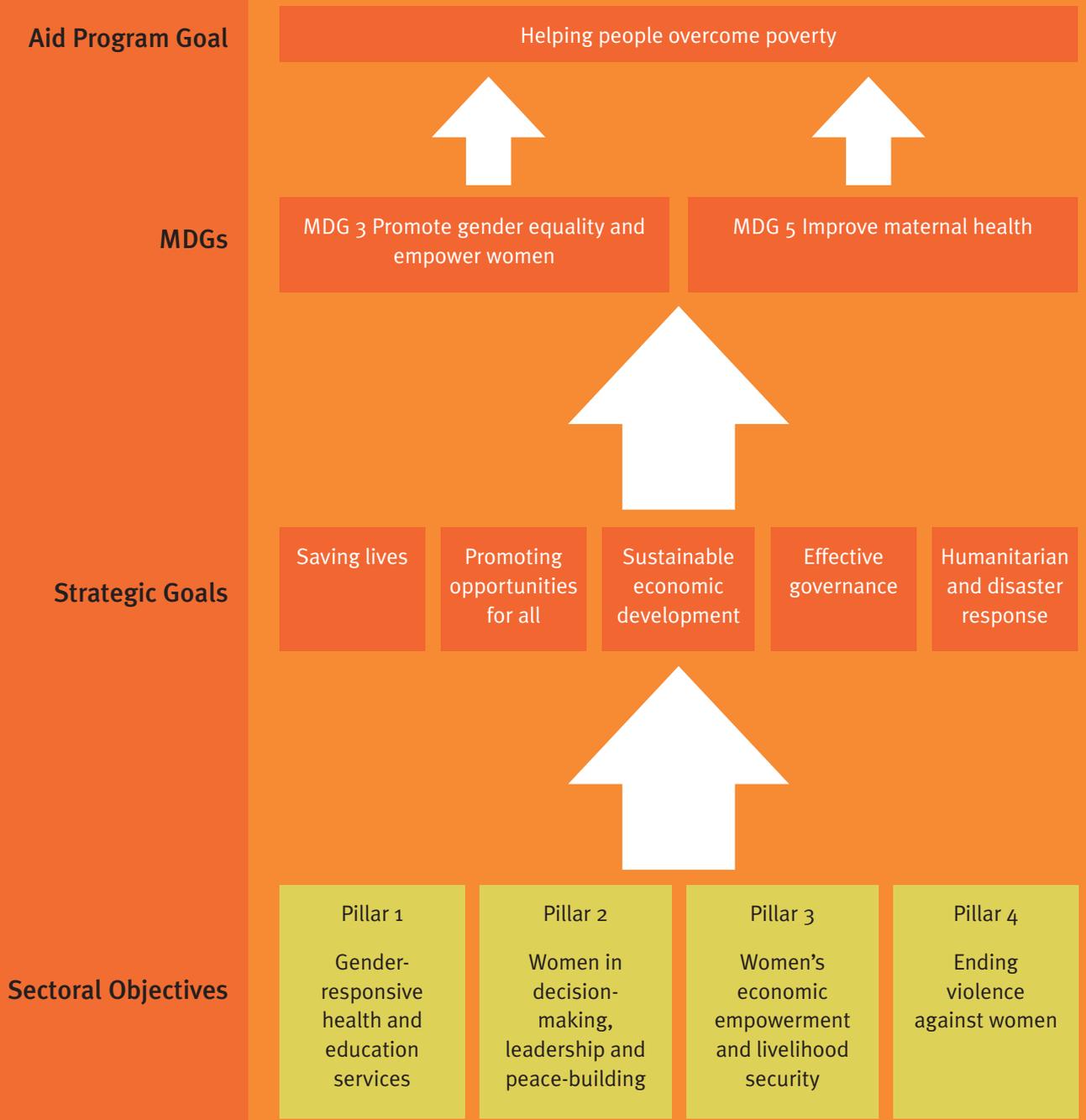
These objectives will be met by focusing the work right across the aid program on removing persistent barriers and constraints to gender equality and women’s empowerment. Results and targets will be used to measure the contribution that each of the strategic goal areas will make to higher level gender equality and women’s empowerment goals. To keep the strategic focus on results, the work will be organised around four thematic pillars aligned to specific aspects of gender equality.

The four pillars are:

1. Advancing equal access to gender-responsive **health and education** services.
2. Increasing women’s voice in **decision-making, leadership, and peace-building**.
3. **Empowering women economically** and improving their livelihood security.
4. **Ending violence against women and girls** at home, in their communities, and in disaster and conflict situations.

Australia will continue to invest significantly in Pillar 1, recognising that equal access to health and education is fundamental for advancing gender equality. Pillars 2 to 4 represent areas where there are persistent challenges and progress toward gender equality has been slow. Investment in these pillars will be targeted, and Australia will strengthen specific efforts to reduce gender inequality. Figure 1 shows how the pillars relate to each of the strategic goals of the aid program.

Figure 1. Gender equality and women’s empowerment across the aid program



Pillar 1: Advancing equal access to gender-responsive health and education services

Health and education are the foundation blocks for gender equality and women's empowerment. In addition to equal access, health and education services need to identify and respond to the different needs of women and girls, men and boys.

In education, significant progress has been made in achieving equal enrolment for girls and boys at all levels of education. Girls' enrolment has made great progress in some middle and high income countries particularly at the secondary level, and in some countries it is boys' enrolment that is lagging. However, in fragile states and conflict-affected countries girls' enrolment still lags seriously behind boys' and a special effort is needed to expand access for girls. Even in countries where national figures show parity, or near parity enrolments, there may be regions, or specific groups of women and girls that lag behind the majority, for example, ethnic minority girls in South East Asia and girls in Indonesia's eastern provinces. In these areas, our education programs will include specific initiatives to reach these groups.

The gender-related priorities in the education sector are:

- > specific focus on girls' education in countries where gender gaps in completion rates are greatest
- > innovating to reach excluded groups of girls and women, for example among the very poor, those with disabilities, and in ethnic minority communities, in countries where gaps for the majority have closed
- > ensuring women have equal access to scholarship opportunities
- > maximising opportunities in education programs to promote gender equality by including women in management, collecting sex-disaggregated data, supporting gender-responsive curriculum development, reducing gender stereotypes in subject choices, undertaking gender analysis of service delivery, constructing separate toilets for girls, and addressing the needs of girls with a disability.

In health, dramatic improvements have been made in life expectancies and decreases in child mortality for women and men, girls and boys, in most regions of the world in the last few decades. In most countries, girls and boys have the same access to vaccinations and health care in infancy and childhood.¹⁵ Progress in reducing maternal mortality, however, has been slow in many countries, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic is contributing to excess female mortality in Africa, particularly in young women.¹⁶ Providing health services to women and children in fragile states and conflict-affected countries, or following disasters, can be especially challenging and needs carefully designed responses. Other aspects of health sector programs that impact on women's empowerment are access to reproductive health services which give women greater control over their own fertility and child-bearing, and the provision of services to help

survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Access to family planning services also has important flow on effects for women's empowerment, enhancing their ability to participate in public life and the economy.

The gender-related priorities in the health sector are:

- > improving maternal and reproductive health services including through programs in countries and regions where women are most at risk, and where appropriate, through targeted support in fragile states, conflict-affected countries, and in disaster situations
- > ensuring that health programs maximise opportunities to promote gender equality by including women in management, collecting sex-disaggregated data, undertaking gender analysis of service delivery, and identifying and addressing issues that disproportionately affect women and girls.



Akhi at school.

Photo: BRAC



Community midwives being trained by the Pakistan National Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) program in Sindh.

Photo: Dr Jai Ram Das / MNCH Sindh

Examples of Australia's approach under this pillar

In 2010, Australia supported BRAC – a large local NGO in Bangladesh – to operate 23,670 primary schools serving 722,065 children and 8,000 pre-primary schools serving 223,864 children. Over 60 per cent of the BRAC students at pre-primary and primary levels are girls and almost 100 per cent of all BRAC teachers are women as are the librarians working in community learning centres and facilitators working in community-based adolescent clubs. This is in contrast to the national norm, where the majority of primary school teachers are male.

Since 2008 in Pakistan, Australia has supported the training of 15,000 health community outreach and facility-based staff in service delivery for mothers and children. This includes training 8,871 midwives under the Pakistan Government's National Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) program. In addition, grants totalling GBP5 million are being provided to civil society organisations and international and national NGOs for research and advocacy on MNCH-related issues such as addressing barriers to access for women and innovative service delivery mechanisms.

Pillar 2: Increasing women's voice in decision-making, leadership and peace-building

Women's participation in decision-making, leadership and peace-building is important as a right in itself. The evidence is growing that when women participate in household decisions it improves their own lives, and when women can influence household decisions, the education of their children and the welfare of the whole family improves. Within communities women's participation in decision making can improve the distribution of resources, and the sustainability of development programs such as water supply such that the whole community benefits. Working together, women can influence policies on gender equality and women's empowerment so other women benefit, and when women are politically active as voters or politicians, policies that improve the welfare of the nation are more likely to be implemented.¹⁷ In peace negotiations, women can make significant contributions by bringing different perspectives and ensuring the needs of women and children are included. This is especially important where constitutions are being written or amended.

Increasing women's participation in decision-making at all these levels challenges basic and long-standing power relationships between women and men, hence to avoid negative impacts men's support is also essential. When access to formal forums is restricted, women can act together outside of the formal system through women's groups and organisations, and they need to form networks and coalitions with men in formal institutions who will support them in order to influence change. Entry points for women in decision-making also exist at the community level, through water and sanitation programs, or other sectoral programs working at the community level that can normalise women's participation in the eyes of both men and women in the community. This can lead to women's participation at higher levels and in more formal systems. Microfinance programs and reproductive health programs, for example, can provide entry points for increasing women's bargaining power at home, especially when the changing relationship between women and men is managed carefully.

Our approach to increasing women's voice in decision-making, leadership and peace-building is therefore to:

- > develop women's leadership abilities in communities, for example, through participation in water supply management committees, school management committees, village health committees and village development committees
- > strengthen women's groups and organisations in civil society, including at sub national level, and help them to build coalitions (including with men) and influence policies and developments
- > build capacities of women to participate in democratic processes as candidates and voters, and to hold governments and service providers to account

- > work with governments and civil society in partner countries to establish an enabling environment for women to participate in democratic processes and administrative decision making
- > support the participation of women in peace-building processes by promoting the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.¹⁸

Examples of Australia’s approach under this pillar

In the Philippines, Mindanao communities have been damaged by decades of complex armed conflict between community groups. Under the initiative ‘Another Mindanao is Possible’, Australia is providing support to the Mindanao Commission on Women to help them to influence public policy and public opinion about peace development from a women’s perspective.

An evaluation of AusAID-funded water supply and sanitation projects in Vanuatu found that although there had been no specific support to build capacity of women leaders, women’s representation had been a requirement in the water management committees, and this had led to their greater participation in decision-making in other forums.

The Mindanao Commission on Women provides women with opportunities to participate in political decision making in their communities.

Photo: Mindanao Commission on Women



Pillar 3: Empowering women economically and improving their livelihood security

Women now make up more than 40 per cent of the global labour force and 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force.¹⁹ If this valuable resource, as well as the skills women offer, is not used effectively it places a heavy cost burden on a national economy. Most women in the workforce in developing countries are engaged in agriculture and they produce between 60 per cent and 80 per cent of food crops in these countries.²⁰ The Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that if women farmers had the same access to resources as men, agricultural output in developing countries would increase by between 2.5 and four per cent.²¹ With food insecurity a major global issue, the rationale for investing in women farmers is compelling.

The informal economy remains a flexible and important source of economic opportunity for women. In some developing countries this sector contributes more than half of the gross domestic product and if women had the same access to credit, markets and technology as men, the returns to women from this sector would significantly increase. As countries develop, their formal sector becomes more important. Removing the barriers for women to enter this safely and fairly as employers as well as employees can help to make countries more competitive and bring significant benefits for women and their families. Barriers and constraints to women's participation in the economy can come through policies and laws dealing with a range of issues such as land ownership or inheritance rights that limit women's access to the same assets, resources and opportunities as men.

At the household level women are more likely to spend money on improving their family's welfare. Women's individual control over their own income has also been shown to improve their ability to escape domestic violence. Differences in allocating tasks in the home and the burden of care are significant constraints to woman's full participation in the economy. All forms of income are vulnerable to external shocks – either financial, or due to health emergencies, crop destruction, climate change, or human generated or natural disasters – and social protection policies need to respond to the different kinds of vulnerabilities faced by, and impacting on, women and men.

Our approach for improving women's economic empowerment and livelihood security is to:

- > open employment opportunities for women outside of the agriculture sector, in both the formal and informal sectors, by working with entrepreneurs – especially women entrepreneurs – and the public and private sector, and by supporting business development
- > improve access to financial services (savings, credit, insurance and financial literacy) by helping providers expand their coverage and

develop new financial instruments that respond to women's needs, as well as by improving financial literacy

- > work with the government, private sector, and research institutions to improve women's agricultural productivity through access to productive resources, machinery, inputs, markets, and new technology
- > provide an enabling environment for women to compete equally with men through improved policies and access to training, rural roads, transportation, electricity, information and digital technology
- > look for innovative solutions to provision of care for children, the elderly, and infirm, including through expansion of pre-primary education
- > support social protection measures that specifically meet the needs of women and children, including those that protect women in the informal sector and other vulnerable occupations.



Local villagers clearing vegetation from beside the roads as part of a Community Sector Program in Solomon Islands

Photo: Rob Maccoll / AusAID

Examples of Australia's approach under this pillar

In 2011, Australia began a new partnership with Women's World Banking (WWB), providing AUD2.2 million core funding over three years to 2013. WWB is an example of innovative cooperation between governments, donors and the private sector around the world to improve poor women's access to financial services, in support of the goals of gender equality and financial inclusion. WWB designs financial products and services including savings for girls, rural finance, micro-health insurance, remittances and financial education to reach poor women through microfinance institutions around the world. WWB also provides institution-strengthening services to support microfinance institutions, including leadership development, gender diversity initiatives, and financial training and support. The WWB network includes more than 39 institutions worldwide who are working with 26 million clients, 80 per cent of which are women. They have disbursed over USD7 billion in loans and currently hold USD3.5 billion in savings.

Solomon Islands Road Program, through the Community Sector Program, upgraded and maintained roads on Malaita Island. The program can demonstrate that the improvement in road transport in Malaita has led to significant improvements for women in accessing markets and essential services such as schools and government extension services. The program also made a point of employing women wherever possible – 39 women and 128 men were employed as contractors and five of the 17 contracts awarded for road maintenance had women as their principals. In addition, 490 women out of the 730 people employed to maintain roads, were women.

Pillar 4: Ending violence against women and girls at home, in their communities and in disaster and conflict situations

Globally, at least one in three women is beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime.²² Violence against women is a significant human rights violation; it devastates lives, fractures communities, and undermines good development. Violence against women takes many forms and occurs in many places – domestic violence in the home, sexual abuse of girls in schools, sexual harassment at work, rape by husbands or strangers, in refugee camps or as a tactic of war. An estimated 150 million girls under 18 suffered some form of sexual violence in 2002 alone.²³ It is estimated that between 700,000 and four million women are trafficked across international borders annually. Adding domestic trafficking would bring the total higher, to perhaps four million persons per year.²⁴

At its heart, violence against women, and the fear of violence, is a result of unequal power distribution between women and men, exacerbated by lack of functioning laws, policies, and institutions in place to deal with perpetrators of violence and provide protection and services to survivors. Responses need to include initiatives to address the underlying causes of violence against women and girls by increasing women's bargaining power and reducing dependence on men through access to economic opportunity, and ensuring women have a voice in decision-making as described in the previous pillars. Specific action is also needed to increase global attention to the issue and build momentum for the changes needed to policies and institutional approaches at the country level. These are long term solutions, however, and in the meantime important services and support for survivors is needed. Many of these services are currently provided by civil society groups, who also play an important role in building internal momentum for change within partner countries.

Women and girls are especially vulnerable to violence in conflict and disaster situations. Peace-keeping forces and emergency response teams have a responsibility to ensure that women and girls are safe from violence in these situations.

Our approach to ending violence against women and girls is to:

- > work with partner governments to help develop and implement the necessary laws and policies for ending violence against women, including increased access by women to law and justice systems
- > expand and improve the quality of service provision (counselling, crisis accommodation and legal support) provided by civil society for women who have been subjected to violence
- > improve health service responses so they can identify, respond and give referrals to women who have been subjected to violence

- > work with men and boys, community organisations and leaders to prevent violence against women and help change community attitudes to violence, including through work in the education sector
- > work with partners in security sector and emergency response teams, and with partner governments to address the specific vulnerabilities experienced by women and girls living in conflict and fragile states, as well as in regions experiencing a humanitarian disaster
- > contribute to international debate on ending violence against women, including through support for UN Women, and other UN agencies with a global mandate, supporting the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960, and by improving understanding of the prevalence and impact of violence against women through regional and national research.



In the Port Vila vegetable markets, a young girl reads a booklet on domestic violence and her rights.

Photo: Rob Maccoll / AusAID

Examples of Australia's approach under this pillar

Research by the Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) in 2008, found that violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor was severe, pervasive and constrained development. In response to the ODE report, Australia is providing practical support to partners in government and civil society in Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, East Timor, and Solomon Islands to deliver coordinated and comprehensive responses for example, counselling services and provision of shelters, and legal reforms. Australia also contributes to global and regional trust funds to support groups and organisations working to end violence against women, including in the Pacific.

Australia has been supporting the work of the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre which has been leading the way in the Pacific on engaging men and boys in ending violence against women. In 2002, the Centre began conducting training courses for male advocates. The training is delivered to local leaders such as police and traditional leaders as well as training community men and boys, after training for women activists and advocates has taken place. This method of working with men by building a foundation first with women around human rights is an innovative approach to addressing violence against women. Because of its success the training has now spread throughout the region.

Where Australia will work



Nearly half of the overall aid program is invested in activities that have either a primary or secondary objective of promoting gender equality and empowering women. This investment is mostly in health, education, and governance programs and also in rural development and other sectors. The level of investment in gender equality and women's empowerment in each country will depend on the sectors that Australia supports in each country, and also on the way we chose to deliver aid and the partners with whom we work.

Australia will concentrate effort in areas where we can make a difference and where our resources can most effectively and efficiently be deployed.

The Australian Government will continue to invest strongly in gender equality across the aid program. This investment will include a more strategic and visible focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women, and a more targeted investment in the areas of violence against women, women's economic empowerment and women's leadership. We expect the highest levels of expenditure in countries with the most severe gender gaps and constraints, including fragile states and conflict-affected countries, and especially where we are supporting health and education services. We also expect the amounts allocated to activities with primary, as opposed to secondary, objectives to increase as country programs take a more targeted approach to improve the impact and effectiveness of their contribution to promoting gender equality.

Outcomes for gender equality and women's empowerment



As a key cross-cutting objective of the aid program the work on gender equality takes place at a number of levels. At the overall aid program level, it is important that the contribution Australia has made to higher level gender equality and women's empowerment goals can be articulated. Figure 1 (page 8) illustrates how the pillars contribute to specific outcomes in each of the strategic goal areas of the program, and how these in turn contribute to higher level goals. Results will be achieved through the implementation of sectoral programs, for example in health, education, food security, and governance. At the country level, the country programs will identify where they can strategically have best measurable impact given the gender issues in the country, and the sectoral composition of the country program. The indicators in these areas will be articulated so that results and progress can be measured. At the initiative level, each initiative needs to take steps to ensure that benefits are equally shared and potential negative impacts on men and women are identified and mitigated. Table 1 below indicates the outcomes expected at each level. Appendix A provides indicative gender equality and women's empowerment indicators that will be used to monitor and evaluate progress under the four pillars.

Table 1: Expected outcomes at each level of monitoring

Level of Investigation	Outcomes
Aid program level	Australia has contributed to saving lives of poor women
	Australia has contributed to empowering women in education, leadership and the economy
Country program level	Country program responds strategically to addressing the priority gender issues in the country
	Country program contributes to improving national indicators for gender equality and women's empowerment
Initiative level	Design of initiatives effectively responds to gender issues, ensures women and men benefit from the initiative, and mitigates negative impacts on women
	Gender-responsive interventions in initiatives and activities are implemented well and lead to outcomes

Endnotes

- 1 Nearly half of total aid program expenditure is on activities with primary or secondary objectives of promoting gender equality and/or empowering women, Source: AusAID unpublished data 2010.
- 2 United Nations Statistics Division (2010), *The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics*, Chapter 3 – Education, online: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/wwEduc2010.htm>.
- 3 World Bank (2011), *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development*, World Bank, Washington, p.77.
- 4 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2011), *The State of the World's Midwifery 2011*, p.vii online: http://www.unfpa.org/sowmy/resources/docs/main_report/en_SOWMR_Intro.pdf.
- 5 UN Women, *Empowering Women Worldwide*, 2011, online: <http://www.unwomen.org/2011/04/empowering-women-worldwide/>.
- 6 United Nations (2011), *Millennium Development Goal Report MDG Report 2011*, United Nations, New York, p.23.
- 7 Worldwatch Institute (2011), *Female Farmers Overcome Barriers to Feed Africa*, online: <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/6431>.
- 8 Sustainable Development Department (SD), Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), *Women and sustainable food security*, online: <http://www.fao.org/sd/fsdirect/fbdirect/FSP001.htm>.
- 9 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) *Gender Equality: Ending Widespread Violence Against Women*, online: <http://unfpa.org/gender/violence.htm>.
- 10 World Bank (2011), *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development*, World Bank, Washington, p.xxi.
- 11 These commitments include the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its optional protocol, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960.
- 12 International Labour Organization and Asian Development Bank (2011), *Women and labour markets in Asia: rebalancing towards gender equality in labour markets in Asia*, Asian Development Bank, Bangkok, p.1.

Cover image: Female patients wait to be seen by the Australian Medical Task Force in Kot Addu, Pakistan. Photo: Heather Pillans/AusAID

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