Gender issues in the evaluation of international aid.
The experience of British, Spanish and Swedish development agencies

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Abstract

Gender equality was introduced into international development evaluation two decades ago. Over these years, there have been different experiences in incorporating gender issues into the evaluative exercises. In this paper, we analyse the evaluative experience of British, Spanish and Swedish development agencies during the period 2000-2010 and how they have included gender equality in their evaluation procedures, methodologies and practices.

Keywords

International development, gender perspective, evaluation.

1 This paper is based on the doctoral thesis ‘Gender Equality in the Evaluation of the Development Aid: the cases of British, Swedish and Spanish aid’. This is a meta-evaluation of British, Swedish and Spanish evaluation practices and is available in Spanish at: http://eprints.ucm.es/13206/ This paper is a preliminary draft. Please, do not quote without author’s consent.

2 We use the term ‘agencies’ to speak about all the official institutions that are in charge of development assistance in the three donors studied.

We specifically examine how gender issues have been included in the following evaluation units: the Evaluation Department (EvD) of the Department for International Development (DFID), in the case of the United Kingdom; the General Direction for Planning and Evaluation of Development Policies (DG POLDE), General Sub-directorate of Planning and Evaluation for Development Policy and the Office of Planning and Evaluation (OPE), in the case of Spain; and the Evaluation Department (UTV) of Sida and the Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV), in the case of Sweden.
Introduction

Gender equality, as a central issue, has been included in international development evaluation relatively recently. Indeed, the vast majority of evaluative practices related to gender equality dates back to twenty years ago. However, the link between gender and evaluation has not been sufficiently developed. Both are relatively ‘recent’ matters and are, often, of low priority in development practices. So, the number of academic references on this subject is limited. Although there are some key articles on feminist evaluation, the majority of the contributions come from general evaluation methodologies, gender-sensitive planning frameworks and meta-evaluation studies.

This paper -based on a review of the evaluation procedures, methodologies and practices implemented and carried out by British, Spanish and Swedish development agencies from 2000 to 20103- aims to contribute to an increase in knowledge about the incorporation of gender issues in the evaluative processes of international development agencies. Taking into account the different starting points of these three donors in relation to evaluation and gender, it specifically pursues to explore their diverse experiences in order to promote a more gender-sensitive and feminist practice and, therefore, the improvement of the aid quality and effectiveness.

In the following pages, we present the different experiences of British, Spanish and Swedish agencies incorporating gender issues in evaluation. These experiences have been influenced by the diverse paths taken by these three donors in relation to evaluation and gender. British and Swedish agencies are international benchmarks in the development evaluation. However, the Spanish agency did not begin to promote this activity until the late nineties and it especially increased its evaluation practice in the last decade. Similarly, the United Kingdom and Sweden are among the pioneer agencies promoting gender equality but Spain only started to regularly incorporate gender equality in their development cooperation agenda from 2005.

Gender issues in the evaluation procedures and methodologies

The United Kingdom and Sweden are two of the donors which have emphasized the need to mainstream gender in the development evaluation and this can be observed in their evaluation procedures and methodologies. It is only since the middle of the first decade of this century that Spain is taking steps to promote a more gender-sensitive evaluation.

Gender equality has become a key issue in the development evaluation linked to

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3 The paper is based on a documentary analysis of evaluation procedures, methodologies and practices as well as on a total of 20 interviews with management and technical staff of the three Evaluation Units analysed. In relation to the study of the evaluation practice, the paper specifically presents a review of the strategic evaluations of British, Spanish and Swedish development agencies. In the case of British and Swedish, the paper describes the main characteristics of the evaluation focused on gender equality -10 evaluation reports in the case of British agency and three in the case of Swedish agency-. Regarding the Spanish case, the paper exposes the whole of its strategic evaluations carried out during the period 2000-2010 -18 reports-. 
the MDGs and the main goal of poverty eradication for British and Swedish agencies. In both cases, there is a political discourse in favor of gender-sensitive evaluation, there are methodological guidelines and specific human resources -although scarce- have been assigned. The British agency also provides management procedures to ensure the mainstreaming of gender in evaluation. In the case of Spain, we have observed a greater concern for evaluating gender equality in recent years. At the beginning of the last decade there was methodological guidance on how to evaluate in terms of gender and a specific guide on how to make an evaluation sensitive to gender equality and human rights is going to be published soon. However, the Spanish agency has not developed any formal requirements to ensure the effective inclusion of gender perspective in the evaluation and has not been staffed for it.

The case of the United Kingdom: A commitment to gender equality in its evaluation procedures and methodology

In the British agency, the "Gender Equality Action Plan 2007-2009" established measures to promote accountability for equality as well as actions for improving the evaluation capacities of partner countries (DFID, 2007). Its evaluation policy also argues that gender equality must be considered in all evaluation reports and that its inclusion is, in fact, a quality standard (DFID, 2009a). The Evaluation Department (EVD) further recognises that adopting a gender perspective is fundamental to getting evaluative evidence and to improving international aid. To do this, it is considered necessary to assess the differential effects of interventions on women and men as well as the lack of equal access to resources both.

Nevertheless, this commitment to including gender issues in evaluation has not been the same weight throughout the last decade. It started to take off from 2005. At this date, the DFID evaluation guide included, for the first time, the relevance of integrating the gender perspective in all evaluations and the need to develop gender thematic evaluations and analyse the gender impact. In the same way, in 2006 the first review regarding gender and evaluation was conducted and it established a specific checklist to integrate the gender perspective. Two years later, the British agency published the guide "How to Note on Integrating Gender within the Evaluation" and it included another checklist to incorporate the Gender and Development (GAD) approach in evaluative phases. This guide also identifies staffing needs regarding gender equality and proposes workshops on this subject. The most recent expression of this interest is the "Evaluation Department Gender Equality Action Plan" that sets out priority actions, responsibilities and deadlines to achieve this goal from 2010 to 2013. In order to improve evaluation quality, this plan proposes the use of template for entry and exit levels where gender issues are included.

However, the impact of the action plan and checklists remains to be seen. So far, there are few resources -time, funding and staff- for evaluating from a gender perspective. Despite of all efforts, the inclusion of gender is only selective and partial. Gender issues are marginalized and other competing evaluative interests are considered
much more important. Nowadays, we have to watch the Conservative government carefully and lobby to ensure that gender-sensitive evaluation continues to be a priority.

The case of Sweden: A political discourse in favor of gender-sensitive evaluation but procedures have not been fully developed yet

Regarding Sweden, Sida recognises the need to evaluate the promotion of equality, along with those other issues linked to poverty reduction, in its evaluation policy (1999). Its "Sida's Evaluation Guidelines" of 2010 does not offer specific guidance in this area although recent evaluation plans of the Department of Evaluation (UTV) do include the evaluation of gender initiatives. Inequality is also considered a main issue by UTV which links it to poverty and human rights and proposes an analysis of gender inequality in relation to other forms of inequality.

But, the “Sida Evaluation Manual” stresses the importance of gender mainstreaming throughout the evaluation process to enhance equality actions specifically and to improve the design and implementation of all cooperation activities in general. With this goal, the manual proposes to revise a number of aspects in all phases of the evaluation (Sida, 2004).

The manual also suggests considering gender equality during the preparation of the evaluation along with other key issues, such as human rights and democracy. In the practice, however, the dialogue between stakeholders defines what is included and the final inclusion of gender issues also depends on the purpose and object of the analysis. Furthermore, the inequality between women and men is not always identified as a key discrimination factor and others, such as ethnicity, for example, are considered most relevant in the South. At this point, however, the UTV shows the need for progress in working with multiple inequalities.

As a whole, the Swedish agency has made a strong commitment to equality which is reflected in its gender evaluations which are an international reference to other donors. However, this commitment to equality is not reflected in the majority of the other evaluations. At that point, there is a lack of resources and specific activities as well as disaggregated data and specific methodological tools. In addition, there is a manifest difficulty and a need for mainstreaming, at the same time, different issues such as environment or gender equality. As a result of this situation, gender is not included enough and its mainstreaming depends on if there is a gender expert involved in the evaluative process.

Moreover, SADEV recognises gender equality as an important issue in evaluation and it has a specific gender evaluation programme. However, it has not developed procedures and has not provided special funds to ensure the systematic inclusion of the gender perspective into all its exercises. In this respect, as in Sida, the incorporation depends on the presence of a gender expert during the evaluative process. Currently, due to that gender equality is not a priority for the MDGs or for the Paris Agenda, combining different evaluative interests and gender equality is a great challenge. The recognition of the great value provided by this practice and the
promotion of better gender planning to facilitate the measurement of changes in this area are also needed to improve the quality of aid.

**The case of Spain: First steps towards the promotion of gender-sensitive evaluation**

Regarding to the case of Spain, the relevance of gender mainstreaming in the evaluation is highlighted in the first ‘Spanish Master Plan for Development Cooperation’ (MAE, 2001a). However, it is only since the "Gender Strategy for Spanish Development Cooperation" (MAE, 2007a) when it delves into the necessary steps. If we look at the Spanish evaluation policy, it makes no direct reference to gender equality (MAEC, 2007d). This issue is not a priority in evaluation for the Office of Planning and Evaluation (OPE) or the General Sub-directorate of Planning and Evaluation for Development Policy. There is only an unwritten policy relative to gender equality as a cross-cutting issue and a sectoral priority in the Evaluation Division of DGPOLDE.

Moreover, unequal attention is given to gender issues in the different Spanish evaluation methodologies. The first two evaluation methodologies, published in the late nineties and the beginning of the last decade, define gender as a main issue in evaluation (MAE, 2001b and 2001c). The first methodology links gender equality to the analysis of the feasibility and it also suggests carrying out thematic evaluations focused on this topic. The second goes a step further and includes a set of elements to take into account in a gender-sensitive evaluation. However, the *Manual for Managing Evaluations* (2007e) does not cover this subject in depth. This manual links gender equality to the analysis of the feasibility as well as mentions the need of a gender-sensitive methodology and fieldwork. I also stresses that there should be gender balance on the evaluation team but it does not explain how to integrate the gender approach in the whole evaluative process.

In addition, although there has been a recommendation to include gender as a cross-cutting issue since 2005, there are no established procedures for it and DGPOLDE –and its Evaluation Division- have not carried out any gender-focused evaluation. In fact, during the period 2000-2010, the only initiative of gender and evaluation is the financial support given to UNIFEM, starting in 2008, to strengthen their evaluations and to generate knowledge in this area. Since 2011, however the DGPOLDE has been designing an evaluation methodology sensitive to gender and human rights.

**Gender issues in the evaluation practice**

Since the late nineties, both the British and Swedish agencies have conducted strategic evaluations of specific gender strategies. However, the Spanish agency, in spite of having increased its support for the promotion of gender equality in recent years, has not yet carried out any specific evaluation focused on gender issues nor has it incorporated this perspective in its strategic evaluations. This is reflected in the review of its 18 evaluation reports published between 2000 and 2010. According to this, none
of these reports carries out a systematic incorporation of a gender perspective throughout the evaluation process.

In the following pages, we present the experience of British and Swedish agencies evaluating gender strategies and analyse how the gender perspective is incorporated in the evaluative exercise of the Spanish agency.

Two evaluative processes focused on gender equality in British development evaluation

The Evaluation Department (EvD) of the Department for International Development (DFID) carried out two evaluative processes focused on gender equality between 2000 and 2010. The first one -called Evaluation of DFID Development Assistance: Gender Equality and Women”s Empowerment- was carried out in 2004 and 2005 and resulted in nine evaluation reports. These analysed how the gender perspective was included in the design, implementation and monitoring of actions in eight different areas. The second evaluative process –Evaluation of DFID’s Policy and Practice in Support of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment– was published in 2006 and was issued only one report. In this case, the evaluation examined the effectiveness of DFID in promoting gender equality and its impact on poverty reduction; the adequacy of the internal systems used; and the role of DFID in international efforts towards gender equality and women's rights.

These two evaluative processes and their 10 evaluation reports are 6.76% of all the strategic evaluations according to available data for the period 2004-2010. Both processes, conducted between 2004 and 2006, are the result of Beijing +10 and the review of the MDGs in 2005. Moreover, the two processes are also the result of a British policy of cooperation that recognises gender equality and empowerment as key factors for the eradication of poverty, for the respect of human rights and for achieving the MDGs. Similarly, they are linked to the need to examine the scope of the Target Strategy Paper. Poverty Elimination and the Empowerment of Women (2000).

If we review the focus of the 10 reports published, none of the evaluations use the DAC criteria but set up other criteria of analysis appropriate for their purpose and object of evaluation. The principles of the Declaration of Paris are not included in the only evaluation carried out after its publication. Nevertheless, the reports show a special interest in analysing the aid effectiveness in terms of gender.

In relation to the gender dimensions, the analysis of gender inequality focuses on the role of women in decision-making and leadership positions as well as on the access to and control over resources and benefits (figure 1). Therefore, there is a greater concern for the incorporation of women in development -following the Women in Development (WID) approach- than for a redefinition of the gender roles and responsibilities.
Figure 1. Gender dimensions analysed in the 10 British evaluation reports.

Regarding how the change in gender relations is analysed in these exercises, interest is focused mainly on the formal institutions and rules. But the changes in individual consciousness of women and men, their objective conditions and informal norms are not as important in the analysis. According to the data, 60% of all reports analyse this type of change (figure 2). This demonstrates an integrationist approach concerned mainly with the gender perspective in policies and institutions.

Figure 2. Types of change studied in the 10 British evaluation reports

However, these evaluations also make important contributions for future analysis of gender actions. For example, they emphasize the importance of studying the understanding of gender equality and women’s empowerment as well as they also stresses the relevance of examining male sensitivity to the needs of women and the role of the new masculinities. These critical issues lead to new areas of interest for gender-sensitive evaluation.
Regarding the methodology applied, qualitative techniques were used most and the quantitative and participatory tools were less used. Specifically, the first evaluative process was based on a review and analysis of documents as well as on semi-structured interviews. The second and more systematic and thorough process also developed discussion groups and used the Change Assessment and Scoring Tool (CAST) and the Most Significant Change (MSC) which are participatory tools. These two tools were considered useful to identify lessons on processes and to assess the effects of interventions on reducing poverty.

Nevertheless, none of the reports specify who applies the techniques -women or men-, or whether the different uses of time, place and mode of communication between women and men were taken into account.

In relation to the dissemination of these evaluations, they were published in paper and electronic format and they are available on the DFID website and on the DAC Evaluation Resource Centre (DEReC). The final results of the evaluations were also communicated at a meeting with the main stakeholders.

Nowadays, these reports are recognised as a "major milestone" on gender and evaluation because they expose the inconsistency between DFID’s practice and discourse. They have also generated an increase in the attention paid to gender issues by the DFID. Specifically, these evaluations were the basis for Gender Equality Action Plan 2007-2009, Making Progress to Gender Equality. In addition, these evaluations resulted in the training in this area and the design of “How to Note on Integrating Gender within Evaluation” and the “Evaluation Department Gender Equality Action Plan” in the EvD. However, none of them has provided information to the public on progress and challenges in relation to gender equality. DFID has also been more interested in evaluating processes to promote equality than in measuring the real progress in this area. However, the progress in gender mainstreaming does not always mean improvements in equality.

Interest in analysing progress in gender equality in Swedish evaluation

In the case of Sweden, the Evaluation Department (UTV) of Sida carried out three evaluations related to gender mainstreaming which are 12% of all its strategic evaluations from 2000 until 2010. The Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV) also started a specific programme on gender at the end of the last decade but there were no publication related to it at the end of 2010. All these evaluation exercises were produced in two moments: at the beginnings and the end of the last decade. These respond to the post-Beijing effect, prompting similar exercises in other donors, and to the Beijing +15 review. The most recent evaluations are also a result of a national context very interested in generating knowledge on gender to improve aid effectiveness.

Regarding the three evaluations carried out by the UTV, two of them examine the Swedish gender mainstreaming strategy and the third assesses how gender issues are included in their agricultural programmes.

As in the case of the United Kingdom, these evaluative exercises do not focus
their analyses on the DAC criteria and they define more suitable criteria for each of the evaluation purposes. The principles of the Paris Declaration are incorporated into one of two evaluations –carried out after its approval- and the attention is paid, specifically, to alignment and harmonization.

The gender dimensions more analysed in these evaluations show an understanding of the gender inequality related to the GAD approach. In this sense, the evaluations link this problem to the different gender roles and needs, to the unequal participation in public and private spheres as well as to the different access to and control over recourses, benefits and services (figure 3).

Figure 3. Gender dimensions analysed in the 3 Swedish evaluation reports.

Parallel, the exercises studied focus the analysis on the gender changes related to individual consciousness of women and men and their objective conditions (figure 4). This shows a greater focus on individual changes than social and institutional aspects.

Figure 4. Types of change studied in the 3 Swedish evaluation reports

Moreover, these evaluations discussed other key issues such as the relationship
between poverty and gender, the different comprehension of gender equality, the quality and type of participation of women as well as the role of women and men as development actors.

In relation to the methodological design, participatory tools and qualitative techniques were used in combination with quantitative ones. Specifically, document analysis, interviews, discussion groups and participatory workshops –such as SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) and CAST- were applied. At the same time, a poll was included in one of the evaluations. This design reflects the Swedish intention to include the vast majority of stakeholders in its evaluative exercises. Similarly, it is the result of the recognition of the difficulty of measuring changes in gender with the traditional methods.

If we analyse the application of techniques, the participation of women and men in the development of the field work was promoted in two of the three evaluations in order to reduce gender bias related to the access to and communication with people of different sexes in the gathering of information. However, there is no information about whether the uses of time and place by the different genders and their different mode of communication were taken into account.

In relation to the communication of results, the Swedish evaluations were published in paper and electronic format and are available on the Sida's website and the DEReC. The key findings and recommendations were disseminated in newsletter and in seminar with the main stakeholders. During the evaluative process, the communication was also constant involving the different stakeholders to enhance critical appropriation of the results.

Regarding the use of these exercises, as two of the three reports came to light in 2010 is only possible to assess the impact of the former. This evaluation –carried out in 2002- influenced the Draft Guidelines for Country Strategies in Swedish Development Co-operation (2001) which included, for the first time, gender as a key subject in the analysis of poverty. It also was the basis for the Policy Promoting Gender Equality in Development Cooperation 2005-2010” and was an important input for the following gender evaluations.

Insufficient attention to gender equality in the Spanish development evaluation practice

In relation to the Spanish practice evaluating gender issues, this donor have not yet carried out any exercise focused on gender equality. In addition, if we analyse the 18 evaluations conducted from 2000 to 2010, gender equality is not identified as a main issue in the definition of their terms of reference (ToR). Similarly, it receives scarce attention in the evaluation criteria, questions and indicators. However, there are some differences between the seven evaluations carried out by the OPE (Office of Planning and Evaluation) in the period 2000-2003 and the 11 exercises developed after 2004 when DGPOLDE (General Direction for Planning and Evaluation of Development Policies) is established and Spanish development evaluation discourse starts to change.
In the vast majority of the cases, the criteria used are the five DAC criteria – effectiveness, efficiency, impact, relevance and sustainability-. In relation to the seven OPE’s evaluations, gender issues are taken into account in the definition of key questions in five of the reports. Gender equality is considered a fundamental factor to development in three of them and it is understood as a horizontal priority in two. Nevertheless, there are not defined gender-sensitive criteria and gender indicators are not incorporated regularly. When gender indicators are included, these are related to women’s participation in the development interventions but no to the changes in gender relations.

Regarding the 11 evaluations conducted after 2004, nine of them mentioned gender equality in the key questions. Three reports include it as a development factor and other three identify it as a priority of the Spanish cooperation policy. Furthermore, unlike the OPE’s reports, four reports include gender issues in defining their evaluation criteria. At the same time, although there is not always a set of gender indicators, the gender indicators used not only provide information on women’s participation but also on the transformations in gender relations.

Regarding methodological issues, the interview to experts and staff of the programmes is the most common technique in the 18 evaluations. The participative tools are not used in the vast majority of these evaluations and their potential to give voice to no heard women is not taken into account. In addition, there is neither information about the number of women and men who are consulted during the evaluation process nor about the attention to different gender schedules and to ways of communication during the work field.

If we look at how gender equality is analysed in the different reports, the OPE’s evaluations review it briefly and in specific parts. Gender equality, therefore, seems to be taken as one more issue to "add" and not as a central topic to evaluate in order to promote more equitable and more efficient interventions. In these first reports, the focus is on the incorporation of the gender perspective in the interventions –in four evaluations-, on the women’s participation in the programmes –in two evaluations- and in the women’s benefits from the interventions –in one evaluation-. So, just two gender dimensions are included in the analyses and they are related to the changes in the women’s individual consciousness and their objective conditions without analysing other social transformations (figure 5 and 6).
The evaluations conducted after 2004 show a bit more attention to the gender dimensions. Seven of the 11 reports assess the inclusion of the gender perspective. However, these evaluations examine a greater number of issues such as the women’s role of women, their living conditions, their participation in public institutions, their contributions to the interventions, among others. It also begins to study the men’s role in the change of gender relations. This reflected a broader understanding of the gender inequality. Indeed, this kind of inequality is linked to the gender practical needs and strategic interests, the gender roles, the women and men participation in the policy making as well as their access to and control over resources. Nevertheless, the gender changes analysed focus on individual change and social and institutional transformations –fundamental to the promotion of gender equality- are no taken into account (figure 5 and 6).

Moreover, the lack of attention to gender equality in the evaluation report is also reflected in their conclusions and recommendations. Thus, the conclusions and
recommendations related to equality are rare and, when they are defined, are very general, descriptive and of little use to improve quality aid and to accountability.

Regarding the dissemination and the use of the reports, all the evaluations were published in paper and electronic format and are available on the MAEC’s website and the DEReC. However, the lack of an information management system reduced the impact of these evaluative results on the definition of new programmes.

**Learning on how to include a gender perspective in evaluation**

According the analysis of the three case-studies, in the following pages we present the main learning on how to promote a gender-sensitive evaluation. Due to the differences between British and Swedish development evaluation and Spanish development evaluation, we differentiate between lessons learned on how to conduct evaluations of gender programme and lessons on how to include gender in the whole evaluative process.

**Lessons learned on how to conduct evaluations of gender programmes**

The analysis of the British and Swedish evaluations –focused on gender programmes- reflects some interesting points to take into account for carrying out future evaluations of this kind of development interventions. Our main learning in relation to these evaluations refers to:

- A re-definition of key evaluation questions according to the programme analysed and the context of the evaluation. The DAC criteria are not considered the more relevant in this kind of evaluations and new dimensions of analysis are defined. These criteria are useful for determining the evaluation scope and unify their format. However, the use of just the DAC criteria can reduce the utility of the evaluative results because they do not take into consideration the different features of the programmes and their context. Also, they are not sensitive to the different interest of the stakeholders.

- No close models to assess gender equality. The British and Swedish reports highlight the relevance of analysing critical questions such as the understanding of the gender equality, the dialogue between stakeholders, the women’s rights, the alternative masculinities and the definition of the women as development agents. The definition of criteria and questions is based on the existing experience related gender equality as well as on the gender and development theory. In any case, these criteria show the need of taking into consideration the stakeholders and the characteristics of the programme.

- Process and outcome indicators defined in a participatory manner. The reports underscore the need for indicators in the formulation and monitoring to assess intervention outcomes. These indicators also have to provide information about both the inputs and mainly about the processes and results.
However, given the complexity of measuring certain changes regarding gender equality, the evaluations propose the design of indicators in a participatory manner with the stakeholders. The evaluation team can not define all the indicators but should be aware of the changes experienced by people. To do this, we should ensure that the voices of both sexes are heard in similar degree.

- The combination of techniques and the use of participatory tools. Evaluations opt for mix quantitative and qualitative techniques and for using participatory tools. This methodological decision responds, first, to the complexity of measuring transformations in gender relations and the limited data disaggregated by sex. On the other, it is linked to a desire to promote greater involvement of people in decision making and a greater ownership of evaluation results.

- Dissemination and use of the results as a key step in evaluation. In the practice analysed, the evaluation reports are disseminated through various means to different stakeholders. In addition, the vast majority of the exercises are linked to the review of policies and their results are used for decision-making. So, the evaluation is understood as an exercise closely linked to planning.

Lessons learned on how to include the gender perspective in the whole evaluative process

The factors that made difficult to integrate the gender perspective in the Spanish development evaluation in the period 2000-2010 were diverse. In the following lines, the main factors that Spanish agency needs to improve in order to promote a gender-sensitive evaluation are presented.

- The weak institutionalization of gender equality in the Spanish agency. There was a significant change in the discourse on gender and development recently. However, serious problems of institutionalization of gender equality and integration of this perspective in the cycle of interventions remained. These problems reduced the possibility of adopting this approach in the evaluation phase.

- A management of evaluation influenced by the response to immediate political needs. Despite the focus on more strategic and oriented learning evaluation, the daily management was strongly influenced by the immediate political demands related to accountability. This situation was increased in a time of crisis, public spending cuts and questioning of the relevance of international cooperation. This kind of management affected also to areas such as gender equality, which requires specific time and resources.

- Lack of a regulatory framework in relation to gender and evaluation from 2000 to 2010. DGPOLDE expressed an interest in the implementation of gender evaluation for the last decade and it has started to design a specific guide on how to make an evaluation sensitive to gender equality and human
rights in 2011. However, Spanish agency only established recommendations in this direction and there were no formal requirements in this regard during the period 2000-2010. Consequently, the incorporation of gender perspective in evaluation depended, ultimately, of the persons implicated, their expertise and their willingness to prioritize gender issues.

- Scarce staff and economic resources for evaluation. This situation made complicated the definition of a responsible post of gender despite the manifest will to work in this area.
- Lack of training and tools on gender. The Spanish agency had staff with training, experience and interest in gender issues. However, the DGPOLDE expressed the need to acquire greater knowledge and tools on gender equality. It recognised the difficulty of working a concept, as gender equality, that have multiple understandings and of including cross-cutting issues into evaluation.

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**Glossary**

- AECI: Spanish Agency for International Cooperation
- AECID: Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
- DAC: Development Assistance Committee
- DFID: Department for International Development
- DGPOLDE: General Direction for Planning and Evaluation of Development Policies
- EvD: Evaluation Department of the Department for International Development
- GAD: Gender and Development approach
- MAE: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- MAEC: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
- MDG: Millennium Development Goals
- OPE: Office of Planning and Evaluation
- SADEV: Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation
- SIDA: Swedish International Development Agency
- UNIFEM: United Nations Development Fund For Women
- UTV: Evaluation Department of Swedish International Development Agency
- WID: Women in Development approach