

Term of Reference for Review of the Gender Strategy of Helvetas (2006-2011) in Vietnam

1. Context

In 2006, Helvetas developed a Gender Policies and Strategy, which formulated three main components or focus areas:

- Engendering all steps and processes of the programme/project cycle
- Engendering the organization
- Gender specific activities

A first quick review revealed that there are a number of gaps in implementing the strategy, albeit it was noted that there were also large difference between countries. From this “State of the Art on Gender” it appeared that four countries were doing rather well, while four countries were not doing so well, based on a set of four criteria (gender focal point, action plan, significant gender budget and gender disaggregated data for M&E), which are also part of the Gender strategy. At the Programme Directors seminar in July 2009, the results were discussed and it was decided to hold peer-peer reviews between countries that seem to be performing well and countries that had some difficulties. Where peer-peer reviews is not feasible, self-evaluation was suggested.

Acting in Vietnam for more than 10 years, Helvetas Vietnam has always tried to take gender issues into account. The projects were formulated in a gender sensitive way, its staff were requested to be updated and aware of the question. In line with Helvetas Gender Policy and Strategy (2006-2011), Helvetas Vietnam made in 2008 an gender aware analysis for the Helvetas staff and develop an Action Plan for mainstreaming gender in its work in Vietnam. The Action Plan seek to improve the capacity of its staff at the RO office as well as at all the projects on gender mainstreaming in project work in response to projects needs and as a first step to operationalise the gender strategy in Helvetas country program in Vietnam.

Hence, Helvetas Vietnam is looking for a gender consultant to assess how far the components, the entry points and the actions, as formulated in the strategy, have been implemented, where the weaknesses are, and what lessons we can learn from the experience. This will be input for a revised strategy on gender, that will come into effect in 2012, and for which a revision will take place in 2011.

2. Objectives

- To make critical reflection on the implementation of the gender strategy in Vietnam programme
- To make concrete recommendations gender mainstreaming and gender specific activities in country programme (e.g. increased number of action plans, target is 100%), including funding mechanisms.

3. Methodology

The gender consultant is required to consult the Helvetas Gender Policy and Strategy, She/he will conducts the assessment with the respective gender focal point of each country. The process is suggested as follow:

- a) **inform** the team of the purpose and process

b) **country assessment** by assessment team (consultant and gender focal point), which includes the gender focal point, using attached guiding questions. E.g. by letting project staff fill out a questionnaire, by interviewing individual staff members, especially project managers and relevant partners, or by discussing the questions in a workshop setting with the staff.

c) **discuss the outcomes** with the team

d) **identify strategies and action points** with the team, based on the outcomes of the assessment. This could be combined with the assessment itself in a workshop setting, or could be a separate meeting. The advantage of a peer reviewer would be that s(he) could come with ideas from their own country but can also take ideas back.

The interview within Helvetas team is coordinated by the respective gender focal point. The gender focal point will also organise meeting with several partners, the name: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; Cao Bang Department of Home Affairs and Cao Bang Department of Planning and Investment; Hoa Binh Department of Agriculture and Rural Development; Hoa Binh Technical college.

It is up to the arrangement, the reviews can either be in the form of face to face interview or by filled up questionnaires.

4. Guiding questions for the review

Human Resources, Gender focal point

- Does the Country programme have human resources in place with experience in gender? Is there a gender focal point? Does the team know this is the focal point and what he/she is supposed to do?
- Is there a ToR for the gender focal point? Has it been discussed with the team?
- Does the gender focal point have the opportunity to bring in ideas and recommendations to the projects on gender?
- What recommendations were taken up and what was not?
- What is the composition of the team(s)? Is there a gender balance? What efforts are made to achieve a gender balance in teams and leadership positions?
 - What would you recommend, what could be improved?

Gender action plan

- How was the gender analysis done? If not, why not?
- Are activities coherent with the finding of the analysis?
- Do the planned activities match with the project activities?
- Do the planned activities allow to obtain the expected results?
 - What would you recommend, what could be improved?

Gender in projects

- Have the gender issues been addressed in the programme, in the various projects?
- Are the objectives engendered?
- How have gender issues been addressed?
- Have roles and responsibilities to mainstream gender been defined? Has this been respected?
- Has accountability to gender equality strategies been highlighted?

- What would you recommend, what could be improved?

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Have the planned activities on gender been implemented in a sustainable way?
- Are activities documented in a way that allows for impact in the longterm?
- Is gender disaggregated data and information available?
- Have the expected gender outputs and outcomes been reached (assumptions versus facts)?
- Have the links between benefits for women and men, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming efforts and development outputs/outcomes been focused on?
- Have the intended/unintended impacts for women and men been examined?
- Have the links between exclusion of a gender perspective and the results of the project been highlighted?
 - What would you recommend, what could be improved?

Partners

- Do partners have the capacity to work on changing gender relations?
- Is there sufficient commitment from partners and donor organisations?
- Have strategies for building partnerships on gender equality been developed and implemented? With which results?
- Are gender sensitive stakeholders involved? (E.g. women’s groups, department of women’s affairs, department for human rights)
 - What would you recommend, what could be improved?

Indicators as formulated in the strategy

- Number of country programmes/projects planned in a gender sensitive way
- Number of staff/partners who have participated in a gender training (m/w)
- Percentage of programme budget allocated and used for supporting the gender mainstreaming process (staff, trainings, analysis and specific activities)
- How would you judge the level of staff knowledge, skills and attitudes with regard to mainstreaming gender?
- Staff ratio by position and sex

With an external consultant, the assessment can be conducted as per time availability of the consultant and the country team. Therefore, the assessment in Laos or Vietnam can be conducted earlier than other country.

5. Timeframe

The assessment and review is conducted in September 2010.

No of days	Date	Activity	
3		Desk review and preparation	
2		Interview Helvetas Vietnam staff and partners	
4		Interview Helvetas staff and partners in Cao Bang	
1		Reflection meeting with Helvetas Vietnam	
3		Reporting	

6. Report

A report in English that reflects all the mentioned points in the guiding question will be sent to Helvetas one week after the mission. Lessons learnt and follow up recommendations are made.

7. Qualification of national consultant

The consultant is expected to have:

- Master's degree or higher in development studies, sociologies, anthropology
- Substantial hands-on experience in development projects, gender, gender mainstreaming, social inclusion in Vietnam
- Experience in conducting participatory assessment, study and research
- Good facilitation skills and English proficiency.

Interested candidates should send the following documents electronically:

- Curriculum Vitae, 3 pages maximum, with at least 2 letters of reference from prior places of employment or contact names and details of your referees
- Two samples of training reports that he/she has conducted

to the following persons: Ms Nguyen Lam Giang at lam.giang@helvetas.org before 31th August 2010.