

**Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in
Advocacy Work on
Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)**

Synthesis Report

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Executive Summary

This evaluation assesses the extent to which OGB's PRSP work has been mainstreaming gender and diversity (gender). It is part of a larger gender mainstreaming evaluation demonstrating OGB's strong commitment to promoting gender equality in its development work.

Three consultants conducted this PRSP advocacy gender mainstreaming evaluation in three stages. In Stage 3, this consultant reviewed documents, interviewed Oxfam staff and partners around the world, participated in a workshop exchange with OH managers and partner staff and produced this report synthesizing Stages 1 through 3 findings (Bell 2002; Derbyshire 2002a).

OGB selected PRSP advocacy to assess its gender and diversity mainstreaming because PRSP advocacy has become an important Oxfam priority for reducing poverty. Oxfam's main PRSP advocacy strategy to date has been to influence ex-ante participatory processes soliciting PRSP inputs from a broad spectrum of civil society voices.

So far the payoff from Oxfam and partner PRSP participatory advocacy has been mixed. Success has been greater at the process than at the content level. At the process level, Oxfam's considerable investment has precipitated increased CSO involvement. However, participatory inputs have hardly fed into PRSP content. In future, Oxfam plans to expand its PRSP advocacy by trying to influence PRSP content, budgets and implementation monitoring (OI 2001b).

Oxfam's PRSP advocacy, like all Oxfam work, is supposed to mainstream gender. In some countries like Uganda where Oxfam influenced PRSP participatory processes, women participated actively and participatory outputs were engendered. But Stage 1 cautioned that this success cannot be attributed solely to Oxfam (Derbyshire 2002a). Reflecting broader PRSP experience, engendered participatory inputs hardly fed into PRSP content. Thus PRSPs in which Oxfam influenced participation have been little engendered. Among PRSPs reviewed, only Rwanda's mainstreams gender but Oxfam was not involved in the Rwandan PRSP.

To identify why PRSPs have hardly mainstreamed gender, this report explores in detail three impediments to engendering PRSP content that Stage 1 identified as follows:

Policy evaporation. One reason that so few PRSPs have mainstreamed gender is because of the widespread stakeholder assumption that engendered participatory processes would feed into PRSPs. With this belief, Oxfam invested heavily to ensure participatory processes became gender inclusive and flagged key gender issues. But PRSP writing teams have hardly paid attention to participatory inputs. For example, sex-disaggregated data emerging from Uganda's PRSP participatory process were reagggregated in the Ugandan PRSP thereby obscuring gender differences and inequalities. Derbyshire calls such dilution of gender focus "policy evaporation".

Conceptual confusion: WID vs GAD approach. Most PRSPs produced to date apply an obsolete women in development (WID) approach mentioning a few female problems in isolation such as girls not attending school and/or women's reproductive health problems and/or domestic violence. Most PRSPs fail to mainstream gender by applying a gender and development (GAD) approach -- analysing inequalities between males and females and proposing solutions to eliminate these inequalities. Rwanda's PRSP exceptionally mainstreams gender because Rwandan stakeholders were committed enough to initiate a series of deliberate steps and allocate sufficient resources to implement them.

Staffing and culture. Insufficient staff capacity on gender and cultural barriers to gender mainstreaming were key elements hindering Oxfam's PRSP advocacy gender mainstreaming work, according to country level managers interviewed. One manager said "mainstreaming gender is a "mysterious" process" and several requested help "in mainstreaming techniques". Transition country managers indicated some of their staff falsely believe their countries have achieved gender equality because they have gender equal laws and women's associations.

OI staff interviewed confessed that their work on gender is "not up to level" because of lack of training and incentives. They said they would welcome gender training. OH managers participating in the Stage 3 Workshop observed that not all Oxfam staff practice gender equality advocacy because gender is not yet "common currency".

Training, used here broadly to represent all gender sensitizing techniques, is recommended for Oxfam country office and partner staff, PRSP writing team members, OI staff and new OH recruits with little exposure to gender and diversity issues. Thus Oxfam should target gender mainstreaming training to the entire PRSP demand and supply chains from the grassroots through PRSP writing teams among country and other Oxfam staff worldwide as needed. The training would demystify gender mainstreaming by introducing practical gender mainstreaming techniques and would explain how gender equality contributes to poverty reduction. It would provide hands-on practice in PRSP gender mainstreaming sector by sector and issue by issue.

For OI staff, Oxfam should organize training in general gender awareness, gender and PRSPs, gender and trade -- given OI's role in the Oxfam trade campaign -- and broader gender and macroeconomics. Since OI shares offices with OA, it would be worthwhile to explore if OA might be interested in sharing the gender training to make it more cost-effective and expose as many Oxfam staff as possible to gender issues and engendering techniques.

If Oxfam alone is not equipped to fully provide such training, it could partner with strategic allies specializing in this work.

To enhance Oxfam country office gender advocacy capacity, their staff need to include gender experts. Encouragingly, regions have begun hiring gender experts. Hopefully, countries will follow.

This report recommends that Oxfam intensify its PRSP gender mainstreaming since mandatory PRSPs legitimizing borrowing from the Bank and the Fund are here to stay for the foreseeable future. It proposes that Oxfam formulate an action plan to mainstream gender into PRSPs, backed by sufficient resources, as proposed by Stage 3 Workshop participants. This report also suggests that Oxfam focus increasingly on engendering PRSCs and PRGFs – respective Bank and Fund lending facilities for implementing economic, financial and trade liberalization regimes.

Diversity needs to become a more integral part of Oxfam’s agenda. All the above recommendations for gender apply to diversity too.

The report concludes that OGB’s current healthy gender stock-taking can provide the basis for Oxfam to live up to its strong international reputation as a gender equality advocate.

Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in Advocacy Work on Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)

Synthesis Report

**Elaine Zuckerman
Gender Action, President**

Introduction

This evaluation assesses the extent to which OGB's PRSP work has been mainstreaming gender and diversity.

Gender mainstreaming is one of Oxfam Great Britain (OGB)'s five program priorities for 2001/2 and 2002/3 and the focus of thematic evaluation for 2001/2. This review of gender and PRSPs is one of two evaluations proposed to focus on current advocacy initiatives. The purpose is to identify the extent to which gender issues have been addressed in PRSP lobbying, both in terms of women's participation and gender-sensitive policy change, in areas where Oxfam GB has been working.

OGB's PRSP advocacy gender mainstreaming evaluation demonstrates OGB's strong commitment to promoting gender equality in its development work. OGB is reviewing progress in gender mainstreaming "to facilitate the development of a more effective organizational mainstreaming strategy" (OGB 2002).

Among international organizations, OGB tries harder than most to mainstream gender into its initiatives. Oxfam has established a mandate and taken many steps to realize gender mainstreaming. For good reason, Oxfam has an external reputation for its strong gender work. However, implementation always lags policy-setting and OGB's relatively new foray into PRSP advocacy gender mainstreaming is no exception to this rule.

This evaluation concludes that there are big gaps remaining in OGB PRSP gender mainstreaming. Reasons for the gaps are that not all Oxfam staff are responsible for gender and gender is not yet "common currency" among either staff or managers -- OGB's own lofty goals established in the mid-1990s. Oxfam participants in a recent Gender Review Workshop came to this conclusion (Annexes 1a and 1b).

OGB's current healthy gender stock-taking can provide the basis for Oxfam to live up to its strong international reputation as a gender equality advocate.

Methodology Remarks

This evaluation was designed as a three-stage process. The present Stage 3 report synthesizes Stages 1 and 2 findings (Annex 2). Inputs for this report's analysis consisted of:

- ◆ Stage 1: Helen Derbyshire’s desk review providing practical and conceptual briefing information to guide the Stage 2 country case studies (Derbyshire 2002a).
- ◆ Stage 2: Emma Bell’s Armenia, Vietnam and Uganda case studies based on extensive interviews with Oxfam field office staff (Bell 2002).
- ◆ Stage 3: Data gathered specifically during Stage 3 following the Annex 2 Terms of Reference including:
 - ◆ Interviews with Oxford, Armenia, Uganda and Vietnam OGB staff; OA staff in Cambodia; OI staff in Honduras and Washington DC; and staff of one OGB partner - Punta de Encuentro in Nicaragua (Annex 2).
 - ◆ Contributions from the Gender Review Workshop attended by OGB managers and staff and staff of OGB partner -- One World Action (Annex 3).
 - ◆ Analysis from reviewing reviewing key Oxfam PRSP documents (OGB 2001a; OGB 2001b; OI 2001a; OI 2001b).

Definitions of select terms used in this report are presented in Box 1 below:

BOX 1. Definitions of Select Gender Terms Used in this Report

Two terms used interchangeably in this paper are “gender mainstreaming” and “engendering”.

Oxfam defines **gender mainstreaming** as “integrating understanding of, and respect for, the different needs, concerns and experiences of women and men into the way we prepare for, plan, carry out, and learn from our work, in relation to both programmes and internal practice, with the ultimate goal of ensuring our work contributes to equity between women and men (Derbyshire 2002a). Applied to international development, mainstreaming gender aims to ensure that both women and men are involved in development design, planning, implementation and follow up and that development projects promote equality between men and women. Mainstreaming gender requires analysing the potential impact on women and men of all development interventions.

Engendering is a short-cut term for gender mainstreaming. This use of engendering was popularized with the publication of the World Bank’s 2001 flagship Policy Research Report, **Engendering Development** (World Bank 2001a).

Gender mainstreaming tools are tools for analyzing gender, a prerequisite for gender mainstreaming.

Gender analysis examines the access and control that men and women have over resources. This includes analyzing the sexual division of labor and the control women and men have over labor inputs, and outputs or benefits. Gender analysis also systematically determines men’s and women’s differing development needs and preferences, and the different impacts of development on women and men. Ideally, it takes into account how class, race, ethnicity, disabilities and other diversity factors interact with gender to produce discriminatory results (Bamberger et al 2001).

Gender advocates persuade those in positions of power and authority to take gender equality and women’s empowerment seriously. Gender advocates can be located in government, civil society and donor organisations. They can be men or women, and individuals or organisations. They may undertake this responsibility as part of their designated role, or purely on the basis of their own motivation and choice (Derbyshire 2002b).

Because gender has received much more attention than diversity, it is mentioned more often in this report.

Oxfam's PRSP Advocacy

Oxfam selected PRSPs to measure gender and diversity mainstreaming because PRSPs are an important area of Oxfam advocacy. Oxfam's and its NGO partners' advocacy contributed to the birth of PRSPs in 1999. PRSPs have become the Bank-Fund mandated national economic plans directed at reducing poverty. Bilateral aid agencies like the UK Department for International Development (DFID) are underwriting PRSPs. At first PRSPs became the debt reduction prerequisite for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). Now PRSPs are being introduced in non-HIPC countries too.

Since many PRSPs are still in draft, many others have yet to be formulated, and existing PRSPs will be reformulated periodically to reflect changing needs, Oxfam advocacy on PRSP design is still timely. Oxfam also is trying to influence PRSP implementation monitoring.

PRSPs are supposed to express not only government but also broad civil society interests solicited through a participatory process. Within this framework, Oxfam and other NGOs and CSOs are trying to influence PRSPs. Various Oxfam offices and local partner CSOs are targeting PRSPs as critical entry points for steering the multilateral agenda in the direction of poverty reduction. Virtually all Oxfam country office staff interviewed stated that PRSP advocacy work is very important for reducing poverty. *"This [PRSP] work provides the Gender Review with an important opportunity to examine the successes and failures of our efforts so far to mainstream gender and diversity within what is a crucial global effort to relieve poverty...."* (OGB 2002).

Oxfam's main PRSP advocacy strategy to date has been to influence the participatory process soliciting views from a broad spectrum of civil society voices. Oxfam was cognizant that this strategy ran *"the risk of getting engaged with nothing else than rhetoric"* in the PRSP process but felt it was a worthwhile enough opportunity to take the risk (OI 2001b). Consequently Oxfam invested considerable resources into influencing PRSP participatory processes supposed to feed into PRSP formulation. Oxfam plans to increase its investment in PRSP participation by trying to influence PRSP content, budgets and implementation monitoring (OI 2001b).

So far the payoff from Oxfam and partner PRSP participatory advocacy has been mixed. At the process level, Oxfam has precipitated increased CSO involvement in the PRSP participatory process. Oxfam country offices have identified and involved local stakeholder groups in formulating PRSP inputs. In some countries with very few CSOs, Oxfam has played a proxy role representing civil society. In some countries where CSOs are still nascent and weak, notably in former state-administered transition economies, Oxfam is trying to nurture CSOs and persuade governments of the development merits of CSO and citizen participation. A number of countries restrict PRSP participation to a very short list of government-recognized NGOs. Overall, Oxfam staff feel their contribution to the PRSP participatory process has been positive.

However, Oxfam's considerable investment into the process has not been reflected at the PRSP content level. In most cases, PRSP writers have scarcely integrated participatory inputs into PRSPs. Oxfam advocacy should promote ensuring participatory inputs feed into PRSPs. More is said about this in the following section. Moreover, as Oxfam expands its PRSP advocacy into participatory implementation monitoring, it should take every measure to ensure participatory implementation monitoring makes a difference in reducing poverty.

Oxfam also needs to also determine and focus its advocacy on critical action points. Oxfam managers participating in the Gender Review Workshop proposed Oxfam do "a power analysis" to determine key entry points. In the case of PRSPs, this means Oxfam should undertake advocacy to ensure writing teams incorporate participatory inputs (Annex 1b). PRSP writers consist mainly of government finance and economics ministry staff. In some countries external consultants have played key PRSP writing roles. Besides continuing its participatory process advocacy, Oxfam must promote feeding participatory inputs into PRSP content including trying to influence the composition of writing teams to ensure they incorporate participatory inputs.

Oxfam country staff interviewed all felt PRSPs play extremely important roles in national development. They desire more systematic OGB support for PRSP work (Annex 4). However, no country staff interviewed mentioned the desirability of influencing Bank and Fund loans promoting structural adjustments and containing conditionalities -- surely the most critical action points: In the new PRSP framework these are Bank Poverty Reduction Support Credits (PRSCs) -- a new name for structural adjustment loans (SALs), and IMF Poverty Reduction and Growth Facilities (PRGFs) -- extended structural adjustment facility (ESAF) reincarnations.¹ Since mandatory PRSPs legitimize borrowing from the Bank and the Fund, while PRSCs and PRGFs are the lending instruments for implementing their economic, financial and trade liberalization regimes, all these are critical entry points for Oxfam's participatory advocacy.

What Has Oxfam Done about Gender Mainstreaming PRSPs?

Oxfam's advocacy work on PRSPs, like all its work, is supposed to mainstream gender and diversity. Given the importance of Oxfam advocacy around PRSPs, this section explores how successful this mainstreaming has been and proposes how it can be enhanced. This PRSP gender advocacy analysis reinforces the general conclusion above that Oxfam's focus has influenced process more than content.

This evaluation's Stage 1 analysis described Oxfam's PRSP work on gender as follows: *"The bulk of Oxfam's work in relation to gender and PRSPs falls into this participation and advocacy area of gender mainstreaming. A number of Oxfam programmes have actively supported the involvement of national or community-level women's organisations in PRSP-related lobbying and ensured that aspects of national and local consultation processes have involved women as well as men (for example, Armenia,*

¹ Max Lawson of OH sensitized the author to the critical role of PRSCs and PRGFs.

Bolivia, Honduras, Vietnam and Haiti). Additionally, several country programmes have incorporated advocacy for gender equality in their PRSP work in various contexts (for example, Bolivia, Honduras, Kenya, Malawi, and Vietnam)” (Derbyshire 2002a). The prime example where Oxfam lobbying may have enhanced women’s participation is in Uganda discussed in more detail below. Derbyshire cautions that success in influencing Uganda’s or other countries’ participatory processes cannot be attributed to Oxfam alone since there were other actors involved.

Although there were successes in engendering the participatory process in some countries, in others participatory processes have omitted women. This is because participatory processes often are organized ad hoc, information is circulated about them late or not at all and women’s groups have little or no time to prepare for them including trying to arrange homecare and transport (Bamberger et al 2001; Derbyshire 2002; Zuckerman 2001). Where women’s groups have been integrated into participatory exercises, women generally remain marginalized from government, civil society and grassroots decision-making and women’s organizations feel removed from macroeconomic debates central to PRSPs (Derbyshire 2002a). Elsa Dawson’s Diagram on the PRSP Process at the end of Annex 1b depicts powerfully how CSO/gender inputs have not fed into PRSPs.

Derbyshire attributes lack of results of Oxfam advocacy engendering PRSPs to the:

- *significant problem of “policy evaporation” in all contexts, as implementation and impact fail to reflect policy commitments to gender equality.*
- *widespread conceptual confusion between “WID”² and gender mainstreaming which hampers effective policy and practice.*
- *gender inequalities in the staffing and culture of development organisations, which inhibit effective implementation of gender equality policy commitments.³*

The following sections analyze each of the above possible impediments to effective gender mainstreaming that Derbyshire identified in relation to PRSP experiences.

Policy evaporation. One reason so few PRSPs have been engendered is because of the widespread stakeholder assumption that engendered participatory processes would feed into PRSPs. Thus Oxfam, CSOs and governments placed considerable effort into ensuring participatory processes were gender inclusive and flagged key gender issues.

Uganda provides the best example of such effort. Ugandan women’s groups played a key role in the participatory process partly owing to Uganda’s strong women’s groups and partly owing to Oxfam’s organizational role. Uganda’s extensive 1998-2002 gender-aware Participatory Poverty Assessment Programme (UPPAP) consulted the poor

² Derbyshire defines a Women in Development (WID) approach as “...small and separate projects and project components run by women for women, typified by women’s income generation projects”. In contrast, she believes that “Gender mainstreaming changes the focus of interventions from women as a target group to gender analysis of women’s and men’s roles and relations as part of the planning process of all development interventions, and to gender equality as a goal” (Derbyshire 2002a).

³ “Gender inequalities in wider society affect who is qualified and available to work; patterns of staffing; training, promotion and career development opportunities; and many aspects of organisational culture” (Derbyshire 2002a).

including women to ensure their voices would be integrated into the PRSP (Uganda 2002). UPPAP included gender training on what gender means, how gender influences people's vulnerability to poverty and how to collect sex-disaggregated data. It convened women's focus groups to overcome reluctance to speak publicly. However, when it came to the national participatory synthesis workshop, gender was diminished (Derbyshire 2002a). Previously disaggregated data was aggregated, obscuring gender differences and inequalities.⁴ This obscuration was reflected in the Uganda PRSP which takes a WID approach scattering a few gender references here and there rather than mainstreaming gender. In preparation for its next PRSP, Ugandan stakeholders are undertaking another participatory effort which is even stronger on gender issues than was the first. Oxfam is financing this initiative but is appropriately leaving the organization to local stakeholders.

Interviews indicated that Oxfam's advocacy on engendering PRSPs has entailed working with local CSOs and other stakeholders to build their capacity in countries like Uganda and Vietnam (Annex 5).⁵ But "policy evaporation" after Oxfam's capacity building remains a serious problem.

Conceptual confusion: WID vs GAD approach. The Stage 3 PRSP content analysis revealed that most PRSPs produced to date weakly apply an obsolete women in development (WID) approach -- mentioning a few female problems in isolation such as girls not attending school and/or women's reproductive health problems and/or domestic violence (Annex 4). Stage 1's literature analysis corroborated this finding (Derbyshire 2002a). The important gender themes PRSPs have addressed are mentioned in freestanding paragraphs or sentences. But most PRSPs fail to mainstream gender by applying a gender in development (GAD) approach -- analysing inequalities between males and females and proposing programs to eliminate these inequalities. A GAD approach mainstreams gender by analysing women's and men's roles sector by sector and issue by issue. This is the essence of the engendering approach that is essential for reducing poverty.

The only PRSP to date that applies a GAD approach to mainstreaming gender, albeit imperfectly, is Rwanda's.⁶ Why Rwanda succeeded in gender mainstreaming and lessons it provides for other countries is discussed next.

Why Rwanda Succeeded in Engendering its PRSP. Rwanda succeeded in engendering its PRSP because it initiated a series of deliberate steps, backed by strong moral and financial commitment, described below:⁷

⁴ A similar aggregation of sex-disaggregated data also occurred in Ghana following its participatory process, thereby undermining the potential to challenge gender-blind policies (Derbyshire 2002).

⁵ This finding based on interviews is contrary to Derbyshire's speculation that, "None of the available reports indicate that Oxfam GB or partner organisations have been involved in gender-related capacity building activities for other key stakeholder organisations."

⁶ Kenya's soon to be published PRSP is also supposed to mainstream gender.

⁷ The gender consultant's inputs consisted of 40 working days including 25 days for preparatory and analytical work done at home and 15 days for two missions culminating in the workshop at the end of the second mission.

First, the Ministry of Gender and the Promotion of Women (MIGEPROFE) hired an external gender expert to facilitate the process. The expert analyzed in detail how the IPRSP was not engendered and suggested how it could have mainstreamed gender.

Second, the consultant held meetings with the PRSP writing group at the Ministry of Economics and Finance (MINECOFIN) to ensure its members were committed to mainstreaming gender into the PRSP.

Third, PRSP stakeholders including MIGEPROFE, CSOs and PRSP writing team members tried to persuade the participatory exercise facilitators, also headed by an external consultant, of the importance of ensuring women's as well as men's views were solicited.

Fourth, the gender consultant designed a Workshop that MIGEPROFE and MINECOFIN co-sponsored to promote engendering the PRSP. Some 50 representatives from a broad range of sectors participated. Two dynamic civil society activists co-facilitated the Workshop. The MIGEPROFE and MINECOFIN ministers opened and closed the Workshop giving the Workshop a high profile. Presentations focused on the importance of integrating gender into the PRSP in order to achieve poverty reduction, and tools to engender the PRSP. Participants practiced using these PRSP engendering tools through a teamwork exercise to engender the gender-devoid IPRSP contents sector by sector including poverty and vulnerability; macroeconomics, debt, privatization and export promotion; agriculture, rural development, food security and microcredit; infrastructure -- transport, water and sanitation; health, education and information technology; and justice, human and legal rights, violence and the police. Teams formulated recommendations on how to engender the IPRSP text using tools provided.

Fifth, an inter-agency PRSP Engendering Committee was established at the consultant's suggestion to promote PRSP gender mainstreaming. Committee members consisted of the PRSP writing team Director, the MIGEPROFE Gender and Development Department Director and a representative of Pro-Femmes – the women's civil society groups umbrella organization.

It helped that the PRSP writing team Director was previously the MIGEPROFE Director of Administration but this was not sufficient to ensure the PRSP would be engendered -- evidenced by the unengendered IPRSP. All of the above steps together contributed to producing an engendered PRSP.

While engendering the participatory process and ensuring participatory inputs feed into PRSPs is important, it is also critical to convince writing teams of the importance of mainstreaming gender to achieve poverty reduction goals. Writers need training on how gender inequalities exacerbate poverty and on gender mainstreaming. Rwanda proved the validity of this approach.

Staffing and culture. Organizational capacity of staff – staff knowledge, skills and commitment to address gender issues in their work and their work culture – is one of the

essential elements Derbyshire identifies for gender mainstreaming. This evaluation barely touches on OGB headquarters gender mainstreaming capacity, the subject of a separate OGB gender mainstreaming review piece. This evaluation does reflect on country office and Oxfam International staff work culture capacity to gender mainstream PRSP advocacy work based on interviews.

Insufficient capacity on gender was one of the key elements contributing to weak work on gender and PRSPs according to several country level staff (Annex 4). None of the country offices whose staff were interviewed had gender experts. Some had gender focal points but they said they needed gender experts to be able to mainstream gender into the PRSP. Country office staff interviewed linked weak gender work in PRSPs specifically to lack of gender expertise, insufficient gender support from OGB and other Oxfam offices, lack of gender training and lack of conceptual clarity about what gender means. Several Oxfam country offices requested greater OGB support around gender and PRSP macroeconomic policy issues. Research and interviews conducted in each of the three stages of this evaluation corroborated these findings (Bell 2002; Derbyshire 2002; Annex 4).

Derbyshire comments on the uneven treatment of gender in OGB PRSP work between OH and country offices as follows: *“Whilst they could reflect particular local circumstances, opportunities and priorities, it seems likely that they also reflect lack of lack of support and guidance and limited gender-related knowledge and skills amongst Oxfam staff and partner organisations. Staff from two countries (Uganda and Albania) explicitly highlight the deficiencies of their own PRSP-related work in relation to gender and ask for additional support in this area of work.”* During Stage 3 interviews, staff from the Cambodia, Uganda and Vietnam offices requested more training on PRSP gender mainstreaming advocacy work.

One country office manager added that staff were confused by the conceptual differences between gender equity and gender equality. To eliminate confusion, Oxfam could use a relatively simple comprehensive gender equality definition encompassing gender equity like the following Sida definition: *“Gender equality refers to equal rights, opportunities and obligations of women and men and an increased potential for both women and men to influence, participate in and benefit from development processes”*.

Country office staff from several offices expressed lack of confidence in mainstreaming gender generally. One said, “mainstreaming gender is a “mysterious” process” and help is needed “in mainstreaming techniques”. To demystify gender mainstreaming and make it easy and possibly even fun to do, Oxfam should organize workshops providing hands-on practice in PRSP and general gender mainstreaming for all staff and local partners. If Oxfam alone is not equipped to provide such in-country training, it could partner with strategic allies specializing in this work.⁸

⁸ OGB managers proposed that Gender Action might provide engendering workshops for Oxfam staff. This report never intended to promote Gender Action but since the idea originated with OGB managers, Gender Action expresses interest in providing training at two levels – for Oxfam staff who need it and for developing country CSO partners. Gender Action is a new non-profit organization dedicated to mainstreaming gender into international development investments, especially those of the Multilateral Development Banks.

A special problem confronts transition country staff, for example those in Armenia and Vietnam, where local staff believe gender inequality is not a problem because their countries have gender equality laws and mass women's organizations. Oxfam country office managers point out these local staff also misunderstand gender, thinking gender refers only to women. These transition country misconceptions need to be debunked through gentle training.

Local levels, notably Oxfam country offices, need gender experts. Each of the nine OGB regions include gender among the regional managers' responsibilities. But with managers already overburdened, they have not all had time to focus on engendering PRSP work. Encouragingly, regions have begun hiring gender experts. Hopefully, countries will follow.

OI staff interviewed in DC apologetically confessed that their work on gender is "not up to level". They attributed this omission to lack of training and incentives. They said they would welcome gender training. This report strongly recommends training for OI staff in general gender awareness, gender and PRSPs, gender and trade -- given OI's role in the Oxfam trade campaign -- and broader gender and macroeconomics.⁹ Since OI shares offices with OA, it would be worthwhile to explore if OA might be interested in sharing the gender training to make it more cost-effective and expose as many Oxfam staff as possible to gender issues and engendering techniques.

It is beyond the purview of this report to explore the gamut of solutions available to transform all Oxfam staff into gender advocates. Therefore this report uses the most traditional approach, *training*, to *represent a range of transformational methods which could contribute to turning all Oxfam staff into committed, practicing gender advocates*. However, training is just one among various complementary change strategies Oxfam will need to explore and implement. One lesson in organizational experience is that engendering requires sustained nurturing. It is an on-going process that needs continuous work (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999). This lesson has been learned at OH where gender awareness has long been promoted and gender mainstreaming has been policy for the last several years. Despite OH's strong pro-gender position, it has learned that gender equality advocacy is not practiced automatically by all staff. Many staff need greater exposure to gender mainstreaming to turn them into gender advocates. OH should also take measure to ensure all staff become gender advocates in order to realize OGB's gender mainstreaming policy. Oxfam's PRSP experiences suggest that making everyone responsible for gender remains a challenge needing special and continuous interventions.

OGB's decision to initiate the present gender evaluation including this gender and PRSP analysis is an encouraging sign. There are several others embodied in the following commendable initiatives:

⁹ Although a glance at the new Oxfam trade campaign volume (OI 2002) indicates it flags gender (but not diversity), OI DC staff volunteered that they would benefit from learning about gender and trade links for their upcoming trade campaign advocacy.

- ◆ OGB PRSP case studies underway include gender and diversity mainstreaming assessments.
- ◆ Managers interviewed proposed using OGB's expanded PRSP budget effective in May 2002 to intensify mainstreaming gender into PRSPs.
- ◆ OGB and OA have initiated a PRSP email support mailing list. This is a strong initiative. Beyond it, OGB is considering developing a listserv. Oxfam could install an online gender advisory service listserv to respond to queries and provide just in time support modeled on the World Bank's stellar Education Advisory Service which provides multiple, rich and usually rapid responses from all corners of the world to queries.

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Besides analyzing Derbyshire's policy evaporation, WID and staff impediments affecting Oxfam's PRSP advocacy work, consultant Terms of Reference (TOR) for this evaluation posited the following hypotheses inviting comments about the causes for these disappointing outcomes (OGB 2002). Each of the TOR hypotheses are listed in Box 2 below, followed by the author's comments in italics about them that emerged from the evaluation.

BOX 2. Oxfam Hypotheses about Why Gender Mainstreaming Work has not Been Effective

The interim PRSPs to date would have little impact on changing gender inequality and the poverty of women because of women's lack of influence in the process and the low level of gender analysis involved.

This hypothesis is true. Women hardly contributed to the PRSP process. Furthermore, gender equality advocates were absent from the PRSP writing teams which consisted mainly of male Ministries of Finance, Economics and Planning officials, in some countries supplemented by bilateral donor financed external consultants.

That although gender was on our own lobbying agenda at the beginning of our work, this then gradually gave way to other priorities. This was due to a lack of institutional understanding of the issues and support mechanisms to ensure and facilitate gender mainstreaming in policy and lobbying work.

Oxfam's in-country PRSP advocacy work has tried to mainstream gender in some countries. The focus has been on the participatory process expected to feed into PRSPs. However, participatory inputs have not been considered by PRSP writing teams. Oxfam and civil society partners should hold governments accountable for integrating participatory inputs into PRSPs.

In some countries, staff felt they lacked skills to mainstream gender into participatory processes. Thus, it is correct to hypothesize that support mechanisms to ensure and facilitate gender mainstreaming were inadequate.

That participation of women's organisations is failing despite our lobbying because it is based on the myth that if you get differing civil society organisations to participate, they will all naturally agree with each other. That there are real difficulties in producing a strategy which reflects all the needs of differing groups, given their competing demands and the lack of resources to meet them. That a key opportunity for strategic alliance that is being missed is linking women's groups and CSOs with gender equality advocates in Governments and gender staff in donor organisations.

In this evaluation, civil society disunity never appeared as an issue. However, it is certainly true to conclude that gender equality advocates across sectors would be more effective if they allied.

That where gender sensitive strategies have been developed, this has resulted from governments with the political will to ensure this, combined with capable and strong umbrella and women's organisations, especially where these have analytical capacity for economic development, labour market structures etc

None of the Oxfam case countries had gender sensitive strategies even in countries like Uganda where women's organizations, including umbrella groups, are strong and have the analytical capacity for economic development, labour market structures etc Reasons include the lack of legitimacy of the PRSP process, disconnect between the participatory and writing processes, and the lack of involvement of women's organizations at the writing stage. Rwanda, though not an Oxfam case country, demonstrates that government political will, active civil society groups under a strong umbrella organization and analytical capacity were contributing factors to producing a gender sensitive PRSP.

The potential for implementation of PRSP commitments to gender equality is low because PRSPs do not address the issue of capacity for implementation.

Indeed, PRSPs do not address the issue of capacity for implementation. Regardless of this problem, hardly any PRSPs analyze and target gender inequalities. This gender neglect undermines the potential for poverty reduction.

Diversity needs to become a more integral part of Oxfam's agenda. A few PRSPs pay attention to ethnic minority and other diverse groups but in a scattered "WID" way rather than through mainstreaming.

Recommendations

This section summarizes the recommendations made throughout this report.

Oxfam should formulate an action plan to mainstream gender into PRSPs and back it with resources, as proposed by Workshop participants (Annex 1b).

Given Oxfam's present state of uneven and insufficient gender expertise among its country staff, Oxfam's PRSP gender mainstreaming strategy requires training country staff, local partners and PRSP writing teams about the value of gender mainstreaming for reducing poverty and of incorporating participatory inputs to enhance country PRSP ownership as well as in gender mainstreaming techniques.

Oxfam needs to formulate and implement a plan to bring all country offices up to a higher level on gender so they have the capacity to gender mainstream PRSPs and all other work. Country offices need gender experts who could assist and train their non-gender colleagues and partners. Regions have begun hiring gender experts. Countries should follow. To begin training country office staff including gender specialists, focal points and others on gender mainstreaming PRSPs, Oxfam could gather them together, perhaps in Oxford or Washington, for an intensive two day workshop devoted to gender mainstreaming perhaps as part of a broader PRSP workshop.

Country office gender training needs to be tailored to specific country needs. For example, tailored training should debunk former state-administered transition country staff misconceptions that gender inequality is not a problem in their countries because they have gender equality laws and mass women's organizations, and that gender refers only to women.

This report strongly recommends training for OI staff in general gender awareness, gender and PRSPs, gender and trade and broader gender and macroeconomics -- given OI's prominent advocacy role in PRSPs, the trade campaign, and broader macroeconomic issues. OI staff are interested in engendering their work but have little clue about how to proceed. Since OI shares offices with OA, it would be worthwhile to explore if OA might be interested in sharing the training to make it more cost-effective. If it seems worthwhile, OGB could send OI a PRSP and gender reading list with the following types of items: Bamberger et al 2001; Zuckerman 2001 and this report.

OH should also take measures to ensure all headquarters staff become gender advocates in order to realize OGB's gender mainstreaming policy. This PRSP evaluation suggests that making everyone responsible for gender remains a challenge needing special and continuous interventions.

Oxfam needs to also determine and focus its PRSP advocacy on critical action points. Hence OGB Gender Review Workshop participants proposed undertaking “a power analysis” to determine key PRSP entry points such as advocacy to ensure writing teams incorporate participatory inputs. A key part of this advocacy would be to convince writing teams of the importance of mainstreaming gender to achieve poverty reduction goals.

An effective way to transmit gender mainstreaming techniques to PRSP writing teams is through workshops where participants practice engendering PRSP contents sector by sector and issue. The Rwandan PRSP which mainstreams gender far better than any of the PRSPs examined for this review proved the validity of this approach (Rwanda 2002). To ensure its PRSP became engendered, Rwanda backed its commitment with sufficient investments in time and resources.

If Oxfam lacks resources to provide the PRSP gender mainstreaming training recommended for various target groups – Oxfam country offices, country partners and PRSP writing teams and OI staff, it could partner with strategic allies specializing in this work.¹⁰

As Oxfam expands its PRSP advocacy into participatory implementation monitoring, it should take every measure to ensure this initiative makes a difference in reducing poverty.

Oxfam should actually intensify PRSP gender and diversity mainstreaming since mandatory PRSPs legitimizing borrowing from the Bank and the Fund are here to stay for the foreseeable future. At the same time, Oxfam should focus on engendering PRSCs and PRGFs – respective Bank and Fund lending facilities for implementing economic, financial and trade liberalization regimes. All these instruments provide critical entry points for mainstreaming gender and diversity.

To eliminate confusion, Oxfam could use a relatively simple comprehensive gender equality definition encompassing gender equity like the following Sida definition: *“Gender equality refers to equal rights, opportunities and obligations of women and men and an increased potential for both women and men to influence, participate in and benefit from development processes”*.

OGB is considering developing a listserve. Oxfam could install an online gender advisory service listserve to respond to queries and provide just in time support modeled on the World Bank’s stellar Education Advisory Service which provides multiple, rich and usually rapid responses from all corners of the world to queries.

¹⁰ OGB managers proposed that Gender Action might provide engendering workshops for Oxfam staff. This report never intended to promote Gender Action but since the idea originated with OGB managers, Gender Action expresses interest in providing training at two levels – for Oxfam staff who need it and for developing country CSO partners. Gender Action is a new non-profit organization dedicated to mainstreaming gender into international development investments, especially those of the Multilateral Development Banks.

Diversity needs to become a more integral part of Oxfam's agenda. A few PRSPs pay attention to ethnic minority and other diverse groups but in a scattered "WID" way rather than through mainstreaming. All the above recommendations for gender apply to diversity too.

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Annex 1a
Gender Mainstreaming in Advocacy on PRSPs
Evaluation Workshop

Workshop Agenda

Facilitator:	Elsa Dawson, Programme Policy Team, Oxfam GB
Resource Person:	Elaine Zuckerman, a specialist in gender, poverty and macroeconomics, previously of the World Bank's Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Gender and Development Unit; President, Gender Action
Participants:	Primarily Oxfam GB staff, one key UK gender network person. See participants listed in Annex 2
Objectives:	To assess the extent to which gender has been addressed in Oxfam's lobbying on PRSPs
Key Outcomes sought:	Clarity about how to gain enhanced and more systematic integration of gender and diversity both in Oxfam's PRSP advocacy activities and in PRSPs themselves
Date:	4 th April 2002, 10.00-12.30.
Venue:	The Garden Room. Friends Meeting House, St Giles, Oxford

Prior to the meeting, participants should have familiarised themselves with Elaine Zuckerman's synthesis of the evaluation case studies – Armenia, Uganda and Vietnam (Annex 5)

<i>Time</i>	<i>Topic</i>
9:30	Arrival and coffee
10:00	Introductions to each other and to workshop format
10:15	Divide into two teams: Team I: How can OGB optimally ensure PRSPs become engendered? Team II: What are the major constraints preventing OGB from effectively engendering PRSPs, and how can they be overcome?
11:00	Coffee
11:15	Presentations of Conclusions by Participant Teams
11:45	Elaine – Lessons for Oxfam from Participants' Conclusions and Actual PRSP Outcomes
12:10	Discussion and Conclusions
12:30	CLOSE

Annex 1b
Gender Mainstreaming in Advocacy on PRSPs
Evaluation Workshop
April 4th 2002

OPENING: ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

The workshop began by soliciting participants' anticipated/hoped for outcomes for the day reflected in the following list:

- Clarity on what needs to change institutionally within Oxfam to improve work on PRSPs
- Pointers re gender and diversity for programme development and country visits
- What are the topline messages on how to integrate gender into PRSPs
- What are the constraints, obstacles in embedding gender into PRSPs
- Relationship between gender and secondary poverty
- Learning how to input gender into on-going work
- Getting an overview of work being done on the video on gender and PRSPs in Uganda
- Learning how Oxfam is dealing with PRSPs
- Learning how we are using materials we already have
- Learning the extent to which we give programme support and analysis
- Ideas on better engendering PRSPs and development aid

TEAM WORK

Participants self-selected either of two teams addressing the questions indicated below:

Team 1

Question: How can OGB optimally ensure PRSPs become engendered?

1. Analysis

Engender PRSPs with a gendered poverty analysis. Engender PPA and feed into PRSP

2. Design and consultation

- Process/participation who and how, where is the action? Need a power analysis of the production process. Who are the writers (often ODI)? Are women's groups involved? Go where the action is eg liberalisation is so critical that even if not part of the PRSPs we should focus on it.
- Content. Focus on specific sectors or all sectors?
- Build capacity of others to advocate and create political space for them to occupy.
- Network and link gender advocates across stakeholders to build broad coalition.
- Stop policy evaporation.

3. Implementation and monitoring

- Budgets (link to general budgeting)
- Build on participatory poverty monitoring eg UPPAP
- Donor performance (eg Tanzania, Nicaragua, Humanitarian)
- Understanding of existing organisations

4. Oxfam's Own work

- Do we want gendered partnership criteria? This requires long-term capacity-building, appraisal and monitoring of partners, self-audits, appraisal of institutional change over time

- Clearer gender objectives
- Performance management
- Strategic allies (gender experts, academics, support trainers?).

5. Conclusion

- Currently we are doing parts of the above. Key question is where do we need to focus?

Team 2

Question: What are the major constraints preventing OGB from effectively engendering PRSPs, and how can they be overcome?

1. Constraints

- Lack of clarity in field offices on expectations regarding priorities and gender mainstreaming.
- Lack of confidence/ownership in field offices – wait for directives from OH.
- Agenda is set by partners – how do we influence and support programme development?
- Hard to do! What does it look like when it is successful?
- How to translate analysis/policy into practical steps.
- We need systems that embed gender into business practices.
- OI structural split between programme and policy.
- Is gender a requirement? Whose responsibility?

2. Proposed Solutions

Internal

- Performance management – integrate gender into system, especially at a management level, so becomes common currency. Managers identify staff specific support needs (not necessarily training).
- Research – get the data right, TORs right, right consultants
- Set specific, achievable activities outcomes at national level (OK to be short-term)

External

- On PRSPs: support women's organisations in national processes, link into gender budgeting initiative, generate data.
- Longer-term: Traffic light system for appraising partners against gender.
- Specialize on gender analysis in PRSPs.

3. Discussion

- Need to understand long-term PRSP process and situate our work in this – long-term capacity-building as well as short-term – focus on writers of PRSPS
- Oxfam GB should discuss its policies and strategies with national NGO umbrella organisations.
- Do power analysis at a national level.

EVALUATION FINDINGS TO DATE

Elaine Zuckerman presented some preliminary findings from her OGB and OI interviews in Oxford UK and Washington DC.

- Gender awareness among OH and OGB field office staff seems to be very uneven. At OH, gender expertise appears to be concentrated in part of the Policy Department especially in the Right to Say and Diversity Group. Although OH reduced its larger centralized gender group to disperse gender experts and mainstream gender institutionwide, gender is not yet mainstreamed because of uneven gender awareness among staff, staff turnover and non-continuous gender training. Some staff who have not received gender induction or training seem oblivious to gender concerns. They expressed willingness to undergo gender training. OI staff have not been exposed to any gender training but are willing to attend workshops.

- Progress in engendering OGB field offices is very uneven because of distinct country cultures and different staff backgrounds. More gender training is needed at the country level too.

- Oxfam has invested large sums in developing PRSP participatory processes and engendering these processes which are meant to feed into PRSPs. Uganda is an example. Yet PRSPs are hardly engendered in Uganda and in other countries where Oxfam has organized PPAs and tried to engender them. There is a disconnect between the PPA and PRSPs processes. Now Oxfam is trying to ensure that participatory processes will play a key role in PRSP monitoring and evaluation. This strategy needs reassessing. PRSP writing teams seem to be composed of ministry of finance, economics and planning officials and donor-supported consultants. An example is the same key consultant-writer participated in both the Rwanda and Uganda PRSPs.

- A concern is that OGB is promoting gender budgets at every opportunity in every country, like it has done with participatory exercises. Gender budgets are very costly and might not yield anticipated impacts. While gender budget analysis is an important initiative revealing the extent of expenditures targeting males and females specifically, they might end up sitting on shelves. If OGB continues to promote gender budgets, it should equally allocate funding into ensuring national budgets use gender budget results.

DISCUSSION

Genevieve: There are 2 interrelated processes to deal with 1) internal gender mainstreaming issues 2) PRSP process

Fiona: How much is Oxfam trying to influence DFID on this?

Max: The DFID institutional finance team (IFID) which does PRSP work is sponsoring poverty impact assessments. Gender was raised at their last meeting but had not previously been on their agenda (Oxfam attends these meetings).

Genevieve: the Gender and Development Network met with DFID last year to discuss this. Some Social Development Advisers in DFID are questioning whether DFID's gender policy can be implemented through PRSP work ie there's an internal difference of opinion with the PRSP internal group. They are happier to talk about the PRSP process than the content. GAD network trying to influence this debate.

Becky: -The problem of the disconnect between the PPA process and writers is mirrored within Oxfam GB ie the programme/policy split.

-We need to think about where the pressure points are to work for gender eg if gender budgeting doesn't work what are the other entry points?

Chris: -Regions may have different views to Oxfam House on World Bank (NB Elaine's view that Oxfam has a remarkably supportive attitude toward the Bank

-Training must be accompanied by management accountability

-What's the right dispersal of gender experts in OGB to support this work? Do we need gender generalists or gender macro-economists?

Elaine: - Need both central and dispersed gender experts.

Max: We need to mainstream advocacy skills. And need to build capacity of our advocates on gender. Look downstream for budget analysis.

Constantino: Problem of Oxfam imposing its priority of gender on CSOs.

Fiona: -Solution must lie in long-term process of support to partners and working with them on institutionalising gender equity and making the links with poverty.

- OI policy people are very task-oriented on specific SCOs so cross-cutting work eg on gender is not really happening. NOVIB has a role in SCO5 planning for OI but who has responsibility for ensuring the gender is actually mainstreamed in OI work?

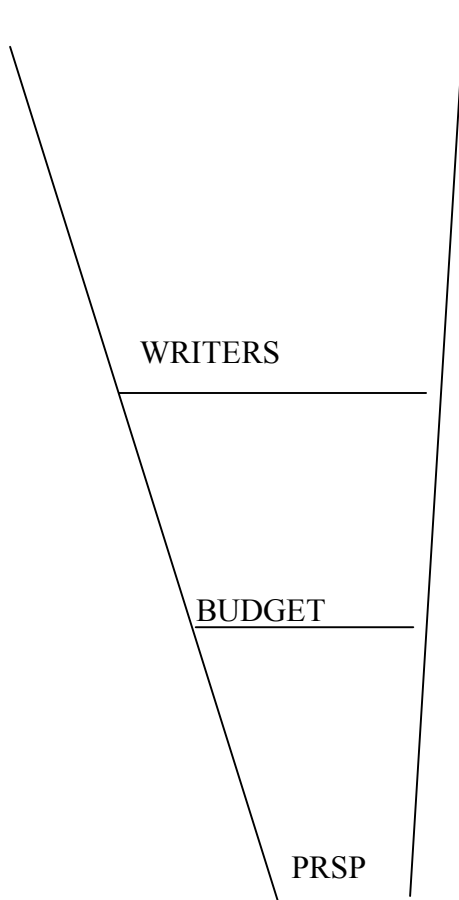
SOME CONCLUSIONS (note that several people had left by this stage of the workshop)

1. **Lobby DFID writers. If this is to be sustainable this lobbying must happen at national level.**
2. **Oxfam should get directly involved in national platform of OGB and partners as does NOVIB as this would provide a forum for discussing policy.**
3. **Do a power analysis by mapping actors across the process. CSOs ->writers -> Govt. Could this be done as part of the rest of the case-studies?**
4. **Need an action plan with allocation of resources.**

DIAGRAM ON THE PRSP PROCESS

Elsa Dawson

CSO/Gender inputs



Specific Terms Of Reference for Elaine Zuckerman

Responsibilities

1. Interview OI (and World Bank if time) staff, and read relevant papers including Helen Derbyshire's desk study report: 2 days
2. Synthesise the results of three case studies for gender and diversity, more if time permits and they have taken place: 3 days
3. Plan and conduct the five hour staff workshop as an externally facilitated internal review and interview those unable to attend the workshop in Oxford. This includes half a day for planning the workshop with the gender review team: 5 days
4. Summarise the key findings of the workshop, case studies and desk review in a final succinct 10-12 draft report. Circulate this to key stakeholders and incorporate comments before finalizing report: 4 days

Annex 3
Persons Met and Interviewed during March and April 2002

PERSON	DATES	BASE ORGANIZATION	FORM OF MEETINGS AND/OR INTERVIEWS
Bloomer, Phil	April 4	OGB, Oxford	In-person meeting
Bradshaw, Sarah	April 4	Middlesex U, London/Punta de Encuentro – OGB partner in Nicaragua	Teleconference
Buell, Becky	April 4	OGB, Oxford	Workshop
Burgess, Ann	April 2-5	OGB, Oxford	Logistics Meetings
Buston, Oliver	March 4	OI, Washington DC	In-person meeting
Cano, Sonia	April 4	OI, Honduras	Teleconference
Casasbuenas, Constantino	April 2-5	OGB, Oxford	In-person meetings and workshop
Dawson, Elsa	April 2-4	OGB, Oxford	In-person meetings and workshop
Gell, Fiona	April 2-4	OGB, Oxford	In-person meetings and workshop
Hyun, Mia	April 5	OA, Cambodia	Teleconference
Kline, Sarah	April 2-5	OGB, Oxford	In-person meeting
Lawson, Max	April 2-5	OGB, Oxford	In-person meetings and workshop
Painter, Genevieve	April 4	One World Action, London	Workshop
Perry, Lynne	April 2-5	OGB, Oxford	Logistics Meetings
Roche, Chris	April 4	OGB, Oxford	In-person meetings and workshop
Roseveare, Caroline	April 3-4	OGB, Oxford	In-person meetings and workshop
Totterdell, Sarah	April 4	OGB, Oxford	Workshop
Twyford, Phil	March 26	OI, Washington DC	In-person meeting
Varga, Octavio	April 4	OGB, Oxford	Workshop
Watkins, Kevin	April 17	OGB, Oxford	Teleconference
Woodhouse, Mandy	April 4	OGB, Vietnam	Teleconference
Wordofa, Dereje	April 4	OGB, Uganda	Teleconference