



Australian Government  
AusAID

# Gender equality

ANNUAL THEMATIC PERFORMANCE REPORT 2006–07

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## Preface

Annual thematic performance reports are among the major new performance assessment mechanisms introduced by AusAID.

Starting in 2007, AusAID will produce an *Annual review of development effectiveness*, informed by annual program performance updates for country and regional programs, and for key sectors and themes.

The purpose of the annual thematic performance reports is to describe progress against AusAID's policy objectives (including regional progress on the Millennium Development Goals), to identify current challenges in aid delivery and to highlight lessons to inform future investments.

The annual thematic performance reports aim to highlight key issues in aid delivery, focusing on the past 12–18 months, rather than to present a comprehensive analysis of all activities.

Four annual thematic performance reports were produced for 2006–07: for health, education, gender equality and economic governance. As this year was a pilot, these four reports are all structured slightly differently.

The four reports were prepared by the relevant thematic group within AusAID, under the leadership of the relevant adviser for that thematic area. The reports were all peer reviewed by a combination of internal and external experts

The purpose of the *Gender equality annual thematic performance report* is to record progress against the Australian Government's commitment to gender equality and to identify cross-regional lessons and issues. In this first year, the focus of the report is on AusAID activities since April 2006.

Gender equality results depend on each program identifying and working towards gender equality objectives. The *Gender equality annual thematic performance report* provides a baseline evaluation of progress in the integration of gender equality into programs. This will enable more robust and comprehensive discussion of gender equality results in coming years.

## Summary

Across the Asia–Pacific region there is clear progress towards equality between men and women. Many of the region’s people have moved out of poverty over recent decades. Women and girls have better access to education and health services. Legal frameworks to promote women’s access to the law are slowly improving.

There has been progress against many development indicators for women in the region, but women have yet to achieve equal opportunity or outcomes with men. There is much left to do. Too many indicators remain stubbornly fixed. There are indications that gaps may be opening in economic outcomes between some groups of women and men. However, addressing inequality between men and women is the work of generations.

There are positive signs that gender equality is being taken more seriously in development work and that greater attention is being given to ensuring that development equally benefits women and men. The World Bank has demonstrated that initiatives that take gender equality into account more often achieve their objectives. This was supported by an internal AusAID review.

It is now widely accepted that gender equality is essential to effective development. There is growing awareness and consensus about the steps that need to be taken to integrate gender equality into development programs and to support progress towards gender equality in partner countries.

The Australian aid program is now in a strong position to ensure that equality is taken seriously as an institutional objective, with a new policy framework, effective processes and increased resources. Gender issues are increasingly being addressed in program designs, particularly through better analysis, and programs are doing better at measuring their contributions to gender equality. However, this needs continued attention.

There have been some good gender equality results from the Australian development program. The renewed attention to gender equality will ensure results are consistent, sustainable and deliberate, but this will take some time. At present, while gender equality results can be identified across the program, they have usually been isolated and programs often miss opportunities to support lasting progress towards equality.

Measuring results also remains a challenge. Given the complexity of gender relations, progress towards equality is inevitably very difficult to measure, particularly over the short term. More attention to monitoring and reporting results consistently is needed.

In meeting these challenges, substantial, strategic and measurable results will accelerate in coming years.

Successful work on gender equality will mean the program is able to support each partner country flexibly, deliberately and consistently to achieve its own well-developed commitments to gender equality.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 GENDER EQUALITY IN DEVELOPMENT

While gender equality varies depending on differing social, economic and cultural settings, there are common elements to aspirations for equality around the world. For example, women everywhere should expect to have their opinions heard and their interests addressed in decisions; they should expect equality of economic opportunity with men and the removal of barriers to equitable outcomes; they should expect equal protection under the law; and they should expect gender-based violence to be unacceptable.<sup>1</sup>

Aid programs alone cannot deliver progress: partner country ownership is crucial. The Australian aid program nevertheless has a powerful role in supporting and influencing progress, building constituencies for change and helping to keep gender equality on national agendas, particularly in the smaller countries of our region.

There is an emerging consensus about what donors need to do to support progress towards equality in development programs. Key are donor agency capacity, accountability and leadership to ensure a sound understanding of context, the consistent use of gender analysis and adequate monitoring of gender equality results.<sup>2</sup>

In a recent review<sup>3</sup>, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that:

... bridging the gap between policy and implementation continues to be an uphill climb. Despite progress, no agency fully matches its own political rhetoric and objectives on gender equality with the required human and financial resources or accountability measures to ensure progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

The World Bank recently noted that 'greater gender equality helps to create a fair society, raises economic productivity, and helps advance other development goals'.<sup>4</sup> At the midpoint of the Millennium Development Goals, it is clear that greater gender equality is related to lower levels of poverty and higher levels of economic growth.

1 These and other aspirations have been expressed in international documents, for example the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Platform for Action that emerged from the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. This platform has been localised in the Pacific in the Pacific Platform for Action.

2 OECD, *Gender equality and aid delivery: What has changed in development co-operation agencies since 1999?*, Paris, 2007.

3 OECD, *Gender equality and aid delivery*, p. 7.

4 World Bank, *Global monitoring report 2007 – Millennium Development Goals: Confronting the challenges of gender equality and fragile states*, Washington, 2007, p. 3.

In addition, equality maximises aid effectiveness, and a rigorous effectiveness agenda can give equality more systematic attention. Understanding this link helps aid programs to reduce poverty.<sup>5</sup>

Australia is now well placed to address these concerns and promote gender equality in development. Gender equality is now an overarching principle of the aid program.<sup>6</sup> This renewed focus is an opportunity to promote both gender equality results and development effectiveness.

## 1.2 THE CHALLENGES OF MEASURING GENDER EQUALITY RESULTS

Inequality is the product of a complex web of forces and cannot be addressed by isolated interventions. There is real debate about what equality between men and women should look like across regions and within each nation. In addition, equality is a long-term goal that must be seen as the work of generations. The complexity and long horizons make the identification and assessment of results inherently challenging, particularly over the short term.

Compounding this are problems in obtaining reliable data across the developing world. Table A1 in Appendix A displays the dearth of internationally comparable data available in the Asia–Pacific region. Reliable gender-sensitive and sex-disaggregated information is largely unavailable in the Pacific. This makes it particularly difficult to monitor and evaluate the effects of development assistance on equality between men and women.

Measuring gender equality results within development programs is also challenging because gender equality is not a discrete sector. As an overarching principle, it is intended that equality be integrated into and measured within programs and that results emerge from each program. The Australian aid program has a way to go before this goal is consistently realised (institutional arrangements are discussed in Section 3 of this report).

Some measures of equality are captured in internationally accepted indicators but some significant aspects of equality are not measured adequately or at all. In some areas better attention to collection of evidence will assist, but tracking gender equality will also rely on qualitative and anecdotal information.

This annual thematic performance report considers the progress of the development program since April 2006 in meeting commitments to gender equality and identifies what more needs to be done. It considers results in specific initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and in mainstream initiatives.

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5 World Bank, *Global monitoring report 2007*, pp. 105–107. See also UNESCAP, *Economic and social survey of Asia and the Pacific 2007: Surging ahead in uncertain times*, Bangkok, 2007, p. viii.

6 *Australian aid: promoting growth and stability – A white paper on the Australian Government's overseas aid program*, AusAID, Canberra, 2006. [www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pubout.cfm?id=6184\\_6346\\_7334\\_4045\\_8043](http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pubout.cfm?id=6184_6346_7334_4045_8043)



The report draws primarily on four detailed country program assessments of progress on gender equality conducted by AusAID's gender equality thematic group between December 2006 and May 2007, the seven annual program performance updates, initiative-level quality reports, and a detailed review of several initiatives.

International research, a 2005 OECD peer review of Australia's aid program and an internal rapid review of gender equality in the aid program in 2005 supported the discussion.

The following discussion is an overview of progress towards gender equality in the region, considered against Australia's international aid program policy objectives.

## 2 The state of gender equality in the Asia–Pacific

There has been some remarkable progress towards equality between men and women over the past decade around the world, particularly in access to education and some other social services. Some indicators, such as maternal mortality ratios, have improved in some regions or nations, but there has been a lack of response in others. Results are much more disappointing for women’s leadership aspirations, and for ensuring effective responses to the unacceptable levels of violence suffered by women in the Asia–Pacific region.<sup>7</sup>

While absolute numbers of women and men living in poverty in the Asia–Pacific region have plummeted, a stubborn gap remains between men’s and women’s economic opportunities and outcomes.<sup>8</sup>

### 2.1 ACCELERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH

The World Economic Forum estimates that around the world only a little over 50 per cent of the gender gap in economic participation and opportunity has been closed.<sup>9</sup> In the Pacific women work hard and contribute significantly to economic growth but benefit least from the results.<sup>10</sup> Women tend to cluster in informal and unpaid work rather than in the formal economy, which is generally better paid and protected (Figure 1).

However, even in the formal sector, women are underpaid compared to men (Figure 2). The gender income gap also persists throughout Asia, although there are significant regional variations. The available evidence also suggests that women in both Asia and the Pacific are disadvantaged in access to property, land and credit.

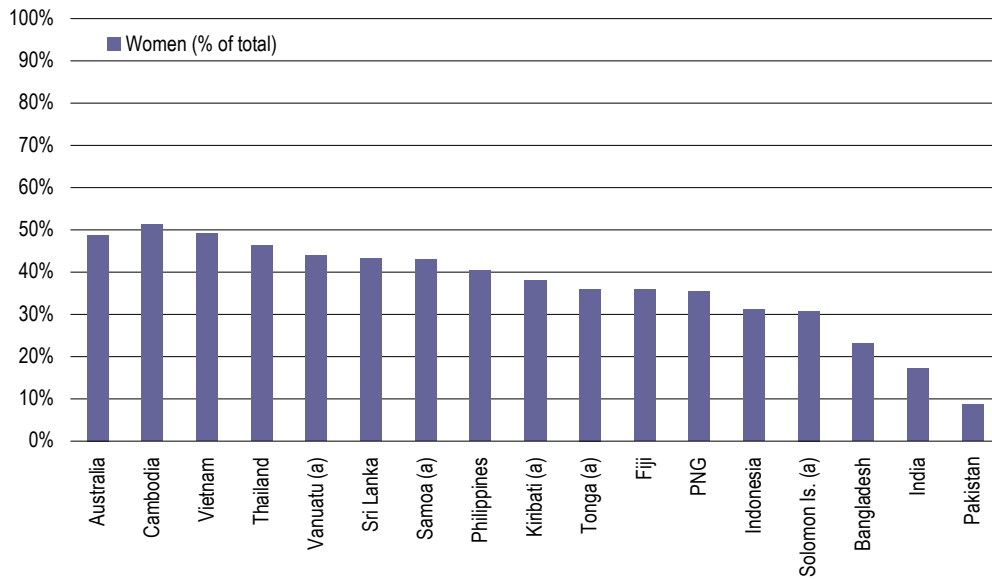
7 See, for example, Ricardo Hausmann, Laura D Tyson and Saadia Zahidi, *The global gender gap report 2006*, World Economic Forum, Geneva, 2006; World Bank, *Global monitoring report 2007 – Millennium Development Goals: confronting the challenges of gender equality and fragile states*, Washington, 2007.

8 See for example, World Bank, *Global monitoring report 2007*.

9 Hausmann, Tyson and Zahidi, *The global gender gap report 2006*, p. 12.

10 AusAID, *Pacific 2020*, Canberra, 2006, pp. 90–1. See Figure 1.

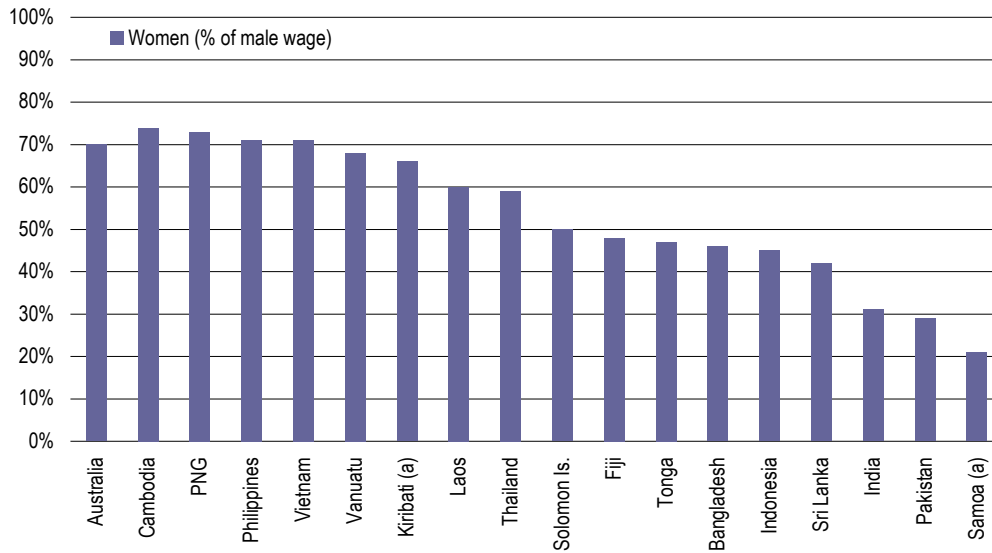
Figure 1 Share of women in wage employment (non-agricultural sectors)



a ADB, *Key indicators 2006 – measuring policy effectiveness in health and education, Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women*, [www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key\\_Indicators/2006/pdf/MDG03.pdf](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key_Indicators/2006/pdf/MDG03.pdf)

Source: OECD, 2006 data OECD.stat, Gender, Institutions and Development Data Base, [http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF\\_INDICATORS](http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF_INDICATORS)

Figure 2 Estimated percentage of female to male wage (non-agricultural sectors)



a 2002 data, ADB, *Key indicators 2006 – measuring policy effectiveness in health and education*, [www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key\\_Indicators/2006/default.asp](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key_Indicators/2006/default.asp), accessed 27 July 2007

Source: UNDP, 2006 data, *Human development report 2006 – beyond scarcity: power, poverty and the global water crisis*, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr06-complete.pdf> (Table 25, p. 367).

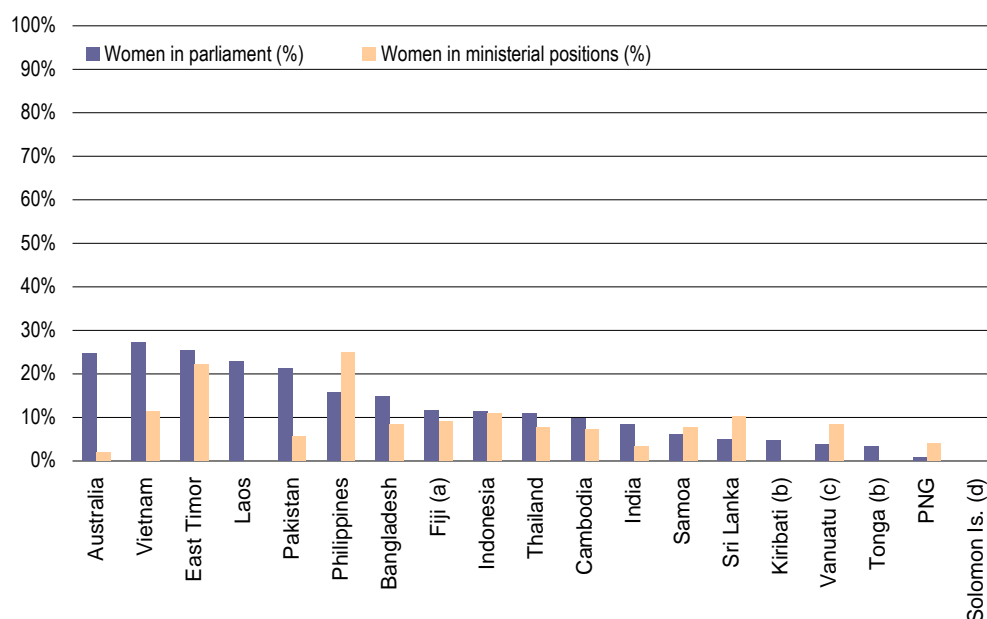
## 2.2 FOSTERING FUNCTIONING AND EFFECTIVE STATES

Women are significantly under-represented in national parliaments, particularly in the Pacific (see Figure 3).<sup>11</sup>

While the level of women's political representation at the national level in Asia sits at nearly 17 per cent, about the international average, the average representation of women in national parliaments in Pacific island states (excluding French territories, Australia and New Zealand) was only 3.5 per cent in 2006.<sup>12</sup> Five of the 10 countries in the world with no female representation are in the Pacific.

Whether or not women sit in their national parliaments, they have a right to adequate representation as citizens. A key test of the ability of legislatures to deal with women's particular priorities and interests is their response to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. It is a serious governance and human rights concern that few nations in our region, and particularly in the Pacific, adequately address gender-based violence.<sup>13</sup>

Figure 3 Women in parliament and women in ministerial positions (% of total)



a Data are pre-coup. UN, Seats held by women in national parliament, percentage. 2006, Millennium Development Goals indicators, <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/SeriesDetail.aspx?srId=557#f2> b Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, *A woman's place is in the House – the House of Parliament*, Report 2, The impact of electoral systems on women's representation in Pacific parliaments, 2006, [www.forumsec.org/UserFiles/File/REPORT\\_2\\_A\\_Woman\\_s\\_Place\\_is\\_in\\_the\\_House\\_-\\_the\\_House\\_of\\_Parliament-5.pdf](http://www.forumsec.org/UserFiles/File/REPORT_2_A_Woman_s_Place_is_in_the_House_-_the_House_of_Parliament-5.pdf) c UNDP, 2004 data, *Human development report 2006 – Beyond scarcity: Power, poverty and the global water crisis*, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr06-complete.pdf>. d International Parliamentary Union, [www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmnm05\\_en.pdf](http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmnm05_en.pdf).

Source: OECD, 2006 data, OECD.stat, Gender, Institutions and Development Data Base, [http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF\\_INDICATORS](http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF_INDICATORS).

11 Inter-Parliamentary Union data, available from [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm) (accessed 31 October 2007). See Hausmann, Tyson and Zahidi, *The global gender gap report 2006*, p. 12. See also Figure A2.3, Appendix 2.

12 Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, *A woman's place is in the House – the House of Parliament*, Suva, 2006, p. xiv. See also Figure 3.

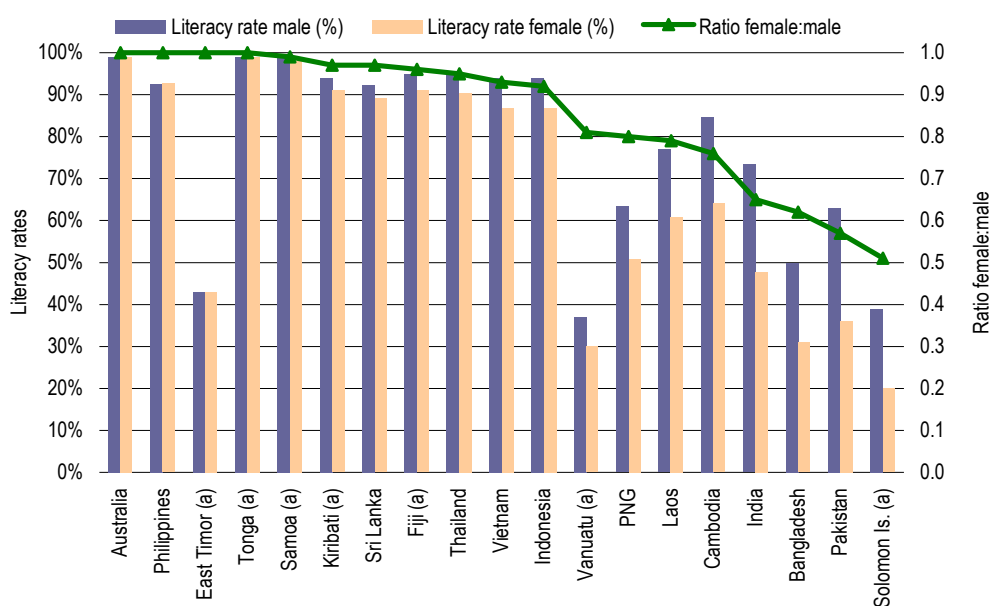
13 The OECD database has inadequate data for the region, but a number of Pacific nations particularly lack an adequate legal framework to address gender-based violence. OECD, 2006 data OECD.stat, Gender, Institutions and Development Data Base, [http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF\\_INDICATORS](http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF_INDICATORS)

## 2.3 INVESTING IN PEOPLE

There has been considerable progress in closing the gap between boys' and girls' access to primary education, with many Asia-Pacific countries close to parity in enrolments. South Asia is a notable exception.<sup>14</sup> There is also disturbing evidence that the gender gap in primary school enrolments is widening in PNG, where the ratio of girls to boys enrolled in primary school in 1999 was 0.92, while in 2004 it was 0.89.<sup>15</sup> There remain sizeable discrepancies in the region in the gender balance, training and promotion of teachers across levels of schooling and seniority.<sup>16</sup>

Figure 4 shows the percentage of women and men in the Asia-Pacific region aged 15 and older who can, with understanding, both read and write a short, simple statement related to their everyday life. It shows the gender gap for adult literacy is widest for Solomon Islands, Cambodia, Laos, PNG and Vanuatu (the data are not disaggregated by age – it is probable that literacy rates will vary considerably between older and younger generations).

Figure 4 Adult literacy



a 2000–2004 data, ADB, *Key indicators 2006 – Measuring policy effectiveness in health and education*, Table 2: Education indicators [www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key\\_Indicators/2006/pdf/rt02.pdf](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key_Indicators/2006/pdf/rt02.pdf).

Source: OECD, 2006 data OECD.stat, Gender, Institutions and Development Data Base, [http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF\\_INDICATORS](http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF_INDICATORS).

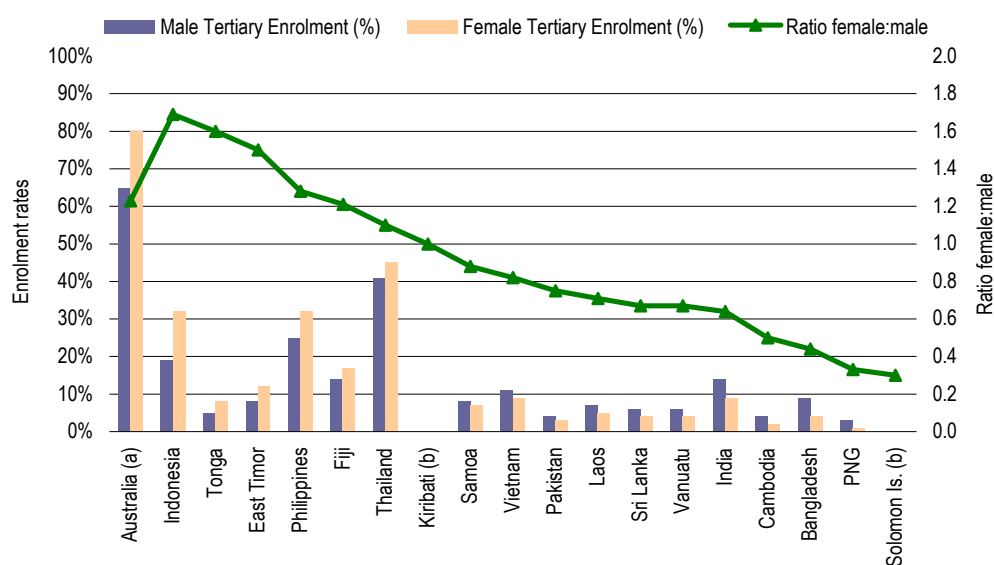
14 World Bank *Global Monitoring Report 2007*, pp. 113–14. There are significant sub-national variations in some countries.

15 UNESCO, *Strong foundations: Early childhood care and education – Education for All global monitoring report 2007*, Paris 2006, p. 256, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001477/147794E.pdf>.

16 UNESCO *Strong foundations*, p. 61, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001477/147794E.pdf>.

Figure 5 shows the percentages of female and male students enrolled in tertiary education. While some countries report higher female than male enrolment rates, this may be due to more males undertaking technical training following secondary education. Greater attention is also required to emerging issues of men's and boys' education.

Figure 5 Gross tertiary enrolment rates



a UNDP, 2004 data, *Human development report 2006 – Beyond scarcity: Power, poverty and the global water crisis*, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr06-complete.pdf>. b Male/female enrolment rates not available. Enrolment ratios from *Pacific Island regional millennium development report 2004*, Statistical appendix, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2006, [http://www.spc.int/mdgs/MDG\\_PDF/Appendix.pdf](http://www.spc.int/mdgs/MDG_PDF/Appendix.pdf) (accessed 27 July 2007).

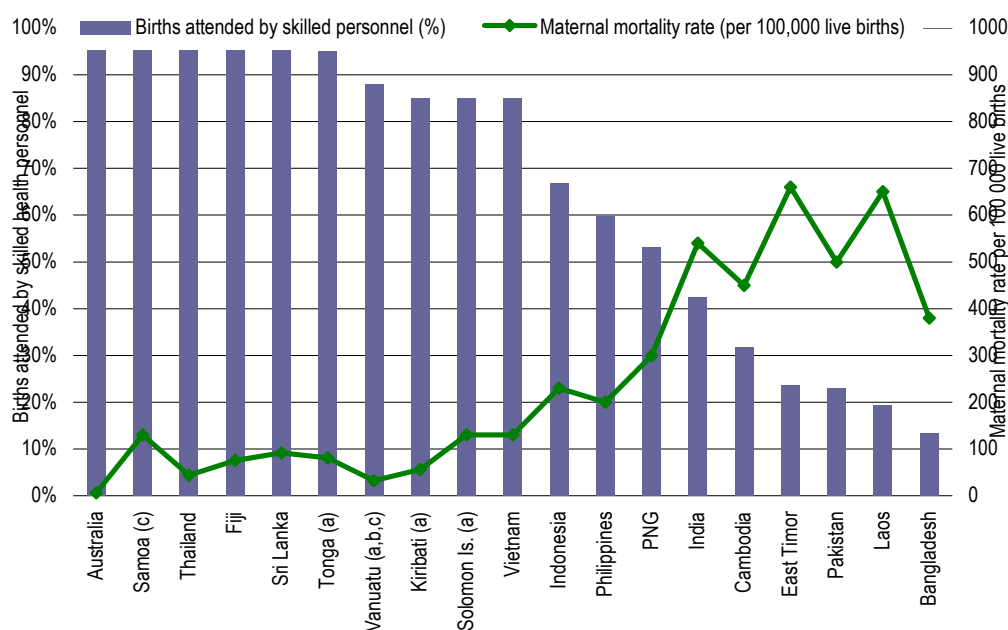
Source: ADB, *Key indicators 2006 – Measuring policy effectiveness in health and education*, Table 2: Education indicators [http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key\\_Indicators/2006/pdf/rt02.pdf](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key_Indicators/2006/pdf/rt02.pdf)

It is much more difficult to measure gender equality in the quality of education, in the standard of curriculum and teaching materials, and in the gender norms that are imparted in education, but it is in those areas that the challenges lie for gender equality in the sector.

Gender inequalities can exacerbate poor health outcomes for men and women. Men and women have different health problems, different access to health services and can experience different health outcomes. For example, maternal mortality ratios are a key indicator of the capacity of a health system, but also reflect levels of inequality within a society. While maternal mortality ratios have improved in some regions or nations, there has been a lack of response in others (see Figure 6) and achievement of Millennium Development Goal 5 (to reduce maternal mortality rate by three quarters) is off track.<sup>17</sup>

17 United Nations Statistics Division, *Millennium Development Goals Indicators*, Series name: Maternal mortality ratio per 100 000 live births <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/SeriesDetail.aspx?srid=553&crd=>

Figure 6 Births attended by skilled health personnel\* and maternal mortality rate#



\* The percentage of deliveries attended by trained personnel (including doctors, nurses and midwives).

# The annual number of female deaths from pregnancy-related causes per 100 000 live births. (adjusted to account for under-reporting, misclassification of maternal deaths, and estimates for countries with no data).

a ADB, *Key indicators 2006 – Measuring policy effectiveness in health and education*, Table 5: Mortality and reproductive health [www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key\\_Indicators/2006/pdf/ri05.pdf](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key_Indicators/2006/pdf/ri05.pdf). b UNDP, 2004 data, *Human development report 2006 – Beyond scarcity: Power, poverty and the global water crisis*, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr06-complete.pdf>. c There are significant variations and some data may vary in rigour.

Source: OECD, 2006 data OECD.stat, Gender, Institutions and Development Data Base, [http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF\\_INDICATORS](http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?DatasetCode=REF_INDICATORS)

The differences in men’s and women’s lives can also affect the rates of incidence, treatment and mortality for many diseases, including malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, all of which have significant gender variations within our region.<sup>18</sup>

## 2.4 PROMOTING REGIONAL STABILITY AND COOPERATION

A number of organisations are working regionally on gender equality, in particular the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). These agencies do some excellent work, but there are concerns that too often gender equality is not discussed at high-level meetings or included in outcomes statements.

<sup>18</sup> See Mitchell G Weiss, 'Gender and tuberculosis: open questions and emerging answers' and Lenore Manderson 'Rapporteur's report: Equity' presented at Global Forum for Health Research, September 2005, Mumbai; see also WHO RBM online database, [www.who.int/globalatlas/dataQuery/default.asp](http://www.who.int/globalatlas/dataQuery/default.asp). More work is needed to identify causes for this discrepancy, but it appears that diagnostic delays are more common for women than men. On HIV, see Chad Hughes, 'Thinking outside the boxes: Preventing sexual transmission of HIV in the Asia Pacific region', presentation at Centre for International Health Burnet Institute, 6 December 2005.

People trafficking is a considerable problem in Asia, and it may be more significant in the Pacific than is generally recognised. Trafficking affects women particularly, because of the profits to be derived from sexual exploitation, but is also a concern for poor men and boys.<sup>19</sup> The increase in labour migration in the region, while providing a valuable economic contribution, leaves many migrants vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and trafficking; there are many gender differences in vulnerability.

The region has also seen an increase in conflict, including most recently in Fiji and Tonga. Conflict affects men and women in different but perhaps equally adverse ways. Women are generally closely engaged in conflict resolution<sup>20</sup> but their contribution is often overlooked and they are inadequately included in peace building, despite the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

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<sup>19</sup> The United States Department of State estimates that 80 per cent of those trafficked cross international borders are women and girls: Department of State, *Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000: Trafficking in persons report 2007*, Washington, 2007, p. 8. [www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/](http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/)

<sup>20</sup> For example, in Mindanao, Philippines; Bougainville, Papua New Guinea; Solomon Islands; and Fiji.



## 3 Progress against Australia's policy objectives

### 3.1 THE POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR CONSIDERING RESULTS

Gender equality has been on the international development agenda for over 30 years<sup>21</sup>, but the World Bank has pointed out that progress towards gender equality lags despite strong donor policy commitments.<sup>22</sup>

The Australian aid program was guided over the past decade by the 1997 policy, *Gender and development: Australia's aid commitment*. That policy required that gender, and the needs, priorities and interests of women as well as men be considered across the whole program. The report of the OECD Development Effectiveness Committee peer review of Australia's aid program in 2005 suggested that the program needed a more visible and institutional response to gender equality and increased capacity, guidance and accountability, including stronger monitoring, evaluation and review processes.<sup>23</sup>

There is now growing consensus on the steps that need to be taken to promote gender equality in development work. Australia has progressed strongly in each of these areas.

- > The elevation of gender equality to an overarching principle of the aid program demonstrates and secures commitment and accountability from senior and middle management.
- > Australia's gender policy complements overall institutional policy objectives.
- > The performance assessment framework for annual program performance updates and the Quality Reporting Tool both integrate gender equality reporting and ensure accountability.
- > Program managers and implementers are receiving technical support to integrate gender equality into initiatives and strategies and to measure results. AusAID gender expertise has increased from one officer before March 2006 to six officers including an adviser and a director in July 2007, and is working to strengthen internal and external networks, which are essential for promoting gender equality institutionally.
- > A comprehensive training program is being developed to build program staff capacity.

21 Since the first World Conference on Women (Mexico, 1975), which defined a World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly; 185 countries are party to the convention.

22 World Bank, *Global monitoring report 2007 – Millennium Development Goals: Confronting the challenges of gender equality and fragile states*, Washington, 2007, p. 12.

23 OECD, *Development Assistance Committee peer review: Australia 2005*, Paris, 2005, pp. 46–48, [http://www.oecd.org/document/33/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_33721\\_34227425\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/33/0,3343,en_2649_33721_34227425_1_1_1_1,00.html)

- > The AusAID Office of Development Effectiveness evaluation of violence against women will provide a strategic framework to mount and sustain a vigorous, multifaceted response in that area.

In particular, a new policy was released in March 2007, reflecting the elevation of gender equality to an overarching principle of the aid program.

The new policy established a performance framework for gender equality, with policy outcomes designed to match the four themes to demonstrate graphically that equality is relevant across the strategic framework of the aid program.

Identified outcomes are:

- > improved economic status of women
- > equal participation of women in leadership and decision making at all levels, including in fragile states and conflict situations
- > improved and equitable health and education outcomes for women, men, girls and boys
- > gender equality advanced in regional cooperation efforts.

The policy also articulated some key operating principles and processes to underpin efforts to promote gender equality through aid. The policy commits the aid program to:

- > set clear priorities on the basis of gender analysis
- > strengthen partner ownership and support country-driven priorities on advancing gender equality
- > engage with both men and women to advance gender equality
- > strengthen accountability mechanisms to increase effectiveness
- > collect and analyse information to improve gender equality results.

As a result of these steps, there is clearly more attention to gender equality by program areas and increased calls on technical expertise.

### 3.2 CONTINUING CHALLENGES

There remains considerable variation in reporting and in the achievement of gender equality results in mainstream development programs. Too many programs are still implemented without adequate consideration of gender factors. More needs to be done to integrate gender equality into monitoring and evaluation and performance frameworks and there should be greater effort to collect gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data. Better gender analysis and integration of the analysis into monitoring and evaluation frameworks will improve the quality of development outcomes.

In common with all development work, a challenge is to make sure that program level results can aggregate to generate sound country level progress towards objectives. It is crucial that country and regional strategies clearly articulate gender equality objectives.

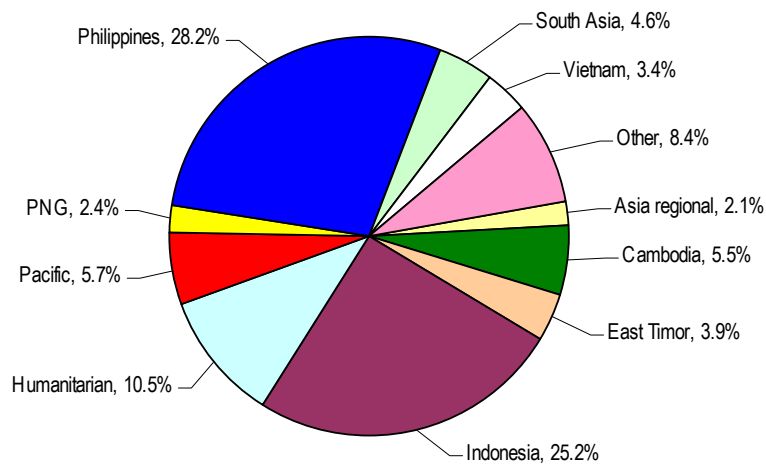
These challenges are further discussed in Section 4.

### 3.3 AUSTRALIA'S AID INVESTMENT IN GENDER EQUALITY

In 2006–07 AusAID allocated more than \$62 million for direct expenditure on gender equality initiatives, an increase from just over \$57 million in 2003–04. Indirect expenditure on gender equality in 2006–07 amounted to over \$600 million. While specific gender equality initiatives are vital and should be scaled up, they will always be a small proportion of the aid budget. Progress towards gender equality also requires effective integration within mainstream programs.

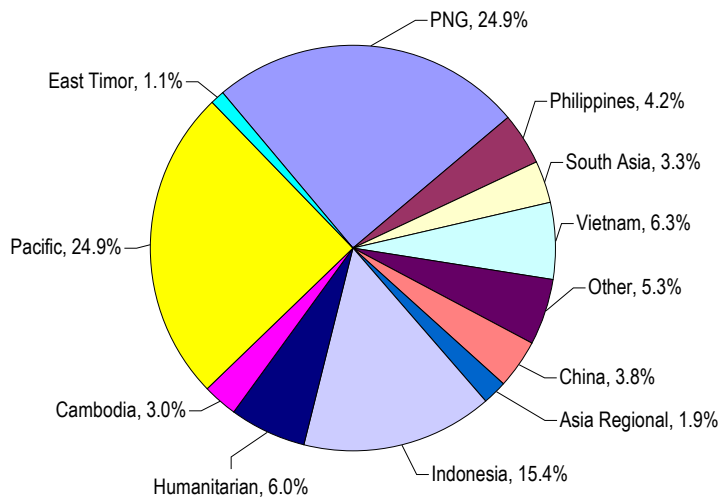
In 2006–07 Indonesia and the Philippines were the major recipients of direct aid funding for gender equality (Figure 7), while PNG was the major recipient of indirect aid funding (Figure 8). The assignment of expenditure on gender equality is determined by responses to the gender marker questions in the aid management system, Aidworks. Some results from gender equality-focused programs and from mainstream programs are discussed below.

Figure 7 Direct expenditure on gender equality by country or region, 2006–07



Source: Provisional estimates from AusAID Statistics Unit, 2007.

Figure 8 Indirect expenditure on gender equality by country or region, 2006–07



Source: Provisional estimates from AusAID Statistics Unit, 2007.

### 3.4 GENDER EQUALITY – FOCUSED INITIATIVES

Most AusAID country programs have a specific ‘flagship’ gender equality initiative, often supporting a women’s organisation. These very small initiatives often make a significant difference to gender equality in partner countries. For example, the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre, the Vanuatu Women’s Centre and the Mindanao Women’s Commission all do excellent work and are at the forefront of advancing gender equality in their countries.<sup>24</sup> Organisations such as these assist in developing local ownership of gender equality. They are also very good at working in partnership with the aid program to support the engagement of sectoral programs, such as health or law and justice programs, with gender equality.<sup>25</sup>

This support works best when the agency is provided with long-term core funding, demonstrating the benefits of taking a partnership approach. Results appear to be less sustainable where funding is provided for limited periods to support specific activities of the agency.

The aid program less commonly supports government gender equality agencies (called ‘national women’s machineries’), and support is generally for specific initiatives rather than ongoing core funding. Again, support for these agencies can contribute to country ownership of gender equality.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> For example, the August 2006 review of the Vanuatu Women’s Centre found that the centre had made ‘major contributions to addressing the issue’ of violence against women (Review, p. 6.)

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, the review of the Vanuatu Women’s Centre.

<sup>26</sup> For example, the Canadian International Development Agency has partnered in South-East Asia with a number of national women’s machineries which, over the longer term, have become capable effective agencies.

In addition to support for women's organisations and agencies, specific initiatives to empower women and promote gender equality include women's health programs and programs responding to gender-based violence. Funding is also provided to support gender equality technical assistance. Core and programmatic funding is also provided to international organisations working on gender equality such as UNIFEM.

The Office of Development Effectiveness is currently conducting a rigorous evaluation of responses in programming to violence against women. This evaluation process is itself developing program-level capacity to address violence and should generate substantial lessons to be applied in the development program.

### 3.5 ACCELERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Internationally there has been limited improvement in the economic status of women compared with men.<sup>27</sup> In the Asia–Pacific women are economically active and responsible for a great deal of productive work, but there has been insufficient attention by governments and donors to:

- > ensuring that economic reform benefits women and men equally
- > supporting women to increase productivity and returns from their work
- > assisting women to move from informal to formal sector enterprises
- > removing discrimination against women and barriers to their employment in the formal economy.

Few governments or donors take account of women's unpaid care and domestic work, assuming it is a free, unlimited and unmeasured social resource.

Australia's development program microfinance has integrated a gender equality perspective. Many of these initiatives aim to improve women's productive engagement, and also to empower them through programs that support literacy or financial and business management skills.

Australia's development program is beginning to engage well with the gender equality potential of private sector development, particularly in the Pacific. For example, the ASEAN–Australia Development Cooperation Program and the Governance for Growth Program in Vanuatu both plan to conduct research on gender equality and women's economic engagement.

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<sup>27</sup> See Section 2 of this report and, particularly, Ricardo Hausmann, Laura D Tyson and Saadia Zahidi, *The global gender gap report 2006*, World Economic Forum, Geneva, 2006, p. 12.

The Australian development program has supported the following organisations that are bringing about positive outcomes for women's equality.

- > The microfinance organisation Capital Aid Fund for Employment of the Poor has more than doubled its client base to 60 000 over a five-year period. An impact assessment conducted in 2006 found that the level of extreme poverty among the fund's clients had declined from 27 per cent to 2 per cent (73 per cent of the fund's clients are female).
- > The Social Monitoring and Early Response Unit, an Indonesian research institute, promotes equal employment opportunity for men and women in administrative and senior research positions within the organisation. Research conducted by the unit integrates gender equality issues, and includes research on gender and poverty, wage differentials for women and women's participation in politics.

There is less attention to the gender implications of economic reform and public financial management in the aid program. These are largely seen as gender neutral but, without adequate gender analysis for each initiative, opportunities to support partner governments to remove barriers to women's improved economic status are often overlooked. As the experience of the recent Pacific Survey shows, there are very few data available in the region to assist the integration of a gender equality perspective into economic analysis. This needs to be addressed.

Attention to gender equality in economic governance programming is improving, but more needs to be done to ensure that it is a routine ingredient. As the gender policy notes,<sup>28</sup> the aid program needs a concerted effort in this outcome area to support progress towards gender equality.

### 3.6 FOSTERING FUNCTIONING AND EFFECTIVE STATES

Australia's development program has made good progress in promoting equal participation of women in a range of areas. Many community development programs promote equality between men and women. Many law and justice sector programs facilitate women's access to the law, particularly for women suffering domestic or sexual violence; however, it is important that partner governments and donors see women as active participants throughout the legal system and not only as victims of crime. Public sector support programs have at times done well in promoting gender equality, and those programs show the way for others in the sector.

Given that women are so poorly represented in leadership positions, particularly in the Pacific<sup>29</sup>, there is a need to increase significantly attention to supporting women into leadership positions. The new Pacific regional leadership initiative will ensure a

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<sup>28</sup> AusAID, *Gender equality in Australia's aid program – why and how*, Canberra, 2007, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup> See Figure 3 of this report.

common and consistent approach, and smaller bilateral initiatives will benefit from the regional consistency. Stronger and more sustainable results are achievable in coming years.

The following are examples of some of the outcomes that have resulted through investment by Australia's development program.

- > The community empowerment program, Local Governance and Infrastructure for Communities in Aceh (LOGICA), has become a widely regarded best practice model for engaging women to drive development change in villages. LOGICA encourages and supports women to participate fully in all activities. It developed the confidence and leadership skills of over 2300 village representatives, of whom more than half are women. As a result, more women are moving into leadership positions in local government.
- > A recent review of community development programs in Indonesia found that the Australian Community Development and Civil Society Strengthening (ACCESS) project, focusing on eastern Indonesia, performed most strongly in integrating gender equality and producing gender equality results. For example, there was a significant improvement in gender relations within families and the broader community; it is also suggested that women became more confident to speak out in their households and in front of meetings attended by men and village leaders.
- > The Indonesia Australia Specialised Training Project Phase III maximises the involvement of women and ensures that gender equality is included across all training modules. The project's compulsory generic modules include gender awareness, along with good governance and change management.
- > The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) law and justice program supported the Women in Law Association and the establishment of the Solomon Islands Prison Service Women's Network, which ensures that gender equality is given priority in the corrections system.

### 3.7 INVESTING IN PEOPLE

There is a general understanding in education programs about methods of supporting partner governments to improve girls' and young women's access to education. Many programs now support partners to ensure that teacher training integrates gender equality, that negative gender stereotypes are removed from curriculums, and that women are supported to enter leadership positions as bureaucrats, senior teachers or community members.

The Millennium Development Goals' focus on maternal mortality ratios and the increased attention to gender equality in the response to HIV/AIDS have helped increase awareness of gender equality in the health sector. Too often, however, mainstream health programs fail to consider the complexity and broad social context

of gender inequality and miss opportunities to promote equality. Health programs also need to do more to support health systems to address gender-based violence.

The following are some of the outcomes for gender equality in health and education initiatives that have been supported through Australia's development program.

- > The PNG National HIV/AIDS Support Project has analysed links between HIV and gender equality. Social vulnerability, violence against women and women's access to decision making are key focuses of the program's response to HIV/AIDS.
- > The Indonesia HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care Project is working to promote, source and distribute female condoms in Papua. The project separately targets men, women sex workers, injecting drug users and those with HIV. It promotes gender equality messages in behaviour-change communication materials.
- > In the Philippines all schools supported by the Basic Education Assistance to Mindanao initiative are developing school-based management models that integrate gender equality in school governance.
- > The Vanuatu Secondary Schools Extension Project trained and employed both women and men in community construction. This increased women's confidence and enabled them to participate strongly in school governance.

### 3.8 PROMOTING REGIONAL STABILITY AND COOPERATION

There is increasing recognition of the need to address gender equality issues in regional programs, but more attention is needed to promote a gender perspective in work on regional integration, particularly in the area of trade liberalisation. The importance of women's engagement in conflict resolution and peace building is increasingly recognised but not yet adequately addressed. There are significant opportunities for Australia to support regional organisations to consider gender equality at high-level dialogues and meetings and to strengthen the capacity of regional organisations to integrate gender equality.

The Asia Regional Trafficking in Persons Project strengthens criminal justice responses to people trafficking in South-East Asia and integrates a gender equality perspective throughout. The project and the preceding project have helped national police in program countries better understand gender equality and support victims of trafficking.



## 4 Key lessons

### 4.1 INTEGRATING GENDER ANALYSIS

The elevation of gender equality to an overarching principle of the Australian aid program has required a change in thinking. The first step is to understand the issues; gender analysis is crucial for a number of reasons.<sup>30</sup>

First, a 'one size fits all' approach to gender equality across the aid program will not work. Gender equality and development contexts differ widely across the region and within countries, and Australia's aid program also varies considerably between countries. Careful and integrated gender analysis is vital to ensure initiatives and programs can support progress towards gender equality.

Second, development programs cannot do everything there is to be done on gender equality. To assume that a program can solve every inequality is to misunderstand the nature of the problem and the influence of a development program. Sometimes small steps, carefully thought through, can be the most useful in generating long-term sustainable change.

Third, strong gender analysis will help programs to take opportunities and avoid making things worse. For example, support to strengthen parliamentary leadership in nations with no women representatives could entrench women's exclusion if it overlooks support for women leaders at the community level and fails to support male members of parliament to recognise the importance of leading for all people. An approach that ignores barriers to women's leadership will effectively condone and exacerbate the existing inequality. While it is important that programs identify key gender equality priorities, it is also important that opportunities are not missed to promote gender equality in other areas of a strategy or program.

Until recently, few country or regional strategies adequately integrated gender equality considerations. The 2007 gender policy identified country and regional strategies as a key focus. This has encouraged the inclusion of gender analysis in the preparation of a number of country strategies (Solomon Islands, East Timor, Fiji and Indonesia). A good example is the Greater Mekong Sub-region Strategy. The health and education sector strategies also pay significant attention to gender equality issues.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> See AusAID, *Gender equality in Australia's aid program – why and how*, Canberra, 2007, pp. 19–22.

<sup>31</sup> AusAID, *Helping health systems deliver: a policy for Australian development assistance*, Canberra, 2006; and AusAID, *Better education: a policy for Australian development assistance*, Canberra, 2007.

However, continuing efforts will be needed to ensure new strategies consistently and adequately integrate gender equality analysis, objectives and indicators.<sup>32</sup>

At program level, where initiatives have sound and explicit gender analysis, gender equality and broader development results are stronger. A review of a number of independent completion reports by AusAID's Office of Development Effectiveness concluded that '... there are no areas where a considered gender analysis and appropriate response would not improve impact'.<sup>33</sup>

Research for this report included a review of a small number of initiatives, with a total financial year approved value of \$60 million, that had a significant (but not primary) focus on gender equality. The review found a high degree of consistency between the level of integration of gender equality at design and gender equality results in implementation. There was consistency between the integration of gender equality at design and the overall performance ratings in the quality report. This provides support for the World Bank finding that projects which take gender equality issues into account tend to achieve their objectives more often than do projects that ignore those issues.<sup>34</sup>

Good examples of gender analysis in the development program include the RAMSI Machinery of Government Program which undertook a diagnostic study of women's leadership in Solomon Islands and has developed a strategy to advance the status of women in government. This strategy takes an integrated and systemic approach to gender equality within the program.

Significantly increased attention to research and analysis on gender equality will pay dividends in gender equality results in coming years. Examples of research include the Vanuatu *Drivers of change* study and Governance for Growth Program, the new Australian Development Research Awards, and the Justice for the Poor program jointly funded with the World Bank.

## 4.2 STRENGTHENING PARTNER OWNERSHIP AND SUPPORTING COUNTRY-LED PRIORITIES

All partner countries except Tonga, Nauru and Palau have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and so are committed to gender equality. All Pacific island countries have endorsed the Beijing Platform for Action and adopted the Millennium Declaration. Many have developed a national policy framework for gender equality.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> After a 2005 internal rapid review of gender equality in the Australian aid program found that only one out of the 15 strategies reviewed integrated gender equality appropriately.

<sup>33</sup> Unpublished Office of Development Effectiveness review, June 2007.

<sup>34</sup> World Bank, *Integrating gender into the World Bank's work: A strategy for action*, Washington, 2002, p. 11.

<sup>35</sup> See AusAID, *Gender equality in Australia's aid program*, pp. 22–3.

Despite these commitments, there are many challenges that can impede the ability of programs to progress gender equality. Rather than retreating under these circumstances, the aid program needs to take an even more strategic and sophisticated approach.

Cultural issues are central to consideration of ownership of gender equality. Gender relations are at the very heart of any culture, and culture shapes personal and institutional behaviour. Culture is often interpreted as a constraint on gender equality. This needs to be addressed squarely; continuing to engage in frank discussions on gender roles and relations can often have a significant positive effect. Finding common ground on gender equality is often not as difficult as it first seems, but program managers need the confidence and capacity to discuss it.

It is important to work patiently, positively and in partnership within the culture to identify entry points for effective engagement and to build constituencies for change. Cultures are never monolithic; there is always a plurality of views. Partner country women's organisations are a key to advancing gender equality under these circumstances.

To support partner country ownership, Australia needs to send a consistent message. Australian program implementers need to be capable, committed to gender equality and accountable for results. AusAID is embarking on a capacity development and training program for staff to meet this need. It is important that implementing contractors are capable and accountable for results. Attention is also needed to working with whole-of-government partners implementing or participating in development programs.

#### 4.3 STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY AND MEASURING PERFORMANCE

Lack of accountability has been widely acknowledged internationally as one of the major reasons for slow progress in the implementation of gender equality policies.<sup>36</sup> An institutional focus on gender equality is important for ensuring that the aid program takes gender equality seriously. As the OECD noted: '[i]ssues that an organisation takes seriously become a focus of internal controls and culture'.<sup>37</sup>

The aid program has taken steps to institutionalise a more consistent response, including, importantly, by improving accountability at country program level through the annual program and thematic performance reporting processes. At initiative level, the quality reporting process is proving to be a valuable accountability mechanism.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> AusAID, *Gender equality in Australia's aid program*, p. 25.

<sup>37</sup> OECD, *Gender equality and aid delivery: What has changed in development co-operation agencies since 1999?*, Paris, 2007, p. 40.

<sup>38</sup> The OECD points out that monitoring by senior management ensures accountability: *Gender equality and aid delivery*, p. 40.

Effective accountability requires adequate measurement of gender equality results. Monitoring of gender equality is also vital for demonstrating aid effectiveness.<sup>39</sup>

Until recently the aid program has been largely unable to measure how or whether it has supported progress towards gender equality in partner countries. Australia has not been alone in this. The World Bank recently noted that '[i]nstitutions have generally been slow to develop and adopt measurable indicators of progress in gender equality and the ratings systems primarily measure good intentions rather than results'.<sup>40</sup>

As a vital first step, AusAID programs will disaggregate data by sex and support country partners to do the same. In addition, programs will increasingly consider whether the questions they are asking are gender sensitive. For example, surveys of sexual behaviour to inform HIV/AIDS programming tell no useful story unless data are sex disaggregated. Measuring earned income by sex can tell an interesting story about women's and men's economic engagement in a society, but it is only a very partial story if information about women's and men's unpaid work is not also collected, and may lead programs to overlook opportunities to promote economic growth and gender equality.

Support for national statistics offices to collect, analyse and publish sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive data can be very useful. For example, the Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics and AusAID recently supported the publication of a gender analysis of the 2004–05 employment, underemployment and incomes survey.

#### 4.4 MOVING FORWARD: GENERATING AND MEASURING RESULTS

The results achieved so far can be made more consistent, strategic and deliberate. Each manager, programmer and implementer will need to take responsibility for thinking about gender equality goals and working towards them across Australia's development program. Strengthened institutional processes and accountability mechanisms will continue to be an important determinant of success.

In the short term, attribution of gender equality results to Australia's aid program will continue to rely on monitoring inputs and processes.

Work to devise adequate ways to measure gender equality results will continue, bearing in mind that progress towards gender equality is slow and complex. In many cases, simple quantifiable results are unlikely to be available, so qualitative tools will be important in this area. For example, attitudinal change is rarely easy to measure, and survey methods are usually expensive but very useful when well done. Measuring gender equality requires thoughtful and creative techniques.

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<sup>39</sup> OECD, *Gender equality and aid delivery*, p. 40.

<sup>40</sup> World Bank, *Global monitoring report 2007 – Millennium Development Goals: confronting the challenges of gender equality and fragile states*, Washington, 2007, p. 13.

Future thematic performance reports will increasingly report on results. The aim is to have a program sufficiently sophisticated and engaged with gender equality to enable the attribution of responsibility for progress at national and regional levels. Successful work on gender equality will lead the Australian aid program to support each partner country flexibly, deliberately and consistently to achieve the partner's own well-developed commitments to gender equality. The conditions are now in place to support this.



	Australia	Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Maldives	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	Myanmar	Cambodia	China	East Timor	Indonesia	Lao s	Mongolia	Philippines	Thailand	Vietnam	Cook Islands	PNG	Fiji	Kiribati	Micronesia	Nauru	Samoa	Solomon Is.	Tonga	Vanuatu
♂ life expectancy	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
♀ life expectancy	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ratio ♀:♂ life expect	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
HIV % total	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
HIV % ♂	x			x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x								
HIV % ♀	x			x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x								
% births attended by skilled personnel	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Maternal mortality	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x			x	x	x	x
Contraceptive use	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
Condom use, proportion all contraception		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x		
Fertility rate	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Violence against ♀	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x							
Literacy ♂	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Literacy ♀	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ratio ♀:♂ literacy	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Net primary enrolment ♀	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Net primary enrolment ♂	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Ratio ♀:♂ net primary enrolment	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Gross secondary enrolment ♀	x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x	X
Gross secondary enrolment ♂	x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	X	X
Ratio ♀:♂ gross secondary enrolment	x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x	X
Gross tertiary enrolment ♀	X	x		X		x	X	x	X	x	X	x	X	x	X	x	X	x		x	X				X		X	x
Gross tertiary enrolment ♂	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				X		X	x
Ratio ♀:♂ net tertiary enrolment	X	X		x		X	x	X	x	X	x	X	x	X	x	X	x	X	x	X	x	x		x	X	x	x	X
♀ age of marriage	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				x		x	x
♂ age of marriage	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x		x	x	x				x				x		x	x

x = available statistics.

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

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ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
LOGICA	Local Governance and Infrastructure for Communities in Aceh
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women