

*Documenting  
Development  
Program Impact:  
A Tool for Reporting  
Differential Effects  
on Men and Women*



United States Agency for  
International Development  
Office of Women in Development

# *Preface*

This Gender Analysis Tool Kit contains ten analytical tools which are intended to be clear, user-friendly devices for policy makers and project implementers to use in addressing gender issues in their development efforts. The tool kit was developed by the staff of the GENESYS (Gender in Economic and Social Systems) Project. GENESYS is a project funded by the USAID Office of Women in Development to support the Agency's efforts to institutionalize gender considerations in development assistance worldwide. The tool kit provides practical approaches to use in accomplishing that objective. Below are the titles of the ten tools.

## *GCID Framework*

- GCID Framework: A Tool for Assessing Institutionalization of Gender Concerns in Development Organizations

## *Quantitative Tools*

- Quantifying Gender Issues: A Tool for Using Quantitative Data in Gender Analysis (A Slide Presentation)
- Country Gender Profiles: A Tool for Summarizing Policy Implications from Sex-Disaggregated Data
- Gender and Household Dynamics: A Tool for Analyzing Income and Employment Data from Surveys

## *Diagnostic Tools*

- Gender and Policy Implementation: A Tool for Assessment of Policy-Derived Impacts on Women and Men
- Sex and Gender—What's the Difference?: A Tool for Examining the Sociocultural Context of Sex Differences

## *Planning And M&E Tools*

- Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for Sustainable Development: A Tool for Gender-Informed Project Planning
- Gender in Monitoring and Evaluation: A Tool for Developing Project M&E Plans
- Documenting Development Program Impact: A Tool for Reporting Differential Effects on Men and Women

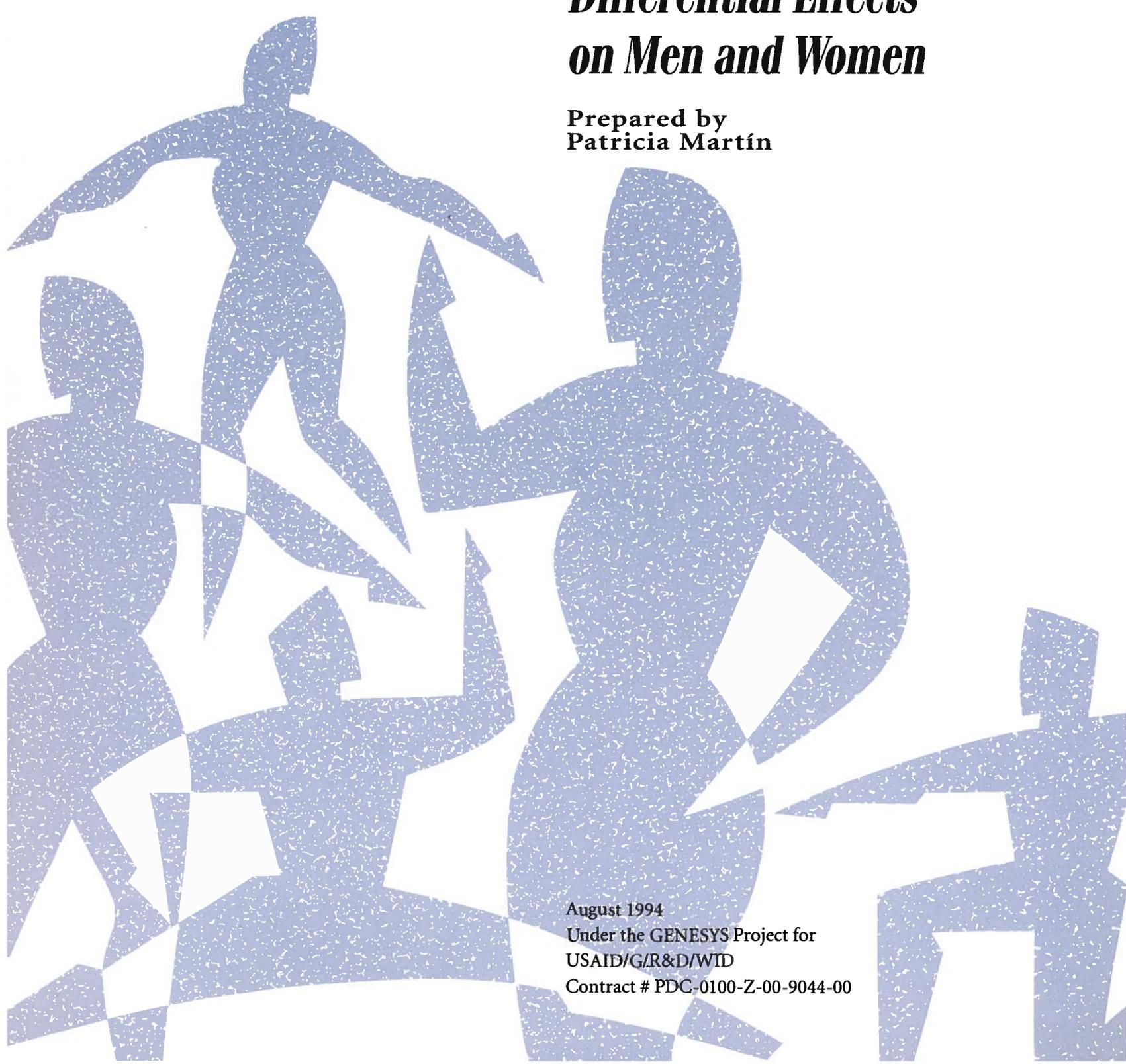
## *Reference*

- Gender Research Guide for the Agriculture, Environment, and Natural Resource Sectors: A Tool for Selecting Methods

***Documenting  
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# ***Acronyms***

**ABS** Annual Budget Submission

**CP** Congressional Presentation

**EOPS** End-of-Project Status

**LAC** Latin America/Caribbean

**NTAE** Non-Traditional Agricultural  
Exports

**POD** Program Objective Document

**SAR** Semi-Annual Report

**WID** Women in Development

# ***I. Introduction***

## ***Reason for Developing the Tool***

The following was developed for the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Bureau of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) by the bureau's gender/WID advisor, but it also applies to other USAID bureaus and missions. It was designed to provide brief, basic guidance applicable at both the project and program levels in a form accessible to project managers and program officers, as well as Women in Development (WID) officers. Its purpose is to: 1) clarify definitions and concepts, 2) provide guidance on assessing whether gender is an important factor in any given project or program, and 3) indicate the kind of information needed to demonstrate the impact of programs and projects on diverse groups of people.

## ***Purpose of the Tool***

The tool complements formal donor reporting guidelines. It examines the rationale for considering gender and its effects on sustainable development and illustrates processes for determining and reporting gender-related impacts through examples of specific USAID/LAC Bureau systems and documents.

While this document uses specific LAC Bureau reporting systems to illustrate ways to integrate gender considerations into reporting documents, it also serves as a model that could be adapted to serve the needs of other USAID bureaus or offices or other development institutions.

## ***Target Audience***

The GENESYS tool *Documenting Development Program Impact* was originally developed for program and project officers within USAID who prepare and coordinate routine field mission reporting to the LAC Bureau in Washington, D.C. Nevertheless, it is useful for anyone who is responsible for analyzing and reporting project and program impacts. The tool also clarifies for upper-level managers the benefits of integrating gender considerations into mainstream reporting documents, rather than reporting on gender-related outcomes through separate channels or documents.

## ***Strengths and Weaknesses***

Use of these guidelines can help the analyst to assess a project/program's impact on individuals by showing how women benefit from development interventions in comparison with men and how the impact can be attributed to project and program efforts. The analyst also can report accurately on a program/project's impact achieved through its gender-sensitive interventions, increase awareness of program results, and promote effective actions to improve these results in the future.



This tool is not meant to supplant an organization's reporting guidelines. The guidelines contained in the tool are illustrative rather than prescriptive and must be adapted to the particular reporting needs of a development organization.

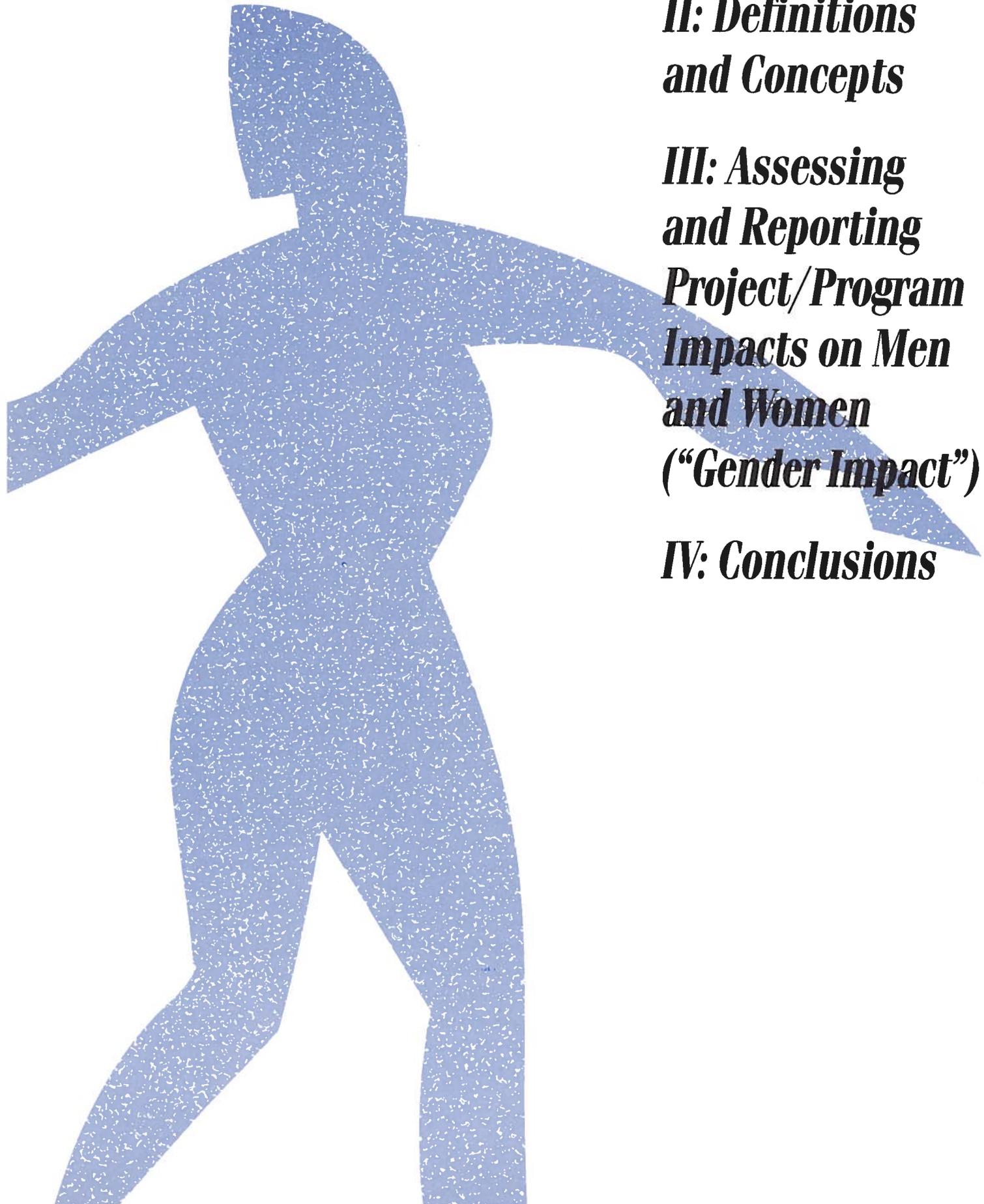
### ***Layout of the Tool***

The main body of the tool is divided into two sections. The first section (Section II) provides key definitions and explains common concepts used by gender analysts. The second section (Section III) presents a four-step sequence for assessing, comparing, and reporting the impact of projects and programs on females and males of all ages. Step 1 provides the user with basic guidelines for formulating gender-informed questions about the participants and project or program outcomes. Step 2 describes principles for analyzing sex-disaggregated information. Step 3 focuses on how to assess different types and levels of outcomes from projects and programs for men and women. Finally, step 4 uses specific USAID reporting formats, such as the Semi-Annual Report (SAR), the Program Objective Document (POD), and Annual Budget Submissions (ABS), to illustrate ways to incorporate gender-related findings into overall program assessments.

***II: Definitions  
and Concepts***

***III: Assessing  
and Reporting  
Project/Program  
Impacts on Men  
and Women  
("Gender Impact")***

***IV: Conclusions***



## II. Definitions and Concepts

The following key concepts summarize the basic definitions and analytical framework for considering gender in development activities.

### *Gender vs. Sex*

“**Gender**” is a sociocultural variable that refers to the *comparative, relational, or differential* roles, responsibilities, and activities of females and males — what a society or culture prescribes as proper roles, behavior, and personal identities. Gender roles vary among societies and over time. “**Sex**” as an analytical category, unlike gender, distinguishes males from females exclusively by biological characteristics.

### *Women in Development*

Because women have, more often than men, been left out of the development process, a special effort often needs to be made so that women as well as men participate in and benefit from development; this effort has become known as “**Women in Development**” (WID). WID does not mean leaving men out; it means ensuring that women are included. USAID has long emphasized paying attention to the effects of gender differences in all its relevant activities — considering gender-based factors in order to ensure full and equitable participa-

tion and benefit by both men and women. “**Gender-neutral**” approaches assume equal opportunities and benefits, without questioning whether a person’s gender constrains or favors his/her access to resources and participation in decision-making.

### *Gender Differences*

Gender differences (differences in males’ and females’ roles in society) usually operate in association with other socioeconomic variables. Neither all men nor all women necessarily share the same interests, concerns, or status. These vary by race, ethnicity, income, occupation, age, level of education, and so on. In addition, the concerns and status of men and women differ *within* groups, whether racial, ethnic, age, or class.

### *Gender’s Effects on Development*

Gender issues affect *economic* as well as social development objectives. Gender is much more than an equity issue: gender inequality, or differences in roles and rights of men and women, affects economic growth as well as social stability and well-being in a society. USAID experience has demonstrated that considering and enhancing women’s, as well as men’s, roles and contributions to the economy promotes development and sustainability. Increased economic participation by women also has proven to have a direct impact on alleviating poverty and its social and ecological consequences.

### *Gender-Related Impact*

Minimizing differences in project and program impacts between men and women can bring about more balanced participation and benefit by both sexes, lessening gender imbalances characteristic of many societies, and thereby encouraging better utilization of all human resources and more effective and equitable distribution of benefits. These are necessary conditions for achieving broad-based sustainable development.

Development activities can have different types of impacts. Some of these are more within an organization’s scope than others (and some may be unintended), but all must be analyzed to evaluate the final results of development efforts and activities and to demonstrate a plausible link between the organization’s interventions and results.

The focus of this tool is specifically on gender-related impact, for several reasons:

1. Gender cross-cuts all other social variables and is usually a factor that affects, at least in some way, an activity’s impact on individual beneficiaries. For example, educating girls has multifaceted benefits that differ from the benefits of educating boys; and female-controlled income may bring about greater benefits in child welfare than male-controlled income.

2. Gender analysis includes other social variables, and is the most efficient means of undertaking effective social analysis. In gender analysis, the effects of other variables are taken into account to provide a complete picture of the factors affecting people's participation in the economy and development efforts and the impact of these efforts on their lives. The analysis examines the roles and participation of women and men belonging to specific groups involved in a development activity (e.g., indigenous farmers, urban or rural microentrepreneurs, minority groups, youth and students, the rural poor).
3. Poor women, whether they are urban, rural, of minority or majority culture or ethnicity, have long been among the most disadvantaged and hardest to include people in development efforts. Therefore, demonstrating impact on women as well as men is a key measure of effectively reaching the disadvantaged, expanding the human resource base, and bringing about socioeconomic change among individuals, thus contributing to broad-based sustainable development.

### III. Assessing and Reporting Project/Program Impacts on Men and Women (“Gender Impact”)

#### *Step 1: Ask Questions at all Stages of Project/Program*

Gender is frequently an important variable in determining project, program, and policy effectiveness. To assess whether and to what degree gender-differentiated factors (as well as other socioeconomic variables) might affect the outcomes of development interventions, key questions should be asked during the strategic planning process and during the design, implementation, and monitoring/evaluation stages of the project/program cycle. These questions include:

- **Who needs to be reached for action to occur** (broken down by sex and other relevant variables)?
- **Why or so what?** What difference will it make if these groups participate in the effort or not? What are the implications for achieving the activity's objectives?
- **How can these groups be reached?** Different means may be necessary to reach different groups; various constraints may exist because of gender roles and activity patterns and different access to resources.
- **How will we know?** What information is needed to determine who participates and what may result?
- **What happened?** Are the expected results being achieved? If not, why not? What changes are needed?

#### *Step 2: Data Analysis*

If gender is a relevant variable, it must be taken into account in determining project and program performance. Sex-disaggregated indicators or other data are needed to assess whether gender factors are relevant to achieving expected outputs and objectives in an equitable and sustainable way.

Attention to gender in data analysis does not mean adding an extra data collection burden; it means focusing on the data needed to illustrate impact — not *more* but *better* information. The following types of information should be sought to determine impacts of development efforts on males and females in target communities:

- The amount of participation by both men and women in key project activities, outputs, and/or strategic objectives and the gender roles of these men and women in their society. These roles affect: a) the way in which men and women are involved in activities — as active participants in decision-making and/or implementation or as recipients of services; b) the types of activities in which they participate (e.g., training, credit, employment); and c) how they handle obstacles to their participation.
- The impact of women's and men's participation in project or program activities, the degree to which their involvement has helped achieve the effort's objectives, and lessons learned in the process.

### ***Step 3: Determining Impacts on Women and Men***

The purpose of the bureau and mission strategic objective framework<sup>1</sup> is to focus and concentrate interventions to achieve the greatest possible impact toward sustainable development goals and to demonstrate progress toward that impact through measurable indicators.

Use of sex-disaggregated indicators at both the project and program levels is important for activities in which gender imbalances are likely to affect attainment of objectives. The relevance of gender and the type of data needed can be determined through a question-and-decision process such as the following:

Based on existing information and experience:

- ***Who participates in this activity*** (by sex and other relevant variables)? Who benefits, and how? Are benefits to both men and women within the target group generally proportional to participation and to the time and effort expended? Are there differences in how families benefit from participation by women compared with men? What are the implications of all of this for project/program impact? Could impact be significantly increased if participation and/or benefits were

expanded (e.g., if more women or more men participated and benefited, or did so in more effective ways)?

If impacts of project/program activities differ for males and females, then:

- ***Why are there differences in participation and/or benefit between men and women in the target group?*** Could mission interventions sufficiently change the factors resulting in these differences in order to enhance levels of participation and/or benefit?

If the differences in impact are amenable to change, then:

- ***What can be done to address gender imbalances in participation and benefits?*** What specific interventions are likely to increase and balance participation and/or benefits for women and men and are possible and practical within existing constraints?

Once these interventions are determined:

- ***How can progress be measured?*** What specific indicators are needed to demonstrate impacts on people's participation and benefits?

These steps are used to analyze indicators to assess project/program results, determine whether impact is occurring, and make any needed modifications in interventions. If there is insufficient information on gender-based differences or the

relevance of gender is unclear, the importance of gender to impact can be determined by including the "who" questions above in an evaluation or study and using this information to assess the effectiveness of the interventions.

Assessment of the impact of project/program interventions on the target population or area is at the heart of the reporting process. On page 7 is an example that illustrates what the completed process of assessing impacts at different levels and attributing these to project/program efforts might look like.

<sup>1</sup> Within the LAC Bureau in USAID, the strategic objective framework is the current planning and monitoring and evaluation approach that links measurable project objectives to broader and higher-level program objectives (strategic objectives). It is designed to make program and project managers accountable for results rather than expenditures.

## *An Illustration of Different Types of Gender Impact and Their Effects on Development and Sustainability*

Development interventions are meant to change conditions and have a real impact on people's lives, such as differences in behavior, income, or living conditions. Sustainability depends on the effectiveness and durability of these changes. The following example of how different levels of impact can be defined and feasibly linked with interventions, in contributing to lasting change, is illustrative. The same logical process can be applied to any type of intervention and impact analysis.

1. **The process begins with project or non-project assistance inputs.** An example is implementation of a vocational training program designed to be accessible to women as well as men. This intervention is meant to maximize human resource development by encouraging participation by both sexes.
2. The inputs are developed with certain goals and outputs in mind. **The output in this case would be actual course enrollment and completion by comparable numbers of women and men, which would indicate successful elimination of gender-related barriers.** Sex-disaggregated project data would demonstrate results directly attributable to mission efforts.
3. Impact achieved by the process is assessed by answering the question **"So what? What difference have the inputs made?"** An initial type of impact for this example is employment. Another equivalent impact would be promotion, for those trainees already employed. Were both sexes successful in finding appropriate employment as a result of their training, thus deriving economic benefit as well as contributing to the economy? This impact can be determined through project data or an evaluation or special study. It can be linked to mission efforts if training is shown to have been based on an accurate assessment of demand for skills or measures taken have been successful in promoting employment of female as well as male trainees.

4. **Other impacts are assessed by looking at other effects, and direct and indirect results.** A further economic impact in this example is the effect on income: do men and women trainees earn similar levels of income from their employment, proportionate to their experience and skills? Income is difficult to measure, but it is essential to find some measure of the **comparative** economic benefit of training by sex in order to identify and address gender imbalance. What are the factors contributing to equality or disparity, and what are the implications for replicating successful or changing unsuccessful interventions? If the mission can demonstrate, through an evaluation, for example, that it has analyzed results and contributing factors, and linked interventions with results (e.g. measures that resulted in successful entry by women into higher-paid non-traditional fields), it can claim that the effort has had the desired impact.

Social impact can be demonstrated by changes in women's influence or status in the family resulting from employment and/or income gained due to training. This could lead, for example, to more equitable decision-making or distribution of resources. The impact of women's income (compared with men's) on family well-being or children's nutrition, health, and education status also could be assessed. This assessment could demonstrate change in socio-economic conditions contributing to sustainable development. Such impact is best demonstrated by a study comparing results with baseline data. If this is not possible, a link still can be made if the economic impacts have been demonstrated and a study or evaluation reveals results based on data such as comparative reporting of change in conditions by both trainees and male and female family members.

### ***Step 4: Reporting Impacts on Women and Men***

If the above process of analysis indicates that gender-related variables are likely to affect achievement of project objectives, gender-differentiated impacts (both positive and negative) should be reported based on those objectives. Any actions taken to counteract effects of gender factors on project objectives should be reported as well. Reporting is necessary to ensure that these impacts on project results are recognized (gender factors are frequently overlooked), as well as to improve project results. A secondary reason for reporting on gender is to satisfy the congressional mandate that programs ensure participation and benefit by both sexes.

If there are no data on or analysis of differing impacts on women and men at the project or activity level, it will be very difficult to address these impacts at the program level. A coherent system is needed to assess and synthesize project impacts at succeeding levels. Such a system requires integrating gender and other types of individual-level (“people-level”) impact into the existing reporting system. This not only provides information in a useful, programmatically integrated form, but eliminates the need for additional and ad-hoc reporting. Some guidelines and examples follow.

### **Project Monitoring Systems**

Projects for which gender variables are or could be a significant factor need to collect and analyze information on gender-differentiated impacts based on what the project is trying to accomplish. Project monitoring systems should include gender-sensitive impact indicators and baseline data against which to measure performance in achieving end-of-project status (EOPS) objectives, which should contribute to program-level strategic objectives.

Project evaluations are an important source of impact data when sex-disaggregated impact questions such as those above are addressed and, especially, when disaggregated baseline data exist. Further, to ensure that the data collected are analyzed, reported, and acted upon, project managers should be trained in at least the basic elements of gender analysis and held responsible by mission management for incorporating gender into performance reporting. An example of a USAID project which analyzes and measures its performance and impact based on sex-disaggregated data is provided in the box.

### ***Example***

*USAID/Quito’s Non-Traditional Agricultural Exports (NTAE) Project’s purpose is to establish a healthy, growing NTAE sector in support of its strategic objective — increased trade and employment. The project’s EOPS objectives include impacts on production, export, and employment figures. The USAID mission conducted a study that showed 80% of NTAE employment in Ecuador is comprised of women. Consequently, the mission persuaded the National Employment Institute to compile sex-disaggregated employment data. One project impact indicator measures gender equity in distribution of benefits as numbers of growers, who are typically male, increase through the project’s efforts. A project target is to increase the percentage of growers who are women to 65%. Training figures are also sex-disaggregated by the project to gauge equity in access to instruction by both women and men.*

### Semi-Annual Reports

Project impacts on men and women (“gender impact”) in the target community should be reported in all relevant Project Status Reports under the section “Other Accomplishments and Overall Status.” Impact should be discussed not merely in terms of inputs and outputs (e.g. number of women trained), but also as the effects on or implications for achieving objectives. Barriers identified or corrective actions taken also should be noted. To the extent possible, all relevant Project Status Reports should disaggregate beneficiaries by sex, together with major activities, in the “Project Status” and “Major Outputs” sections. This not only will reveal who is participating and how (data needed to determine gender-differentiated impact) but also will enable the mission to aggregate certain impacts across projects (e.g., numbers and/or percentages of male and female participants, trainees, beneficiaries of employment creation, loan recipients), particularly when the SAR system is automated. This in turn can facilitate reporting of individual-level (“people-level”) impact in the mission director’s overview section, Action Plans, Congressional Presentations, and ABS coding (discussed further on the following pages). Two examples of projects that report on sex-disaggregated project impacts in semi-annual reports and other project status reports are provided in the boxes.

### Example

*In its Project Status Report for the Land Use and Productivity Enhancement Project, USAID/Tegucigalpa has disaggregated by sex all of its major outputs (activities planned and accomplished). Based on this data, the report discusses project impacts, including the fact that the project did not reach its planned proportions of women-headed households with project benefits, at least in part because of inaccurate projections of both total population and household composition. The project has reported that women are participating in project activities at lower rates than men, except in several activities specifically targeted to women, where their participation has been high. The report states that the project is paying more attention to promoting women’s participation in other activities.*

### Example

*USAID/Quito’s Project Status Report on the Water and Sanitation for Health and Ecuadorian Development Project describes training for women promoters and community members (who are trained by the women promoters). The report also discusses the importance to the project of the promoters’ field work and notes that training for promoters has been expanded and that informal training in operations, management, and hygiene education has been mainly targeted to women as the most influential members of families.*

### **Program Objective Documents (PODs) and Action Plans**

Strategic objectives and program outputs should include sex-disaggregated indicators wherever gender is a significant factor. Programming decisions, which follow program objectives laid out in PODS, should be based on Action Plan performance reports. Gender impacts (program effects on women and men) should be described and synthesized in the Action Plan narrative, based on information from the indicators and sources such as SAR data and project evaluations, in terms of their influence on meeting strategic objectives. In other words, program reports should address the extent to which women and men are participating and benefiting from USAID mission projects and discuss the difference this has made (positive or negative) in achieving the desired results at the program level. It also may be useful to summarize the reasons for any significant gender-based differences and how they have been addressed (lessons learned). On this page are two examples of program reporting that discuss gender differences in program impact.

### **Example**

*In its Action Plan overview, USAID/Tegucigalpa synthesized and discussed the contributions of its program's key activities toward improving equity, highlighting impact on women and other disadvantaged groups. The overview describes studies to assess the impact of its programs on the poor and on women and to guide future programming. All key indicators are sex-disaggregated (e.g., manufacturing employment gains, access to factors of production, practice of environmentally sound cultivation techniques, number of vocational training graduates employed).*

### **Example**

*USAID/Guatemala provided a clear example of how gender impact links with development impact in its Action Plan overview. The overview reported that the Mission had successfully negotiated with the country's Ministry of Education for significant policy and resource commitments to improve girls' education. These commitments are expected to reap long-term benefits not only in educational attainment but also in reduction of fertility and infant mortality rates.*

### **Congressional Presentations (CPs) and Annual Budget Submissions (ABS)**

The CP should contain a brief synthesis of the significance of gender factors to achieving results and a summary of impact on women as well as men in the narrative section (in response to the congressional mandate, mentioned above, that programs ensure participation and benefit by both sexes). The primary concern in the ABS is that budget allocation codes accurately reflect the impacts on women and men reported in the performance assessment and reporting documents discussed above. This allows missions to link expenditure levels to development outcomes. Analyses conducted by USAID Washington's WID Office in LAC countries indicate that there are often significant discrepancies between levels of participation and benefits disaggregated by gender in the SARs and the ABS coding. This calls reporting accuracy into question and indicates underreporting of WID impact in either the SAR or ABS. Examples of these types of discrepancies are described on page 11.

## Example

*R&D/WID's analysis for Guatemala showed that an education project was reported in the SAR as having a significant component focused on girls' education; however, the ABS coding for the project did not include WID. The SAR for a rural electrification project included disaggregated training data and reported that women comprised 30% of project participants, yet no WID coding appeared in the ABS. The reverse occurred for special development fund activities. The SAR made no mention of women as project participants or beneficiaries, but various activities were coded for WID in the ABS (up to 40%); the overall WID attribution was 27%.*

## IV. Conclusions

Attention to gender-differentiated impacts of programs and projects, as outlined, helps provide a specific measure of results of development efforts on individuals (males and females) within a target community. Gender is a critical factor in assessing and documenting improvements in the lives of individuals, not only broad communities or whole families, that can be attributed to development interventions. Once a project/program manager has decided that gender is an important, integral factor in an activity, he/she

must analyze the outcomes or results of the activity and report on them, examining differences in impact and benefits due to gender. In standard, required reporting on project/program efforts, these gender-based differences and reasons for them should be discussed (supported by sex-disaggregated data), and improvements over the life of the development activity may be attributed to project and program efforts to overcome these gender barriers.





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