

Publications on Agriculture and Rural Development: No. 6

Handbook for Mainstreaming. A Gender Perspective in the Agriculture Sector

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COOPERATION AGENCY

Department for Natural Resources
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Publications on Agriculture and Rural Development

This series covers issues on agriculture and rural development from a development cooperation perspective. Sida's Department for Natural Resources and the Environment believes that the publications will be of interest to those involved in this field of work.

The document is a result of a Sida commissioned study but it does not necessarily represent Sida's policy. The views expressed are those of the author(s) and should not be attributed to Sida.

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This handbook has been developed for Sida by a team of consultants – Helen Thomas, Beth Woroniuk and Johanna Schalkwyk – in close consultation with the Department for Natural Resources and the Environment at Sida.

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Preface

In May 1996 the Swedish parliament established equality between women and men as an overall goal for Swedish development cooperation. The Action Programme for Gender Equality being developed by Sida focuses on a mainstreaming strategy which requires that a gender perspective is included in policy development, policy dialogue and development interventions.

The Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on women in Beijing, 1995, identified the linkages between gender equality, natural resource management and the environment as one of the „critical areas of concern” in efforts to promote gender equality. Sida will support the development of new strategies and approaches to improve the focus on gender equality in relation to natural resource management and the environment in development cooperation policies and programmes.

Within the framework of natural resource management there is a need to develop clearer understanding of the linkages between gender equality and agriculture. Understanding why and how gender is important and relevant to agricultural development is crucial for mainstreaming a gender perspective into development cooperation policies and programmes in this area. Development cooperation planners, administrators and consultants need assistance to identify and understand these linkages in order to carry out adequate sector analyses and to include a gender perspective in policy development and policy dialogue as well as in the planning and development of different types of support.

This handbook has been developed by Sida's Department for Natural Resources and the Environment in close collaboration with the Gender Equality Unit to further the development of awareness, commitment and capacity for working with a gender perspective in relation to agriculture. Support was received from a team of gender specialists, Helen Thomas, Beth Woroniuk and Johanna Schalkwyk, who were responsible for producing the handbook in consultation with Sida personnel and consultants.

The handbook is composed of three parts:

- i) An analysis of the linkages between gender equality and agriculture which should guide sector analysis and policy development and help set concrete measurable goals.
- ii) „Talking points” to guide policy dialogue on gender in relation to agriculture taking the starting point in both social justice and effectiveness rationales.
- iii) Guidance for mainstreaming gender in different parts of the planning cycle: sector analysis, project formulation/appraisals, annual reviews and evaluations. This part of the handbook has not been developed as a conventional checklist. It is comprised of a series of questions which should be asked at different phases of the planning cycle as well as comments on why these questions are relevant and possible actions to be taken. It aims to develop awareness of the questions that need to be asked rather than to attempt to give answers.

It is not possible to develop generic guidelines which are completely adapted to all national and institutional contexts. While this handbook was developed specifically to stimulate further development within Sida, it is hoped that they will also prove useful to other actors, for example to national partners and NGOs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johan Holmberg', with a stylized, flowing script.

Johan Holmberg
Director of the Department for Natural Resources and the Environment

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Explanation of the Handbook Structure

A one-page description of the logic behind the handbook tables.

Questions for Sida staff at four key moments in the programming cycle:

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3.2 project formulation/appraisal

3.3 annual review

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How to use this Handbook

What Is This Handbook? This handbook is a reference tool to assist staff to mainstream a gender equality perspective in the agriculture sector. They build on Sida's work to date and incorporate insights from development programming around the world, academic research, and international agreements (such as the Beijing Platform for Action).

It is meant to stimulate thinking and to provoke discussion. **Not all questions are relevant at all times.**

Why Has It Been Prepared? The handbook has been prepared in response to requests from staff for further assistance in applying a gender equality perspective in specific sectors and at different stages of the programme cycle.

Who Should Use It? The handbook can be used by Sida staff at headquarters and country offices. Some of Sida's partners (government ministries, implementing agencies and contractors) may also find it useful particularly as a means of better understanding Sida's approach to gender equality.

When Is It Useful? The different components of the handbook should be useful at different times. The **Overview: Gender Equality and Agriculture** provides an introduction to key issues in the sector from a gender equality perspective. This should help to introduce key insights and arguments.

The other four sections (**sector analysis, project formulation/appraisal, annual review/monitoring, and evaluation**) can be used at the corresponding stages of the programming cycle. The general **overview** complements each of these sections.

How Might It Be Used? This handbook is designed to be a working document. Ideally, staff will consult it as they move through the programming cycle.

This handbook does not provide a set recipe to be followed at all times. It is designed to raise issues and promote active learning and thinking on the relevance of a gender perspective and the goal of gender equality to different types of programming.

Staff may find it useful to review specific sections from time to time, rather than working through the entire handbook in one sitting.

Staff may also find it useful to add specific examples of best practices, case studies or terms of reference, so that the handbook becomes increasingly useful.

1 Overview: Gender Equality and the Agriculture Sector

This overview aims to facilitate the development of gender spectacles in the agriculture sector. It is not comprehensive, but suggests ways in which gender-based differences and inequalities are relevant to agricultural production, processing and marketing, and food security in general. The implications of these factors are briefly explored. Specific examples are provided to encourage ongoing reflection and further exploration of programming options.

1. Introduction

Gender is an important variable that has often been overlooked in development co-operation programmes. Other social variables (such as class, ethnicity and age) should also be a part of the analysis. Each situation must be examined on its own and assumptions should not be carried from one situation to another.

Women's and men's roles and responsibilities in the agricultural sector vary from region to region

In the agriculture sector, women and men have different roles and responsibilities which vary greatly from region to region. In some regions, in addition to sharing responsibility with men in all aspects of the commercial sector (cash crops, food crops for sale), women are also responsible for subsistence food production and preparation. In other regions, the division of tasks between men and women is more distinct. For example, women may not participate at all in the production of crops grown outside the homestead, but carry out post-harvest activities. Women may be responsible only for specific types of livestock, such as poultry or goats, while men are responsible for all aspects of cattle rearing.

Women and men do not have the same access or control over resources

The tasks associated with the production and processing of all types of agricultural outputs may be shared between all family members. At the same time, women generally have sole responsibility for household maintenance and the daily preparation of food. This creates tensions for women concerning the best way to allocate their time, usually leaving little room for additional demands on their labour.

Women make these contributions to family and community well-being with unequal access and control over essential resources (including time). For example, women have less secure access to land and in some areas have no legally-defined rights at all. Women often have limited bargaining power to increase their control over resources, both within families and with community and government decision-makers.

Mainstreaming gender equality involves...

The integration of a gender perspective into the agriculture sector involves two fundamental dimensions:

***... recognizing the different interests & responsibilities of women and men and...
... recognizing gender equality as a goal in itself***

- > disaggregating target populations to understand the different roles, responsibilities and needs of women and men (as well as other relevant differences, for example between ethnic groups, class, age);
- > raising questions about how development co-operation programmes can go beyond recognising gender differences and build more equitable gender relations. Recognising gender equality as a goal in and of itself in all programming can contribute to this process.

A gender analysis is required to address both of these dimensions. This type of analysis looks at the division of labour (and the division of rewards) between women and men in households, the economy and society in general. It also examines structures (such as organisations, judicial structures, political parties) and ideas (such as socialisation processes and expectations about masculinity and femininity) that reinforce gender inequality. It raises questions of unequal relations, unequal access to decision-making, and power imbalances.

2. Food security as a framework for gender analysis:

Food security involves more than agricultural production

Farming systems as a whole contribute to food security at a household, community and national level. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has recently developed an analysis based on three „pillars” of food security¹:

- > food availability or adequate food production;
- > economic access to available food;
- > and nutritional security, which often depends on the availability of non-food resources associated with health, education etc.

Development co-operation programming in the agriculture sector has the potential to affect these three areas, although most attention is usually given to food production systems. The following sections consider gender equality issues associated with each of these areas. The examples provided are meant to be illustrative rather than exhaustive, and to offer a starting point for further explorations that take into account the specific conditions of each region and type of programming.

2.1 Gender and food availability or adequate food production:

Gender-aware programming supporting increased food production could look at...

All farmers (particularly poor farmers) face constraints in increasing agricultural productivity. Existing infrastructure and pricing systems may limit marketing potential for certain products, and access to post-harvest technologies may restrict productivity potentials. Women face particular constraints as farmers, processors and marketers based on gender inequalities. Nonetheless, women are significant agricultural producers in the commercial cash-crop sector and primary producers of food and subsistence crops in almost all areas. Factors to consider are:

... differential access and control over agricultural inputs

- > **Access to and control over land, livestock improved seeds and other inputs** – Women are almost always less privileged than men in rights to land and other forms of property. With greater levels of insecurity of access to land, women may regard investments in land too risky. Where women do have access to land, they tend to have smaller plots of land than men (for example in Sub-Saharan Africa) and are allocated plots of poorer quality.

Development co-operation programming can: assist women to obtain improved legal rights through support to advocacy groups; fund legal education programmes; and engage in policy dialogue to support legal changes with appropriate government departments. These kinds of activities complement initiatives to increase productivity.

... evolving control over land

- > **Access to and control over common property resources** (for example water resources and forests) – Women's traditional access to common property resources may be eroded or expropriated by male community members once investments have been made to develop these resources. For example, land redistribution may eliminate areas of communal land, on which women may rely for wild crops. The priority placed on activities for developing the resources may differ between men and women. For example, when decision-making about public irrigation systems is controlled by men, ancillary domestic or subsistence production uses for water (which are the responsibility of women) may be accorded less or no consideration in the design or maintenance of systems.

... who is positioned to make use of new technologies

- > **Access to and control over appropriate technology** – Women farmers generally own fewer tools than men, reducing their potential for increasing yields. When new technologies are introduced, the different requirements and physical capacities of women and men must be given adequate consideration to ensure that wo-

men's specific needs are addressed. There are many examples of the positive impact on women's agricultural productivity from the introduction of machinery that reduces the drudgery of tasks associated with their domestic responsibilities or post-harvest activities. It is important to consult women as well as men on the priorities for research into labour-saving devices and other tools. Women also tend to have more restricted access to cash or credit to purchase new technologies.

... who has access to extension services

- > **Access to appropriate extension services** – Although women are significant agricultural producers and agro-processors, there is extensive evidence that women receive few extension services in almost all regions. This may be for a combination of reasons: extension services may be offered at times when women are busy with other tasks; farmers may be expected to travel to a central point for services, which is difficult for women with children or women with many other responsibilities; the content of the extension advice may not be appropriate for the tasks usually performed by women or not include the crops or livestock for which they are responsible.

In some cases extension advice would be best delivered by women extension agents, but they make up a small proportion of overall agents in both government and non-government sectors. Evidence from many studies has demonstrated that investments to target women in the delivery of extension services has significant pay back in increased adoption rates and productivity. These increases can be achieved even though women extension agents may require different support services than their male counterparts, such as separate living quarters when travelling in the field.

... barriers affecting women's access to credit

- > **Access to and control over credit** – Applying for loans from formal credit institutions or agricultural input dealers can be an intimidating process for women. The institutions may be located far from the farm, making the transaction costs too high for women who will have to find others to care for their children or tend their plots while they travel. The forms required and negotiations with male staff may be too challenging for a woman not used to public interaction with officials. The rates of return on the small plots or subsistence crops produced by most women may be too small to be of interest to the formal lender. Despite these constraints, women repayment rates have proven to be high. When special efforts are made to improve delivery of services to women, the rates of return are as secure as for large-scale producers.

It cannot be assumed that women will retain **control over income** from produce sold, or even the credit they receive from development co-operation programmes targeting women. There is recent evidence of male family members encouraging women to receive loans (and bear the associated liabilities) and then expropriating the cash. Care has to be taken to consult with women, both during the design and implementation of credit and income-generating projects, to ensure that the intended beneficiaries maintain control over the credit and the resulting income.

... differences in men's and women's education

> Women tend to have **lower levels of formal education**, hence extension or credit information should be made available in suitable formats. Lack of education may also make women feel more shy and reluctant to speak up in meetings or during interviews with project planners. Sensitivity to these kinds of issues can ensure that women have opportunities to express their concerns.

... women's multiple responsibilities restrict the time available to take on new tasks

> As women are responsible for many tasks they have **limited labour time available** to take on extra activities. There have been many examples of increased productivity in cash crops being unsustainable, as women cannot provide adequate labour for the increased processing required. Analysis of the whole farming system, in the context of other non-agricultural activities is required to identify where flexibility in labour commitments might exist.

... different priorities for a research agenda

> Access to **appropriate processing and storage technologies** – Most agricultural research has focused on production aspects of farming systems – especially those dominated by men. Research and development of post-harvest technologies appropriate to women tasks has been neglected. Many processing and storage activities undertaken by women take place away from public view and are missed by researcher enquiries. Interviews with women highlighting tasks for which they are specifically responsible will provide a more accurate picture of how production and post harvest activities interact and where technologies can enhance productivity. Consultations with women will also allow researchers to identify areas for research that women see as priorities.

... access to market information

> **Knowledge of market conditions, pricing and other marketing information** may be more difficult for women to obtain. In many African regions women are engaged directly in marketing activities, but in other regions women may only be involved with trading subsistence or food commodities. In some regions – for example South Asia – women have very restricted mobility and therefore rely on information from male family members

concerning the relative profitability of certain crops or investment opportunities. These men may have no interest in the types of crops women could grow and may not relay the relevant information. Women with limited access to marketing information find decision-making concerning investments to increase productivity too risky. Encouraging women's co-operative marketing groups or providing basic literacy training will help women find alternative sources of market information.

2.2 Gender and economic access to available food:

Intrahousehold dynamics influence how the benefits of increased food production are distributed among family members

It is generally assumed that increases in agricultural productivity will result in proportional increases in farm household incomes. It is also assumed that increases in income will produce increases in household food consumption. These assumptions may mask important differences between members of households which a gender analysis can uncover. Examples include:

- > According to several studies, women typically spend a higher proportion of their income on food and health care for children than do men. This suggests that if women are able to retain control over increased income, more of it will be spent on improving the overall food security for the household. Investments which are targeted to areas of agricultural production for which women are responsible are likely to have greater potential to improve family food security than investments that do not take these gender-based differences into account.
- > Women may not retain control over increased income earned through their efforts. If development co-operation programming is intended to benefit women producers, those planning and implementing the project should consult with these women about appropriate mechanisms to put in place to discourage male family members from expropriating women's income. For example, in several cases from Southern Africa, women farmers have requested assistance to establish separate bank accounts from their husbands. In other cases awareness-raising sessions have been organised for men in the communities to explain the importance of allocating income earned to family needs such as food and health services.

2.3 Gender and nutrition security:

Women's ability to balance family responsibilities with productive tasks influences household nutrition security

Nutrition security requires adequate food quality and quantity for all household members and also adequate health and child care, access to clean water and good sanitation. Management of resources within a household which can improve nutritional status is usually the responsibility of women. The multiple roles and responsibilities women hold in this regard have several implications for agricultural programming, including:

- > Women's potential contribution to agricultural production must be analysed in light of their other daily tasks. For example, any increased demand on women's labour for cash crop production or in processing increased yields, may be provided at the expense of other tasks vital to family food security. In several African countries, studies have shown that women provide as much, if not more, labour than men for cash crop as well as subsistence production, while men carry out almost no domestic activities.

Households rely on women to provide care to other household members: to meet the physical, mental and social needs of children, the elderly, and the sick. Several studies have demonstrated that women in families with relatively good food supply may not have adequate time available to feed very young children as frequently as necessary to ensure normal growth. This can often be the case for women whose male family members demand increased labour inputs into cash crops at the expense of their domestic responsibilities. Tensions frequently arise around how women allocate their time.

Careful analysis of labour inputs required from all farm family members to change or intensify production systems, will provide insights into where flexibility around different tasks might exist for both men and women, and whether increased contributions will affect other tasks not necessarily associated with agricultural production. Discussions within the community can also be promoted concerning the way that contributions men can make to domestic activities can improve household food security.

- > Women in poorer households tend to have lower health status than their male relatives. This may be due to food distribution patterns which frequently favour male household members, or because of closely spaced pregnancies. Investments in health care within a family may also favour male members, contributing to women's lower health status. Women's potential to participate in productive as well as domestic activities is affected by their health status.

Mainstreaming a gender equality perspective in capacity-building initiatives involves both...

... strengthening the institution's ability to develop and implement gender-aware initiatives, and...

... broadening employment opportunities for women

3. Gender and Institutional Strengthening

Much agriculture sector development co-operation programming is now focused on capacity building within partner institutions. The integration of a gender perspective in capacity building projects has two dimensions:

- > The institution's capacity to analyse and act upon women's specific needs and to integrate a gender perspective into activities it undertakes or services it provides. This requires skills in gender analysis, willingness to consult with women, and recognition of the need to define programme objectives and anticipated results that include gender equality. Activities to strengthen these capacities, such as training or technical assistance, should be considered as programming options.
- > The representation of women throughout the institution (in various professional capacities and at decision-making levels). Employment equity policies or strategies may be useful to support efforts to increase the number of female staff. It may be especially important to encourage the hiring and training of female extension agents, even in times of government down-sizing or retrenchment.

Endnotes

- ¹ This framework is adapted from A.R. Quisumbing, L.R. Brown, H. Sims Feldstein, L. Haddad, and C. Pena, *Women: the key to food security*, Food Policy Report, IFPRI, Washington, 1995

2 The Rationale for taking a Gender Perspective in the Agriculture Sector: Some Talking Points

From an efficiency/effectiveness perspective

Using a gender analysis supports development effectiveness:

Communities are not homogenous. People have different needs, interests and access to and control over resources based on a variety of factors including gender. Therefore an accurate picture of the „target group” should include a disaggregation by gender. A gender analysis will assist in understanding the full picture of who does what work (both paid and unpaid, contributions to commercial and subsistence production, post-harvest and marketing activities), who has what responsibilities, who makes what decisions and how resources are both allocated and controlled. A project based on a full set of information has a better chance of meeting its objectives than one based on incomplete facts.

A complete picture of all activities which take place within and outside the farm enterprise assists in identifying where potential for effective/efficient development exists.

Bottlenecks in production or processing might occur unless time allocations are considered, particularly as women in farm enterprises may not only be responsible for many agriculture related activities, but also for domestic tasks and other income earning activities. Women's access to extension services may also be constrained by their responsibilities for other activities.

From an equitable development perspective

Equitable development implies that women receive a fair share of development resources and benefits.

Despite the pivotal role women play in agricultural production, processing and marketing, past experience in agricultural development programming has demonstrated that women's needs and priorities are not necessarily addressed. This has severely limited the possibility of project resources and benefits accruing equitably between women and men. Without an understanding of the different starting points of women and men (responsibilities, resources, priorities) and explicit consideration of gender equality issues, there is no guarantee that women will receive a fair share of development resources.

Equitable development implies that programming is used to build more equitable gender relations.

Providing opportunities for women to participate in a meaningful manner, alongside men, in development co-operation initiatives can improve women's skills and status in other contexts within the community. Recognising gender equality as a goal in and of itself in all programming can contribute to this process.

3 An Explanation of the Handbook Structure

This column contains questions for Sida staff to ask themselves (WHAT?)

This column explains why these questions are relevant and important (SO WHAT?)

This column provides advice on what to do with the answers to the questions in the first column (NOW WHAT?)

3.1 Sector Analysis	Why ask these questions?	What steps can you take?
Initial questions for Sida staff	Why ask these questions?	What steps can you take?
Aims of problem, needs and capacities of the population in relation to the agricultural sector. How the analysis of the sector (areas, problems...) taken into consideration needs and possibilities by social group (ethnic, class, age) and by gender? Consider for example: - the roles and responsibilities of women and men in all types of farm enterprises (subsistence versus surplus producers, low input and high input); - access and control over land (tenure systems, rights to ownership, inheritance patterns, etc.); labour supply (unpaid family labour, paid employment, etc.); and agricultural inputs (seed, machinery, credit, extension services) between women and men, in different socio-economic classes; - post-harvest activities: comparative access to and control over technologies for agro-processing or appropriate storage facilities; - marketing and consumption issues (economic access to available food and nutritional status, both within families and across households and regions; and - changes to farming systems following the introduction of new production technologies which have altered roles and responsibilities between women and men.	Women are generally responsible for subsistence production while they play a positive role in commercial or cash-crop production. While it is important to understand who does what in all farming systems, an understanding of who takes decisions about which responsibilities can also provide important insights into: - where flexibility lies between responsibilities; - to whom new technologies and inputs should be targeted; - where conflicts or bottlenecks in production or processing might occur (access to labour inputs required from women who are responsible for both subsistence or household and production for sale as well as other domestic responsibilities); - the importance of other tasks associated with household food security (caring for sick, preparing food, child care) for which women are generally responsible. Attention also should always be paid to gender differences in access and control over inputs and the process of information/technology transfer, for both production and processing/storage. Attention should be paid to access to marketing infrastructure, pricing information and control over income gained through the sale of surplus production.	Sida may need to expand its information base and network on gender issues within the agriculture sector. It could, for example: - undertake specific studies; - consult with women's organizations and non-government organizations with extensive experience of working with women; Sida can also ensure that all studies, consultations and analyses undertaken for programme planning purposes consider gender differences and women's specific concerns by, for example: - including these issues in the terms of reference; - including local experts with proven expertise in gender analysis in our study teams; and - ensuring that all consultations include gender equality objectives.

Gender Equality and Agriculture
Sector Analysis

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This indicates the moment or stage in the programming cycle to ask these questions:

- sector analysis
- project formulation/appraisal
- annual review/monitoring
- evaluation

3.1 Sector Analysis

Initial questions for Sida staff:	Why ask these questions?	What steps can you take?
Analysis of problems, needs and capacities of the population in relation to the agriculture sector. Has the analysis of the sector (issues, problems...) taken into consideration needs and priorities by social group (ethnic, class, age) and by gender? Consider for example: • the roles and responsibilities of women and men in all types of farm enterprises (subsistence versus surplus producers, low input and high input); • access and control over land (tenure systems, rights to ownership, inheritance patterns, etc.); labour supply (unpaid family based, paid employment, etc.); and agricultural inputs (seed, machinery, credit, extension services) between women and men, in different socio-economic classes; • post-harvest activities: comparative access to and control over technologies for agro-processing or appropriate storage facilities; • marketing and consumption issues (economic access to available food and nutritional status), both within families and across households and regions; and • changes to farming systems following the introduction of new production technologies which have altered roles and responsibilities between women and men.	Women are generally responsible for subsistence production while they play an active role in commercial or cash-crop production. While it is important to understand who does what in all farming systems, an understanding of who takes decisions about which responsibilities can also provide important insights into: • where flexibility lies between responsibilities; • to whom new technologies and inputs should be targeted; • where conflicts or bottle-necks in production or processing might occur (excess labour inputs required from women who are responsible for both subsistence/household and production for sale as well as other domestic responsibilities); • the importance of other tasks associated with household food security (caring for sick, preparing food, child care) for which women are generally responsible. Attention also should always be paid to gender differences in access to and control over inputs, and the process of information/technology transfer, for both production and processing/storage. Attention should be paid to access to marketing infrastructures, pricing information and control over income gained through the sale of surplus production.	Sida may need to expand its information base and networks on gender issues within the agriculture sector. It could, for example: • undertake specific studies • consult with women's organizations and non-government organizations with extensive experience of working with women. Sida can also ensure that all studies, consultations and analyses undertaken for programme planning purposes consider gender differences and women's specific concerns by, for example: • including these issues in the terms of reference; • including local experts with proven expertise in gender analysis areas on study teams; and • ensuring that all consultations include gender equality advocates.

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Analysis of existing national policies and programmes in the agriculture sector: Are national programmes and investments in the agriculture sector likely to extend benefits and opportunities equitably to women and men? Do the criteria used for prioritizing investments take account of gender differences in resources, needs and priorities with respect to agriculture and food security? What national commitments have been made to women's rights and gender equality (constitutional guarantees, international conventions such as CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, national policy statements on women's position or gender equality)? Are there national institutions and organizations that could support the development of gender-aware approaches in agricultural development and food security?	Agriculture and food security policies and other macro issues will influence the constraints and opportunities women face in accessing and controlling resources necessary to maintain or increase productivity in either the surplus-producing or subsistence farming systems. Such policies range from food subsidies affecting local and international prices, to investments in farmer- responsive extension services, or services to improve nutritional status of vulnerable family members, e.g. girls, elderly. Policy changes can redress gender imbalances and assist in directing resources to those with the potential to increase food security. Dialogue can be assisted by reference to national commitments. In many of Sida's partner countries the national constitution and the adoption of international conventions provide a basis and a justification for pursuing gender equality issues (e.g. repealing discriminatory land tenure rights & inheritance laws). Many countries have national policies on gender equality that state general principles as well as sectoral objectives. These may have been updated in preparation for the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. Many countries have also established a government ministry or office of women's affairs that acts as an advocate for gender equality and gender responsiveness in the programmes of sectoral ministries. National and local women's organizations and women's studies centres are other resources or potential partners.	Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of targeting national resources should be emphasized by Sida in policy dialogue to support its emphasis on improving gender equality. There are many examples in the agriculture sector which can be used along with more general national commitments to promoting gender equality, such as the Beijing Platform for Action. Sida can consult with national institutions such as the ministry responsible for the status of women, women's organizations, and women's studies centres, about issues and experiences in promoting gender equality in the agriculture and food production sector, and can also encourage its partners within the sector to undertake such consultations.

Initial questions for Sida staff:	Why ask these questions?	What steps can you take?
Analysis of the Ministries associated with agriculture and other government institutions: Do national and local institutions/partners have the capacity to identify and address gender issues in the sector? For example: • do they have access to information on gender-related issues in the sector? • do planners and managers have the skills to formulate and analyse questions on the socio-economic and gender aspects of agriculture? Do training strategies pursued by these institutions include content which integrates a gender perspective? • have they developed processes for public participation and community empowerment in planning for agricultural development and food security issues that seek the views of both women and men? • do they have links with women's organizations and women's studies centres concerned with gender issues in this sector? • how strong is the political will and what is the extent of resources available to respond to key gender equality issues? What is the capacity (strengths and weaknesses) of the national women's machinery to assist with the mainstreaming of gender equality issues into line ministries concerned with agricultural development and food security?	If these national and local institutions lack the capacity to identify and address gender issues in planning or implementing policies and programmes, donor action within projects will remain isolated initiatives with limited long-term impact. Analyses of how organisations adopt new perspectives, including a gender perspective, have identified the importance of policy advocates. These are people within an organization (i.e. the Ministry of Agriculture, local extension office) who are willing and able to promote a gender perspective, who have the knowledge and skills to demonstrate its relevance to the organisational mandate and goals, and who can identify opportunities and allies to push the issue forward. The identification of individuals who are taking on this role, or potentially could do so, is a means by which to support processes already under way and to assist Sida staff in developing their analysis and strategies in the sector.	Consider how Sida initiatives to strengthen planning and management in the sector could contribute to building institutional capacity for gender-aware agricultural planning at the national or local level; through for example: • identifying gaps in data and information, and possible strategies, either in the short-term by undertaking a special study, or in the longer-term through a review of data sources, and the identification of possible modifications to methods of data collection or presentation; • building skills relevant to gender analysis by including components on gender issues in training programmes for planning and management in the agriculture sector; • assisting in the development of effective processes for public participation in the sector that ensure that the views of both women and men are expressed; and • supporting research by national institutions or women's organizations on gender issues in agricultural development and food production (particularly in areas that link macro-level policy implementation and impacts with experiences at a micro-level) to provide a stronger basis of information and analysis on these issues.

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i> Analysis of employment and training in the sector: Are the employment and training strategies pursued by national partners such as the Ministry of Agriculture, or NGOs promoting food security, also promoting gender equality? Do partner national institutions promote equal access to employment and training opportunities for women? Are training courses appropriate to encourage women's increased participation?	<i>Why ask these questions?</i> This is significant to ensure that women are not only being trained and placed in positions of potential influence concerning the prioritizing of gender equality issues, but also to ensure that the training content includes components which promote the use of gender analysis of impacts of policies, effectiveness of extension techniques, etc.	<i>What steps can you take?</i> Consider the opportunities through which Sida can support and strengthen gender equality in employment in partner institutions. This is of particular significance in organizations providing services with direct contact with women farmers (extension or on-farm research organizations), through for example: • supporting partner institutions in analyzing the gender balance in employment in the sector and identifying barriers to equal participation by women; • encouraging partners to analyze comparable effectiveness of male and female officers in the delivery of services to all types and classes of farmers: low-input, high-input, subsistence and surplus producers which include both women and men; and • ensuring that any technical and managerial training financed by Sida for personnel in the agriculture sector includes measures to ensure equitable participation by women.
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<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Analysis of opportunities: Generally within the sector, where are the possibilities for change that will promote gender equality? Can these be integrated into the priority areas identified by government ministries? Are there other donor initiatives in this area that Sida could complement and build upon?	Although programming may be driven by interests articulated by partner organizations, it is useful to have a sense of the overall opportunities and possibilities to promote gender equality within the agriculture sector.	Programming options which offer greater potential for addressing gender equality issues should be prepared in advance of discussions with partner governments. Those participating in discussions should also be aware of trends in other macro-level gender equality issues (especially those associated with food security) such as health, education, transportation, and infrastructure, to ensure that the longer-term linkages between these different issue areas are integrated into discussions.

3.2 Project Formulation/appraisal

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Consultation: Who has been consulted concerning the project objectives and design? Did the consultation specifically raise gender equality issues? • were both women and men consulted? • which women? which men? (staff within the government bureaucracy or non-government organization? members of the target group representing all types of production?) • how was the consultation organized? did the consultation process facilitate maximum input from women?	Consultation and participation are themes that have received emphasis from Sida in all aspects of development cooperation. In considering these processes from a gender perspective, it is important to ask who has been consulted, what have they been consulted about, whose needs have been identified as important, and whether the methodology of consultation influenced women's participation levels and the findings. For example, if a farming systems approach is adopted, a focus on crops and livestock production important to women's subsistence needs should be included as well as production for surplus. Community meetings held at a village level may be dominated by the views of men and special measures may be necessary to ensure that women's voices are heard.	In addition to consultations undertaken by Sida in the initial planning stages, Sida can include a specific requirement to consult with women and women's organizations in its contracts and terms of reference with consultants and implementing agencies. Solid research on the gender implications of government policy options can be funded, which stress the need to link macro-level policy with impacts at the micro-level. Sida can also assist partners to understand the rationale for consultations and to develop methods for undertaking consultations that ensure that women's views are heard.

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Gender Analysis: Does the initial analysis for project planning include gender perspectives? • Is the project planning based on an understanding of gender differences in the target group (roles and responsibilities, access to and control over resources, priorities for development initiatives, ability and capacity to participate)? • Did project planning include an assessment of community contributions anticipated (labour, time, resources), who (men or women) would make these contributions, and their capacity to respond to the expectations? • Do institutional assessment consider institutional capacity on agriculture and gender equality issues?	A gender analysis is an important basis for specifying objectives and strategies, which otherwise may be based on (implicit or explicit) assumptions that may not turn out to be valid. Although the analysis and design of programmes and projects may be prepared by national partner organisations rather than Sida, Sida can provide assistance and support to partners in undertaking such an analysis and also review the issues in its own appraisal process.	Sida can provide assistance to partners in undertaking gender analyses for programmes and projects by identifying and/or financing the requisite expertise. Willingness to do this can be suggested at an early stage of dialogue on programme and project possibilities and can be justified by national commitments to gender equality, such as the Beijing Platform for Action. In project appraisal by Sida, the team undertaking the appraisal (whether composed of Sida staff or consultants) should include a member with expertise on gender issues in the agriculture sector; where the appraisal is contracted to consultants, their responsibility to consider gender factors can be included in the terms of reference.
Project Objectives: Do the project objectives specify what the project seeks to achieve in relation to gender equality and women's participation? Have the gender equality concerns been considered in relation to the main issues of the project? Have targets and indicators been established to clarify these objectives and to facilitate monitoring?	Care should be taken to ensure that the gender equality objective specified is related to the main concern of the project or the impact it seeks to achieve. All too often, gender integration has been pursued by adding a component that is not directly related to the main objective. For example, when project activities are based on a farming systems approach to increased overall agricultural production, subsistence crop needs for which women are primarily responsible should be incorporated as a part of the entire food production system, rather than as a separate issue area.	If a clear analysis of gender implications has been conducted during the sector analysis, then the development of specific objectives will be greatly facilitated. Consultations with women's equality experts and advocates may assist in the identification of objectives, realistic targets and indicators, based on previous experiences and lessons learned.

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Implementation Strategy: How will objectives for gender equality and women's participation be pursued in the project? Have specific strategies been identified to pursue these project objectives? For example: • have the obstacles that may keep women from benefiting or participating been identified and appropriate strategies developed? • have the budgetary implications of the gender equality elements in the project been anticipated? • does the project management structure and budget provide the necessary expertise on gender issues, equality and women's rights?	Often gender equality provisions are seen to be „self-implementing“. Insufficient resources are allocated. In other cases, the project design provides for an exploration of possible strategies on gender equality issues as part of project implementation rather than design, without providing a contingency fund or flexibility to finance the strategies once they are developed. In both cases, good intentions are frustrated. A clear strategy or plan on how gender equality objectives will be reached is required. The need for technical expertise is often underestimated. Specific skills and experience are required for high-quality project design and for leadership during implementation. These are professional skills and should be recognized as such.	Review project plans and contracts to ensure that they include explicit consideration to the means (how will it be done?) of implementing gender equality objectives and provide for the technical expertise and budget for the resources required. A realistic estimate of the resources required to achieve gender equality components is vital to ensure respect from partner and contracted organizations.

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Expectations of the implementing agency: Does the implementing institution or agency have a commitment to gender equality and to achieving positive outcomes for women through the project? Are the responsibilities and expectations concerning gender equality clearly spelled out in any agreements or contracts?	The implementing institution's understanding of and commitment to achieving project objectives on gender equality, and to bring flexible and innovative means to pursue these objectives, will be an important factor in the project's success in this area. Accountability on these issues is facilitated when responsibilities are clearly specified in each agreement and contract.	Discuss gender equality objectives and women's participation with national partners and implementing agencies (including contractors). Be prepared to explain how these issues relate to the overall objectives of the project. Sida staff should seek out potential gender equality advocates and provide them with support (moral support, access to networks, training etc.). Their efforts to demonstrate to their colleagues how and why gender is a relevant and crucial variable should be supported and rewarded. Definitions and expectations should be agreed on. The responsibilities of each party should be clearly stated in decisions with measurable indicators developed for monitoring.
Reporting and monitoring: Does the reporting and monitoring system for the project provide for gender-disaggregated data collection on participation in various aspects of the project and on the indicators selected to monitor change and impact? Will both women and men be involved in identifying indicators to monitor change and impact, and will both be involved in providing feedback?	The collection of gender-disaggregated data is essential for monitoring changes brought about by the project and for identifying both achievements and obstacles. Feedback from both women and men is important for the same reasons that consultations with both are important in project planning: gender differences in activities and resources may result in differences in impacts.	Agree with partner(s) on the key gender-disaggregated data collection needs and the methods for analysis and reporting. Key indicators for monitoring and reporting should include those to enable analysis of: • participation rates of women and men in project activities (e.g. consultations, extension demonstrations, research, decision-making); and • changes in farming systems and impacts on levels of food production and consumption.

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Revision and renewal of projects: Have the objectives and design of a programme or project being considered for renewal been assessed from a gender perspective? That is, are questions being asked in the review and renegotiation process about: • project efforts and achievements to date in addressing issues of concern to women and gender equality? • whether the project objectives and implementation strategy require modification to reflect concepts and approaches agreed to in the Beijing Platform for Action? • Whether the partner or implementing agency has developed an awareness or commitment to agriculture, food security and gender equality concerns?	The questions in this section are most effectively raised at the initial design stage of a project, but can also guide thinking when a programme or project is in progress or will be continued in a new phase. While options may be more restricted where the main elements of project design and objectives are already in place, small changes at this stage could still have important impacts.	Possible steps include: • review the programme or project in light of the questions above to determine the extent to which a gender perspective has been applied and to identify potential opportunities for positive action; • if an evaluation is to be undertaken as part of the assessment and project extension process, identify the information required to address gender issues in the project and ensure they are included in evaluation terms of reference (see section on Evaluation); • seek out individuals in partner institutions and project staff who would be internal allies in identifying and advocating project modifications to address issues of women, agriculture, food security and gender equality; • seek out other potential sources of ideas and support such as the government office, or ministry of women's affairs, or women's advocacy organisations; and • build on recent commitments to women and agriculture, food security and gender equality, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, in dialogue with partners.

3.3 Annual Review

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Preparation for the review: Have there been any important changes relevant to gender equality issues since the last review? For example: • new legislation, government policies or commitments on equality (such as the Beijing Platform for Action, legislation regarding land tenure, improving women's rights)? • the formation of new women's networks or organizations, or a changed profile/capacity of existing organizations? • changes in economic and social conditions or trends that affect resources, priorities and needs for food production (for example impact of HIV/AIDS on available labour, roles and responsibilities in households)? Or have there been other developments that provide new opportunities, such as: • new information or knowledge arising from research or ongoing projects that suggest promising approaches or strategies?	These questions assist in assessing whether or not the original analysis is still valid and in identifying whether programme modifications should be made. Such modifications might address problems and issues identified in the course of programme implementation, or might be proposed to take advantage of new opportunities that have arisen.	Preparations for the Annual Review could include: • consultations with women's advocacy organisations (both state and non-state) to identify changes or concerns that should be investigated further, either prior to or in the course of the Annual Review; • inclusion of these issues in the terms of reference of any background studies or analyses to be undertaken for the Annual Review; • discussions by Sida staff on programmes and projects in light of this analysis and identification of possible programme modifications or additions; • preliminary discussions with partners on these possible modifications; and • identification of gender-related issues that should be formally discussed during the annual review, and the results that Sida would like to achieve through those discussions (what outcomes or agreements on programme modifications or new initiatives).

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Are gender equality concerns on the agenda for the Annual Review? Do gender equality concerns form an integral part of several agenda items? Who will speak to the issue? What are Sida's goals for raising this issue during the Annual Review?	If these issues are not explicitly included on the agenda, they may be overlooked. As well, it is important to have one agenda item (not at the end of the meeting) where gender equality concerns are explicitly discussed and agreements reached concerning progress towards goals. This does not mean, however, that there is no discussion of gender issues throughout the other items. Both types of discussion should occur. Given the complexities of this issue, it is important that a senior person be given responsibility for the issue to re-enforce the priority given to this issue by Sida. There should be clear reasons for raising the issue: why are these issues being discussed and what are the desired „outputs” of the discussion.	Consider: • initial discussions of the agenda with partners; • terms of reference for the Annual Review; • information needs to fully address the issue; • clarification of discussion goals; and • briefing needs for the spokesperson (do they have the information and the arguments to be persuasive on this issue)?
Analysis of projects: In the analysis of each project: • Have short-term targets relating to gender equality been reported on and met? • What has supported the achievement of these targets? • If they have not been met, why not? What measures can be taken to address the obstacles encountered? • Are the original targets still relevant?	This is an essential step in monitoring project implementation. It is an opportunity to assess progress to date and decide whether or not changes in basic project design are required. Although the best moment to integrate a gender perspective is during the design phase, it is not too late to introduce changes during implementation.	The analysis may reveal a need to rethink project strategies where the project falls short of anticipated objectives. If information required to assess project development is not available, there is a need to develop new targets or indicators. The Annual Review process also provides the opportunity to achieve agreement with national partners on any changes to project strategies that may be required.

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i> Approaches taken by partners: Do the partner institutions and Swedish implementing organizations have a clear understanding of the gender-related issues and objectives of the project?	<i>Why ask these questions?</i> This is a moment to ensure that all stakeholders are on the same path with respect to gender equality objectives. Is support required to ensure that partners understand this objective and are capable of implementing these aspects of the project?	<i>What steps can you take?</i> Sida could consider how it can assist national partners and implementing institutions to be more innovative in the integration of a gender perspective into agricultural policies and the promotion of food production. Sida for example, could provide gender training, facilitate the establishment of linkages between policy implementing institutions and other actors (for example: linkages between non government organizations effective in integrating gender perspectives into their community based work, and local, regional or national government institutions involved with formulating agricultural policies).
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3.4 Evaluation

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Purpose of Evaluation: Do the terms of reference for the evaluation clearly specify the gender equality issues and questions to be addressed in the evaluation? Do they clearly identify what Sida and its partner(s) want to learn about gender issues?	A „lesson learned” from past experience is that the TOR for an evaluation must include explicit and feasible directions for the analysis of gender issues in order to produce a report that is helpful for future planning purposes. The long-standing policy of integrating a gender perspective in all Sida projects provides a rationale for including related issues in evaluations, even if specific objectives on women’s participation or gender equality are not included in project documents. Given that evaluations often provide the basis for an extension or further phase of cooperation, they provide a critical opportunity to identify what can be learned from past efforts and achievements and to build on this in accordance with Sida’s gender policy.	The type of information required to address gender equality issues in the specific project area should be discussed with partners and stakeholders. Clear and specific terms of reference can be formulated once there is agreement on what should be learned. This could include a range of issues, as suggested below.

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Project design and implementation: Will the evaluation review the process of project design and implementation? Is it clearly specified that this evaluation should consider the extent to which Sida's gender policy has been followed? Will the evaluation look at how this project has contributed to the achievement of Sida's gender objectives?	This is important to specify as evaluations are frequently limited to an assessment of objectives as stated in project documents rather than broad issues of Sida policy. Thus the opportunity to learn from past experience about what works and what is necessary for successfully integrating a gender perspective is missed.	Basic questions about the process of project design and implementation could include: • Initial Analysis: Was the project based on an understanding of gender differences in roles and responsibilities of women and men in both the subsistence and production for surplus sub-sectors? Did project planning include an assessment of differences and similarities in the needs and priorities of women and men? • Baseline data: Was project planning based on gender-disaggregated data. Was adequate data collected at the planning stage to allow an assessment of change or improvement on the basis of gender at the evaluation stage? • Consultation and decision-making: Did women participate to the same extent as men in decision-making in project planning and implementation? • Gender equality objectives and strategies: Did the project plan specific objectives and strategies with respect to women's participation and gender equality? Were project implementors able to respond to issues that arose in the process of implementation or as a result of experience gained?

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Project resources and activities: Will the evaluation review resources and activities directed to target groups? Is it clearly specified that this analysis should identify the extent to which women as compared with men benefited from or participated in project inputs and activities? Is it clearly specified that the analysis should consider the appropriateness and implementation of initiatives to address gender equality objectives?	These concerns are often omitted if the requirement is not specific in the directions to the evaluation team.	The types of questions for evaluators to address varies with the types of inputs and activities of each project. For example: • In a project that strengthened community-based decision-making: were women included in the process (both as organizers and community participants) and were women's needs and priorities included in final decision-making? • In projects that provide technical assistance (Swedish or nationals): were female experts used and encouraged to provide positive role models? • In a project aimed at strengthening institutional capacity of a specific institution: were activities to enhance the institution's capacity to integrate a gender perspective included (gender disaggregated data collection, policy analysis, policy dialogue)?

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i> Project outcomes with respect to agriculture and food security: Will the evaluation consider project outcomes with respect to differences in needs and priorities for women and men? Do the directions to the evaluators clearly specify that the analysis should consider outcomes by gender?	<i>Why ask these questions?</i> These questions are important for the development of a better understanding of the way in which particular interventions support both women's participation and the achievement of gender equality objectives in this sector.	<i>What steps can you take?</i> Specific questions must be developed for each type of intervention. Examples include: • How has the intervention affected the ability of women and men in low-input farming enterprises to take risks concerning the application of a new technology? • Has the participation of more women extension officers increased the transfer of knowledge to both women and men? • Has the intervention met the food production requirements of women in the subsistence sub-sector as well as men operating primarily in the surplus production sector? • Have efforts to strengthen government research institutions affected the manner in which research agendas are developed, and do technologies produced respond to both women's and men's needs and priorities for food production?
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<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i>	<i>Why ask these questions?</i>	<i>What steps can you take?</i>
Socio-economic impacts: Will the evaluation consider the project's impacts on such factors as gender differences in access and control over resources, opportunities and incomes?	Agriculture sector initiatives can generate major social changes. Analysis of the influence of these interventions on gender relations and gender equality issues are an important source of information for future planning.	Specific questions need to be formulated for each project. Examples might include: • How has the project contributed to building equitable gender relations in the society? Has the intervention affected patterns of land tenure, access to and control over inputs, redistributed use of paid labour, etc., in a manner that has improved women's status in their communities and met their immediate needs? • Are the communities benefiting from government services which respond more credibly to their needs? Who are those services reaching?
Evaluation process/methodology: Does the evaluation process or methodology provide for the types of information and data-gathering that would allow a gender analysis? Does the evaluation plan provide for consultations with women and men on their views about project results and impacts? Is it specifically required that data collected be disaggregated by gender? Do the terms of reference provide that the evaluation team will include a member with the requisite skills to undertake the gender analysis and provide leadership on this issue?	These processes for ensuring that the views of both women and men are obtained and that gender-disaggregated data is collected must be built into the planning of the evaluation if it is to be done in a cost-effective manner. Past experience indicates that an adequate gender analysis requires that the evaluation team must include a member with specific and demonstrated expertise on gender analysis. This task cannot be relegated to a junior member.	Review the evaluation terms of reference and the evaluation plan. Support the development of national evaluation expertise in the area of gender equality. Provide support to team members with the specific responsibility for gender equality aspects of the evaluation so that they can effectively and efficiently carry out their responsibilities. All team members must understand that gender equality is a serious Sida priority.

<i>Initial questions for Sida staff:</i> Lessons learned: Does the evaluation call for the identification of specific „lessons learned” about gender equality issues in any of the areas above and recommendations for future projects?	<i>Why ask these questions?</i> This may seem obvious, given that the task is an evaluation, but it is often not done even where data has been gathered. Thus, to avoid losing an opportunity to learn from experience, the evaluation terms of reference should specify a requirement to discuss lessons learned with respect to gender equality issues through the project and the evaluation.	<i>What steps can you take?</i> This is a consideration in both reviewing the terms of reference and judging whether the report is complete and adequate. There may also be scope for the communication and discussion of the lessons learned through seminars and other meetings.
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4 Best Practices

5 Own Notes

Previous Publications on Agriculture and Rural Development:

1. Pluralism and the Extension Agent: Changing Concepts and Approaches in Rural Extension.
Ian Christoplos and Ulrich Nitsch
Department of Extension Education
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
2. Farm-Level Applied Methods in East and Southern Africa, FARMESA: Report of a Sida Appraisal Mission
Lars Leander and Ray Purcell
3. Regional Soil Conservation Unit, RSCU:
Report of a Sida Review Mission, August 1996
D.W. Sanders, M. Berlekom, J.R. Kamugisha
4. No Organizational Fixes: NGO's Institutions and Prerequisites for Development
Hans Holmén and Magnus Jirström
5. Rural Trade in Mozambique: Pre-Feasibility Study
Central and Northern Provinces, March 1997
Vincent Tickner



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ISBN: 91 586 7523 X
ISSN: 1402 1455