
Reporting on the Gender Learning Day – 20 September 2018

The Gender Learning Day 2018 was hosted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and co-organized by the two backstopping partners HELVETAS and ICFG. It focused on implications of the ‘SDC Effectiveness Report on Gender Equality’, experience sharing on gender analysis and exchange on integration of gender within other frameworks and analytical tools. The event gathered SDC’s GenderNet members and gender experts as well as the gender responsible focal persons from Swiss NGOs and SDC partners. The lively exchange hosted in Bern brought about common issues as well as good practices in the ongoing process of planning, conducting and implementing the results of a gender analysis. The need to think more about integrated approaches was emphasized.

1. Opening: IP’s work on Gender Equality

Rahel Bösch (SDC) opened the Gender Learning Day with an input on the work of the Institutional Partnerships Division (IP) of SDC in terms of strengthening gender equality. Together with SDC and other institutional partners, IP has worked on implementing coherent and consistent standards for the prevention of ‘Sexual Exploitation and Abuse’ (PSEA) and functioning compliance mechanisms for a protected reporting and independent treatment of cases of inappropriate behaviour.

Initial progress in the area was reached, owing to the new code of conduct (CoC).

Outputs of IP’s project are the following:

1. Efforts to strengthen gender equality at operational and management level are intensified.
2. Active participation and constructive inputs in the learning process on PSEA.
3. CoC with zero tolerance valid for the organisation and all its contractual partners elaborated and introduced into the contracts with all its partner organisations.
4. Functioning compliance mechanisms introduced – possibly together with other partners – for a protected reporting and independent treatment of cases of inappropriate behaviour.

2. Effectiveness in the field of Gender Equality

Based on the findings of the Annual Status Report 2017 and the Effectiveness Report, SDC Gender Focal Point Ursula Keller presented successes and challenges in reaching effectiveness in the field of gender equality.

Find the complete presentation and read about challenges and recommendations for partners [here](#).

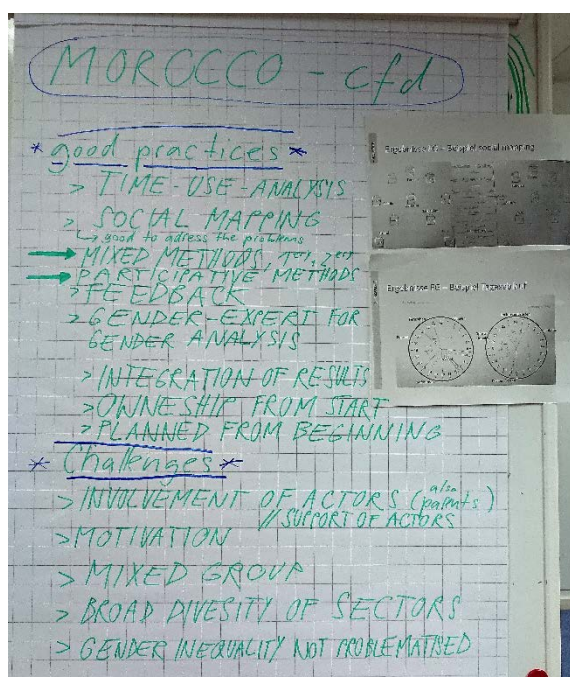
3. Gender Analysis: How do we go about it?

In a World Café, participants reflected and shared their experiences on how their organisations are doing gender analysis; on challenges and good practice. Participants mentioned lacking knowledge or sensitivity on gender inequalities by partner organisations as well as limited resources as issues that prevent project staff from conducting gender analysis. Therefore, flexibility on the 'when and how' of a gender analysis, as well as integrated approaches, were found to be good practice.



Facilitating a World Café, SDC Gender Focal Point Ursula Keller presented SDC's approach on how to reach more gender transformative results. Thereby, she stressed the importance of gender analysis to reach relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of development interventions. You can find her complete presentation on how to do a gender analysis [here](#).

Reference - SDC Guidance Sheet: '[How to Do a Gender Analysis](#)'



4. Gender Analysis: Case studies

Three different projects and their gender analysis were presented as case studies in the afternoon. Participants selected one of the three cases for deeper examination. As a first step, the case holder from the respective NGO presented the project and the specific context. As a second step, participants elaborated a gender analysis method based on available information. Thereby, they identified the main subject of analysis, involved persons and the way to conduct it. During the third and final step, the case holder shared what was actually done as a gender analysis. Then, a joint extraction of what the group agreed followed combining good practices between the group's brainstorming and the actually conducted gender analysis. These results were then shared and summarized in a plenary session.

Stefanie Hofer from cfid presented a gender specific project from Morocco. Within this project, a separate gender analysis was planned and integrated into the project design from the very beginning. A local gender expert designed and conducted the

analysis together with the partner organisation in order to enhance ownership. Innovative and participatory methods such as time-use-sheets, social mapping, online questionnaires and focus group discussions were used.

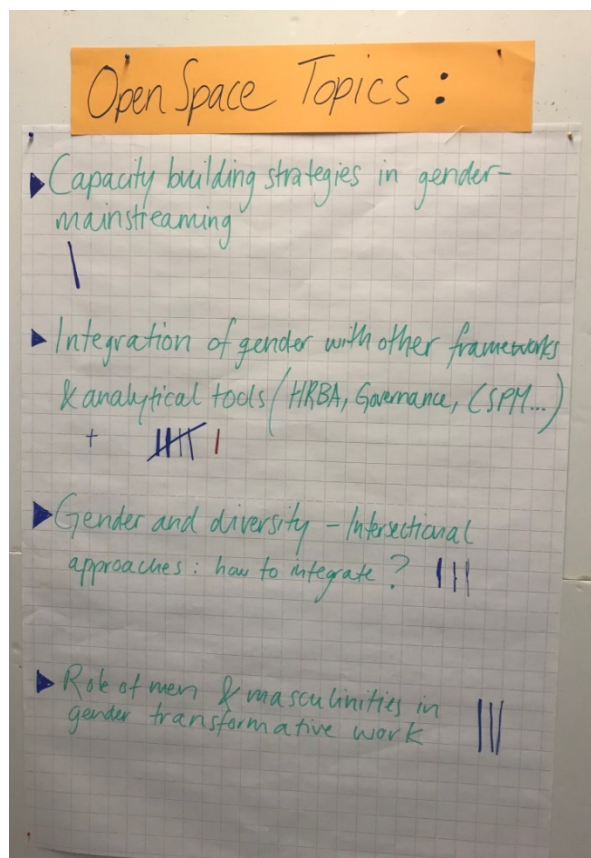
Another project located within a conflict and fragile context in Chad was presented by Katharina Thurnheer from Caritas Switzerland. In this project, a combined gender and conflict context analysis was conducted during the project's launching phase and was used as a basis for the further detailed programme development.

Alessandra Pellegrini Calderón from Swisscontact presented a gender transversal market system development project based in Macedonia. To integrate gender at all levels of the project, the whole market was analysed through a gender lens, using the market system donut for analysis and centralising gender at the core.

Reference – SDC Guidance Sheet: 'Mainstreaming Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) in Market Systems Development'.



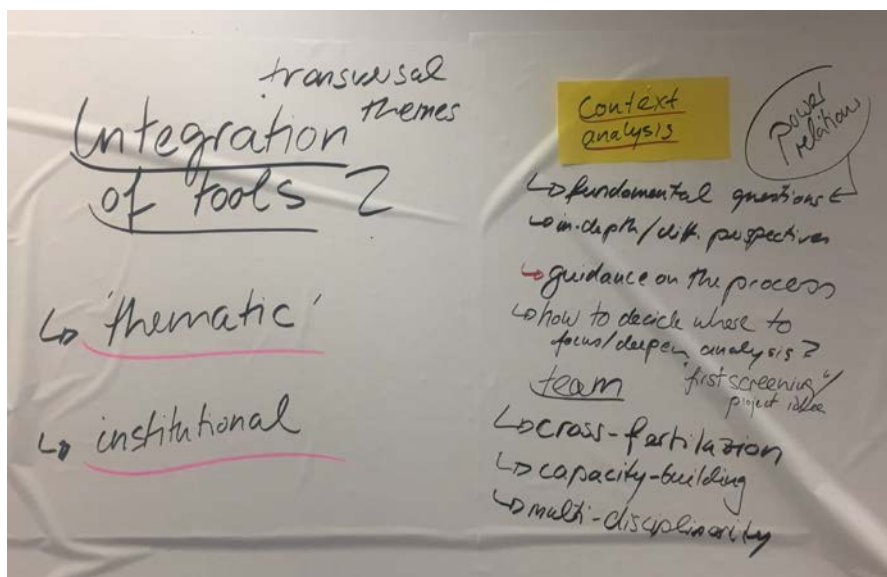
The discussions about the three cases showed that a gender analysis is an ongoing process. It turned out to be crucial for a successful analysis and the implementation of the results to involve the key stakeholders. Moreover, it appeared vital to keep the conversations about changes in the context and its impacts ongoing; both positive and negative. A gender analysis is the starting point. The 'real' work starts, when tackling questions regarding the transformation of results into concrete action.



5. Open Space: Integration of Gender within other frameworks & analytical tools

During the morning session, participants were able to vote for one topic to be discussed during an 'open space' session to close the Learning Day. The integration of gender within other frameworks and analytical tools, such as the Human Rights Based Approach, Governance or Conflict-Sensitive Programme Management, was chosen by the participants as a priority topic. Ursula Keller moderated the open exchange. Two levels of discussion were distinguished: the thematic level and the institutional level. On the **thematic level**, it was mentioned that a context analysis should be the starting point of every other analysis. Based on these results, strategic decisions - such as the selection of the right questions - must be taken. Thereby, Caritas's project in Chad was mentioned as one example of a successful thematic integration, since it combined a gender and a conflict context analysis. On the **institutional**

level, the discussion raised the question of the possibilities of creating *one* analytical tool, which integrates different themes. Experience shows that practitioners in the field are often overwhelmed by the many different thematic analytical frameworks they should apply. Gender is often one aspect which is not regarded as priority. Therefore, a gender analysis may not be seriously applied. SDC as well as Helvetas are currently in the process of bringing different thematic experts together and trying to find practical solutions to this problem. In a cross-fertilisation process, these experts reflect on developing a framework that allows to conduct a basic analysis with minimum standards on different topics. Based on this, practitioners would then decide on which topic to deepen the analysis. Participants mentioned that a specific context needs to be the starting point of every analysis. Further analysis should be based on the analysis of power relations, bringing together different thematic parts, such as Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), gender, etc. Nevertheless, one question remained open: How should decisions be taken to identify the analysis areas to be deepened? Participants agreed on the need to think more about the integration of different frameworks and on a multidisciplinary exchange. SDC, HEKS, Helvetas and Swisscontact all mentioned that they are currently in a capacity building process to get tools, which facilitate a comprehensive analysis for practitioners.



6. Conclusion: Findings and Recommendations

The exchange on the Gender Learning Day 2018 brought about some key points that support practitioners in doing a meaningful gender analysis:

- Due to restrictions in the field, strategic decisions might have to be taken on what is feasible. Practical tools for analysis can be applied as complicated or as simple as needed – most important is, that gender is considered and some kind of gender analysis is done.
- Gender analysis is an ongoing process. Vital to a successful analysis and implementation of the results is to involve the key stakeholders and to keep the conversation about gender ongoing.
- International obligations and national legal frameworks should be leveraged – it gets difficult for local authorities to argue their own policies, if practitioners use them.

Further, the discussions revealed some practical inputs on successful gender analysis:

- If resistance is expected, it is recommendable to choose non-sensitive entry-points to build trust. From there on, issues that are more sensitive can be tackled. A human rights-based approach is useful to trigger discussion on gender issues. Depending on the engaged stakeholders, decisions are made on the entry points and the adapted language used (e.g.: use business-language in a market-oriented project, etc.).
- Be aware and raise awareness of your colleagues that there is an extra effort needed in order to get women or girls participating – in a gender analysis as well as in the project itself. It is not enough to set the goal to have 50% women or girls participating. Extra time and resources need to be allocated to assure their participation.
- Within market-oriented projects, there is often a tension between gender-responsive and market-oriented priorities. There is a need for gender-focused persons to understand the working of the market in order not just to do 'occupational therapy' and vice-versa. The tendency is often to work too much on one side.
- After a gender analysis, consistent effort needs to be put into the implementation of results. When conducting an analysis, there are always some 'uncomfortable truths' detected. There as well, it is advisable to look for non-sensitive entry points to start the discussion and then 'dig' deeper.

The afternoon closed with an outlook on more exchange concerning the integration of gender within other analytical tools and the announcement of another Gender Learning Day in 2019.