

LEARNING PRODUCT

# Women's Empowerment in Rural Community- Driven Development Projects



**IEG**  
INDEPENDENT  
EVALUATION GROUP

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**WHAT  
WORKS**



# Women's Empowerment in Rural Community-Driven Development Projects

**An IEG Learning Product**

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# Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CBO	community-based organization
CDD	community-driven development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
ICR	Implementation Completion and Results
ICRR	Implementation Completion and Results Review
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
KDP	Kecamatan Development Program
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MASAF	Malawi Social Action Fund
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
NGO	nongovernmental organization
MIS	monitoring information system
NSP	National Solidarity Project
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OED	Operations Evaluation Department
PNPM	Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Mandiri (National Program for Community Empowerment)
PPAR	Project Performance Assessment Report
PRF	Poverty Reduction Fund
SHG	self-help group
TASAF	Tanzania Social Action Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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# Highlights and Lessons Learned

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## ***Features of CDD***

- ❖ Community-driven development (CDD) projects aim to empower communities, in particular disadvantaged members. They target women as beneficiaries and many directly refer to women's empowerment (chapter 2).
- ❖ CDD interventions have the potential to address some of the constraints to women's economic, political, and social empowerment that exist in the rural areas where they operate. Their activities can have both direct impacts (especially on economic empowerment) and indirect impacts (mostly on political and social empowerment) (chapter 3).
- ❖ CDD projects use diverse strategies to ensure that women participate in the community needs identification process and in subprojects' selection and prioritization stages. The most common strategy is the use of quotas. This participation is regularly tracked in monitoring and evaluation frameworks (chapter 3).
- ❖ CDD programs pay less attention to ensuring women's participation in project implementation, operation and maintenance, and monitoring (chapter 3).
- ❖ Indicators of empowerment are typically limited to *outputs* of project activities rather than development *outcomes*. Impacts "outside the project boundaries," or spillovers, are rarely measured, partly because impact evaluations are still very few (chapters 2 and 4).

## ***Results of CDD***

- ❖ CDD programs generally succeed in increasing female participation in village committees. Less is known about the impacts of this participation because most of the programs do not measure the quality and results of participation (chapter 4).
  - ❖ CDD programs that support livelihoods or income-generating activities often succeed in improving women's access to credit, training, and jobs. Impacts on *economic* empowerment in terms of changes in earnings, consumption, productivity, education, and health are not normally measured (chapter 4).
  - ❖ CDD programs can increase women's voice and decision making in project activities, especially when a share of subprojects is reserved for women to choose. *Political* empowerment at higher levels, such as women's ability to engage with local authorities or participate in the formal political process, is not normally measured (chapter 4).
  - ❖ Mixed evidence exists regarding impacts on *social* empowerment. In some cases higher participation in project's activities led to higher social capital, voice, and decision making in the community, but not always. Little is known of changes at the household level (chapter 4).
  - ❖ Because CDD interventions can impact empowerment both "within" and "outside" the project boundaries and irrespective of their stated goal, they would benefit from being
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more intentional in defining, discussing, and measuring empowerment in their results chain (chapter 5).

- ❖ The design of CDD projects could benefit from being informed by gender-specific needs assessments to identify the constraints that women face in the rural space where they operate. CDD interventions can enhance women’s empowerment and inclusion by addressing those constraints in their design, or leave women behind for lack of doing so (chapter 5).
  - ❖ Impacts on empowerment may take time to materialize, and depend on a range of factors, several beyond the project’s span of control. CDD interventions should better frame what they can affect both in the short- and in the long-term (chapter 5).
  - ❖ More systematic assessment, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation are needed to increase learning of what works to increase women’s empowerment through CDD (chapter 5).
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# Management Response

World Bank Management welcomes the IEG learning product, *Women's Empowerment in Rural Community-Driven Development Projects*. Management appreciates the active engagement with IEG during the preparation of the report, which provided an opportunity to learn from successful efforts to engage women through the community-driven development (CDD) approach. In response to the final product, Management has the following comments.

While the report brings forward many useful insights and suggestions, Management feels that the opportunity to gain knowledge from CDD programs regarding women's voice and agency would have been maximized if the report had focused more on extracting helpful lessons on what has worked and why. Rather than exploring in detail the conditions under which CDD operations have encouraged women's participation and empowerment, the report appears to have taken a more evaluative perspective, highlighting what CDD projects didn't do, or didn't do enough of, in terms of participation and empowerment. The problem with this approach is that women's empowerment is rarely part of the stated objective of CDD projects. Thus it should not be surprising that projects did not dedicate more time and effort to measuring and analyzing the complex facets and dynamics of empowerment. For this reason, a number of statements in the report may be ambiguous and misleading on the overall achievements of CDD programs if taken out of context.

At the same time, Management agrees that it is worthwhile for all projects to seek, either directly or indirectly, to enhance women's participation and empowerment whenever feasible, and that there are valuable lessons to be learned from CDD projects that have resulted in greater voice, participation and agency of the citizens of poor communities (including both men and women). The report's learning value for staff would be enhanced by more deeply exploring and better presenting the specific contextual dynamics and design elements of CDD projects in which women's voice and agency appear to have improved as well as by drawing lessons from operations that explicitly target women's empowerment to help enhance this dimension of CDD operations. Management remains ready to work closely with IEG in this further level of learning during the dissemination phase of the report, as IEG proposed.

# 1. Introduction

Community-driven development (CDD) interventions rest on the principle of empowering communities. Yet, the gender-specific impacts of CDD, especially on empowerment, have not received due attention in evaluation and, more generally, in the theoretical and empirical literature. There are several reasons for this. First, programs may not have gender-specific outcomes as explicit objectives. Second, even when they do indicate that they want to increase women's participation and inclusion, programs are not very specific about which dimensions of female empowerment they can plausibly affect, which activities need to be implemented to make a difference (and in what sequence), and in which timeframe one can reasonably expect results. Finally, there are few impact evaluations that measure the effects of CDD on various dimensions of empowerment in a sex-disaggregated way.

This report explores evidence of how the CDD approach can create and enhance participation and decision making when women, as well as men, are to be included in the "community" voice and choice. It reviews the theoretical and empirical literature and analyzes World Bank-supported CDD projects. Its intent is to help practitioners who implement CDD interventions more explicitly define, discuss, and integrate gender-relevant elements in the design of CDD projects; be more effective in implementing and monitoring features that may affect men and women differently; and identify meaningful indicators and information to assess gender impacts.

The available evidence discussed in this report shows that CDD projects typically mention women among their intended beneficiaries and succeed in engaging women through participation (chapter 2). Projects increasingly respond to the findings of social assessments and gender assessments in the project design. They commonly include activities to engage women, particularly to support their participation in project activities. They are less likely to take steps to ensure that women's participation improves their standing in the community and contributes to overcoming the specific obstacles they face in the rural space (chapter 3). CDD projects track mostly output, not intermediate or development outcome indicators. This limits the evidence about their impact on the economic, political, and social empowerment of women (chapter 4).

As a result, evidence, where it exists, is mostly about the immediate impacts of the project on the inclusion of women and on some of the economic benefits from the project's activities. Positive impacts are documented on outputs such as participation and engagement, and in some cases on intermediate outcomes such as social capital and women's increased confidence. These results are mostly restricted to the CDD project sphere. Very little information is found on impacts of CDD on the economic, political,

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

and social empowerment of women at the level of broad development outcomes. Where it exists, evidence is mixed on effects on women’s political participation and attitudes and behavior change with respect to gender roles within formal and informal institutions. It is unclear if this is because such effects are negligible or because they haven’t been properly measured and documented.

It is important to recognize that CDD projects by themselves cannot be expected to easily change social norms, perceptions, and attitudes that have been in existence for generations, especially when it comes to women’s empowerment. CDD projects are only one element in the broader country context. Yet, addressing empowerment more explicitly in the results chain and documenting evidence even when it is about contribution and not causation can help define the potential role of these projects and learn about their impact.

### Methodology

This report uses evidence from 20 longstanding rural CDD programs<sup>1</sup> that have received sustained support from the World Bank (the list is presented in Appendix 1, Table A.1). The analysis was guided by the following key questions:

Do CDD interventions result in women’s economic, social, and/or political empowerment, as well as men’s? And what are the conditions (including contextual elements) and the design elements that enhance or hamper these impacts?

Specifically, the report aims to address:

- Design elements: How are CDD projects designed to enhance women’s economic, political, and social empowerment?
- Indicators: How do CDD projects measure women’s economic, political, and social empowerment?
- Outputs, intermediate outcomes, and outcomes: What are the outputs, intermediate outcomes, and outcomes of CDD projects for women’s economic, political, and social empowerment?

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<sup>1</sup> This report uses the terms “project” and “intervention” interchangeably to indicate the bundle of activities that are planned and implemented to achieve the CDD goals. The report also uses “project” in a more specific way to indicate the individual World Bank loan supporting a CDD intervention, as opposed to “program,” which is used to identify a series of loans (individual projects) to support over time a specific CDD in a given country. For example, the Indonesia PNMP Rural (National Community Empowerment Program in rural areas) has been supported by four completed projects so far.

To answer these questions, the report:

- Reviewed gender dimensions of CDD projects, using project documents and other project-specific analysis, as well as IEG evidence, particularly from project performance assessment reports (PPARs) (eight of the programs reviewed had a PPAR); and
- Reviewed the theoretical literature on female empowerment and on gender impacts on CDD (including, when available, impact evaluations).

## **Organization**

The report is organized as follows: chapter 2 reviews the concept of empowerment, presents the CDD approach, and discusses its potential to affect women's empowerment. This section analyzes the narrative around empowerment in project documents and how it is reflected in the results framework – and links these with the broader theoretical literature on women's empowerment. Chapter 3 discusses gender features of selected World Bank-supported CDD interventions and how they relate to women's constraints to economic, political, and social empowerment, especially in rural areas. Chapter 4 presents the available evidence on women's economic, political, and social empowerment. Chapter 5 discusses the findings and their implications.

## 2. The Community-Driven Development Approach and Women’s Empowerment

This chapter reviews the concept of empowerment, and how it applies to CDD. It makes a distinction between empowerment as a process and empowerment as a goal, and organizes the potential impacts of CDD projects in three domains – economic, political, and social. It proposes a results chain for CDD that explicitly incorporates empowerment dimensions at the level of outputs, intermediate outcomes, and development outcomes, and identifies empowerment indicators at those levels.

Community-driven development (CDD) is “an approach to local development that gives control over planning decisions and investment resources to community groups (including local governments).”<sup>1</sup> The approach has been widely used at the World Bank and elsewhere in different contexts, including fragility and conflict.<sup>2</sup> CDD interventions are based on the principle that community involvement in identifying needs and priorities, making decisions about investments, and managing investment funds can produce better development outcomes than more centralized, top-down approaches. Moreover, involving communities is also an end in itself – the “bottom-up approach” to poverty reduction that CDD projects embed has been promoted on the grounds that it makes development more inclusive and responsive to the real needs of the poor, because it has the potential to empower poor people, improve governance, build social capital, strengthen communities’ collective action, and shift public spending to represent the needs of the excluded (Mansuri and Rao, 2013; Casey, Glennerster, and Miguel, 2012).

Although specific CDD objectives may differ, empowerment is a foundational element of all CDD projects. CDD objectives can include expanding access to services by strengthening education, health, and access to markets; public infrastructure projects;

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank CDD core course material:

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTCDD/Resources/430160-1361480685593/9058621-1366731546330/Session1\\_IntroductionCDD.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTCDD/Resources/430160-1361480685593/9058621-1366731546330/Session1_IntroductionCDD.pdf). This definition corresponds to the one provided in the PRSP Sourcebook: “Community-driven development (CDD) gives control of decisions and resources to community groups.” (World Bank 2003, p. 3).

<sup>2</sup> The World Bank Group invests a sizeable part of its portfolio in CDD projects. According to more recent data (as of December 2015) from the CDD Community of Practice at the World Bank Group, the CDD portfolio consists of 178 active projects across 72 countries for \$17.1 billion in active financing and 5 to 10 percent annual World Bank lending. With the World Bank’s support, the CDD approach has a great potential to advance the gender equality agenda.

increasing collective or individual income and consumption through microfinance and skill development; supporting local governance or decentralization; and helping the government to reconnect with its citizens and rebuild trust after a period of conflict. Irrespective of the specific objective, though, there is a common CDD approach, which consists of empowering communities by giving them more control over development resources and strengthening their ability to identify priorities and manage development activities directly. Because of the specific modality used to achieve these various objectives – through direct community involvement – empowerment is central to the CDD approach.

Communities are diverse – made of different groups with different preferences and goals, facing different constraints and responding differently to incentives. In most communities poor women are likely to be more disempowered than their male neighbors. CDD projects often recognize this explicitly and, to increase the agency of disempowered people in these communities, they seek to make specific efforts to reach and empower women.

By giving voice to women, CDD provides an opportunity for women to influence local decisions so that they more closely reflect their preferences and their needs, as stressed by the recent World Bank Group Gender Strategy (World Bank 2015). CDD projects may also generate indirect positive impacts to the extent that they succeed in decreasing poverty and boosting communities' well-being. The strong link between poverty reduction and gender equality (World Bank 2011a) thus provides a rationale for an additional focus on women's empowerment (World Bank 2007). Moreover, because most CDD projects are implemented in rural areas, they can drive change where women tend to be at greater disadvantage and gaps are wider. Investing in rural women was, indeed, identified as one of the priority areas for "global action" in the World Development Report 2012 on Gender Equality (World Bank 2011a, Table 9.1).

Even when CDD projects are successful in increasing women's participation in project activities, they may not succeed in achieving sustained and lasting change in local decision-making or on shifting social norms. This is because CDD projects may not have changing power relationships as their main and explicit goal, or they may not recognize that the project could be an opportunity to do so. Furthermore, empowering communities, especially traditionally excluded groups, takes time and cannot be accomplished simply by a project. Encouraging communities toward greater inclusion may not necessarily change power brokers within the communities (Casey, Glennerster, and Miguel, 2012). Finally, specific CDD interventions may be more successful in effecting some specific types of empowerment than others. One research study on Sierra Leone "GoBifo" project found the distribution of benefits within a community to be

more equitable for local infrastructure projects, while no fundamental change was achieved at the political or social level (Casey, Glennerster, and Miguel, 2012).

## **Empowerment and CDD: A Process and an Outcome**

Involving communities and empowering them to take control of decisions regarding their own development is both the means to achieve better development outcomes and an outcome in its own right. Empowerment is embedded in the whole approach and at all stages of the CDD results chain: “targeted community-driven approaches devolve control and decision making to poor women and men, which empowers them immediately and directly.” (World Bank 2003, p. 308). It is both a final objective and a functional one to achieving other project objectives – for example, to increase income and access to services (Jorgensen 2005). Thus, it is a *process* – to achieve other outcomes – and an *outcome* in itself. This distinction is important as we assess empowerment in relation to CDD projects.

Empowerment has different interpretations. The World Bank, defining its approach to empowerment for economic growth and poverty reduction, describes empowerment as “... the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives” (World Bank 2002, p.14; Narayan 2005, p. 5). This definition highlights the dimensions of choice, action, and ability to influence institutions. According to Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland (2006), empowerment is about strengthening individuals’ asset-based agency and their ability to change the institutional rules that shape human behavior and social interactions. Community members who are able to participate in making key decisions and effectively exercise their voice and choice are empowered – and this is an outcome that CDD interventions have the potential to pursue for the community as a whole, for its male and female members, and for the poor and other traditionally excluded groups, such as ethnic minorities.

Because it is complex and multifaceted, measurement of empowerment presents several challenges (Narayan, 2005; Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland, 2006).

First, the multidimensional nature of “empowerment” makes it difficult to measure with simple metrics (for example, being empowered in one dimension does not necessarily imply being empowered in another dimension; see Kabeer 2001 and 2012; Duflo 2012).

Second, as mentioned earlier, empowerment is both a process and an outcome. Finding an indicator able to capture the process of empowerment as opposed to a (static) outcome has proven difficult. Outcomes can be more easily expressed using

quantitative data, but measuring processes requires (participatory) qualitative data collection and analysis. Balancing the use of quantitative versus qualitative data to measure empowerment is challenging, but necessary to capture its many facets (O'Neil, Domingo, and Valters 2014; Kabeer 2001; Rao and Woolcock 2005).

Third, empowerment is highly contextual, because social, cultural, political, and economic conditions vary across societies and over time, as do institutions. Empowerment also depends on the characteristics of the groups that are part of the population.

Fourth, comparing different groups, such as men and women, requires a deeper analysis than solely looking at averages and sex-disaggregated indicators. Men and women face different constraints which are also based on age, race, social status, education, and other socioeconomic characteristics (Pereznieto and Taylor 2014); hence, both individual-level "absolute" indicators and relative measures are needed to assess empowerment and capture the power dynamics within the community and the household. All these difficulties explain why thus far, despite the existence of multiple indicators and indices, there are no universally agreed measures or indicators of female empowerment (Box 2.1).

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### Box 2.1 Approaches to Measuring Female Empowerment

Different institutions have proposed their own measures of gender equality and women's empowerment, each reflecting their distinct emphases and perspectives. The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) *Gender Development Index*, *Gender Empowerment Measures*, and *Gender Inequality Index* capture absolute levels of women's economic participation, economic opportunity, political empowerment, educational attainment, and health and well-being. The World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Index* measures gender gaps in four dimensions: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, overall health, and political empowerment. The Economist Intelligence Unit's *Women's Economic Opportunity Index* covers five dimensions of women's empowerment: labor policy and practice; women's economic opportunity; access to finance, education, and training; women's legal and social status; and the general business environment. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) *Social Institutions and Gender Index* focuses on social institutions that impact equality between men and women, and considers the four dimensions of family code, physical integrity, ownership rights, and civil liberties. Alkire and others (2013) developed the *Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index* to measure the impact of agricultural interventions on women's empowerment in five domains: production, resources, income, leadership, and time. The World Bank Group's *Women, Business, and the Law* database compiles information on laws, regulations, and institutions that differentiate between women and men in seven areas: accessing institutions, using property, getting a job, providing incentives to work, building credit, going to court, and protecting women from violence.

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## CHAPTER 2

### THE COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT APPROACH AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

In addition to indices, other measures are derived from household-level data. Alkire and Ibrahim (2007) propose a shortlist of internationally comparable indicators of individual agency and empowerment. Alsop and Heinsohn (2005) assess degrees of empowerment within three domains and eight subdomains: state (justice, politics, and service delivery), market (credit, labor, and goods) and society (family and community) at three levels – macro, intermediate, and micro. The recently launched Roadmap for Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative (Buvinic and others 2013; Buvinic and Furst-Nichols 2014, 2016) analyzes best practices and recommends outcome measures (direct, intermediate, and final) of women's economic empowerment, classified along increased productivity, income, and well-being. Many researchers and institutions propose single indicators or a combination of indicators that can be reported disaggregated by sex and collected at the community, household, or individual level using a variety of methods.

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### Empowerment: Economic, Political, and Social Dimensions

Empowerment is typically conceptualized in three domains: economic, political, and social. Economic empowerment refers to the market domain, in which a person is an economic actor. Political empowerment refers to the state domain, in which a person is a civic actor. Social empowerment refers to the society domain, in which a person is a social actor (Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland 2006; World Bank 2007).

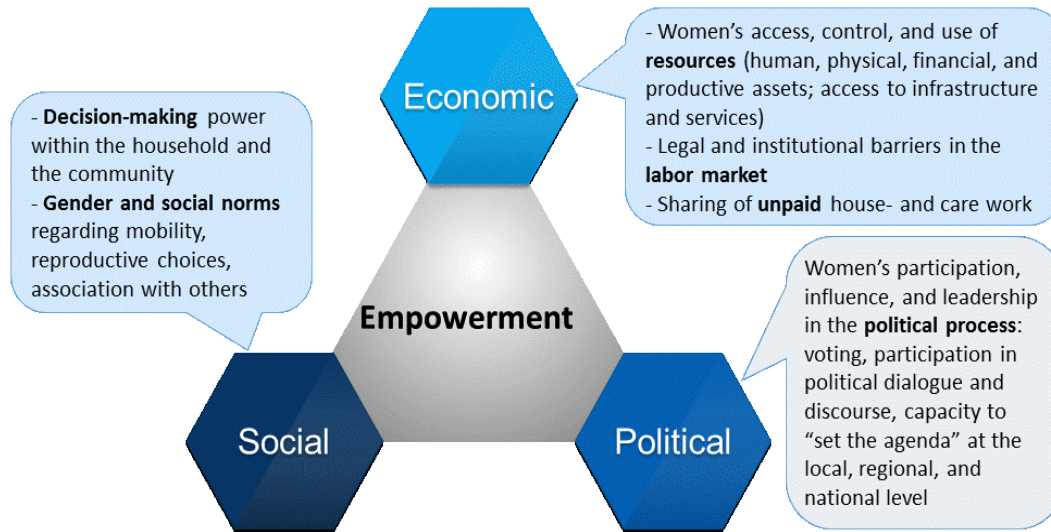
The manifestations and measurement of what empowerment is about, however, depend on the context and on the characteristics of each group in the society. Changes in empowerment for one person or group cannot be assumed to apply to other individuals or groups (Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland 2006). Furthermore, little is known about whether changes in one realm of empowerment (such as economic) could have negative repercussions in another realm of empowerment (such as social).

Women's empowerment means creating the conditions for women to be able to make choices, which implies that women may have different preferences than men, but also different abilities to make choices because of gender inequalities in bargaining power and access to resources (these constraints will be reviewed in the next chapter).

*Economic* empowerment involves improving the ability of women to access resources and employment, higher productivity and earnings, and increases in the income, assets, expenditure, and consumption they control. The legal and institutional barriers in the labor market and the way unpaid domestic work and care work are shared at the household and societal levels heavily influence this domain. *Political* empowerment is about participation and decision making in formal institutions, including local government, interest groups, and civil society and women's ability to set and influence the political discourse. *Social* empowerment refers to women's status in society, which depends on social norms, gender roles within the household and the community, and

social capital. Figure 2.1 summarizes the main components of female empowerment; Appendix C presents a list of dimensions and indicators in the three domains.

**Figure 2.1. Dimensions of Women's Economic, Political, and Social Empowerment**



### How Is Female Empowerment Integrated in the CDD Results Chain?

Figure 2.2 summarizes the main elements of CDD projects and proposes a theoretical results chain that reflects the different stated objectives that CDD interventions may have for men and women (individual CDD projects may only have one or some of them). It also applies the broader empowerment framework to the specific case of CDD projects and identifies the manifestations of empowerment under the economic, political, and social domains that are pertinent to CDD.

To achieve their objectives, CDD projects include a number of activities (these may vary depending on the specific goal of the CDD intervention). They support training and facilitation activities aimed to strengthen the community organization and its decision-making role and capacity (*Institution building*), as well as assets creation through block grants provided to the communities (*Asset creation*) and income generation programs to individuals (*Livelihoods support*). *Program conditions* are meant to ensure greater inclusion and citizens' engagement.

CDD projects include activities aimed to strengthen community participation, decision making, and control of resources to enable communities to build assets and infrastructure and support income-generating activities. At the *Outputs* level, projects aim to ensure that community members are involved in choosing, planning, implementing, participating in, and monitoring subprojects. These outputs are meant to

## CHAPTER 2 THE COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT APPROACH AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

generate several *Intermediate outcomes*, which may include increased skills and capacity and improved livelihoods (at the economic level); increased voice and decision making in project activities and better ability to relate with local authority structures (at the political level); and increased social capital, social cohesion, and improved attitudes regarding the role of women in the household and the community (at the social level). The ultimate *Development outcomes* may include economic empowerment, in terms of higher income, consumption, productivity, assets and financial stability, as well as positive outcomes from better access to services (improvement in education, health, time savings, better quality of life); political empowerment, in terms of greater participation in the local political decision-making process; and social empowerment, in terms of positive changes in social relationships and gender norms. The conditions, design, outputs, and outcomes of each specific CDD intervention are influenced by formal and informal institutions, community characteristics, and social norms, including attitudes toward women's participation and empowerment (*Context*).

Figure 2.2 shows explicitly that the CDD approach has the potential to empower women as much as men in the economic, political, and social domain.

By increasing access to livelihood opportunities, jobs, and income, CDD projects can increase women's *economic empowerment*, to the extent that the choices regarding infrastructure, assets, and income-generating activities respond to the needs of both men and women. CDD projects can also improve access to services such as education and health, in ways that are particularly beneficial to women and girls and generate substantial time savings for women thanks to rural infrastructure, water in particular.

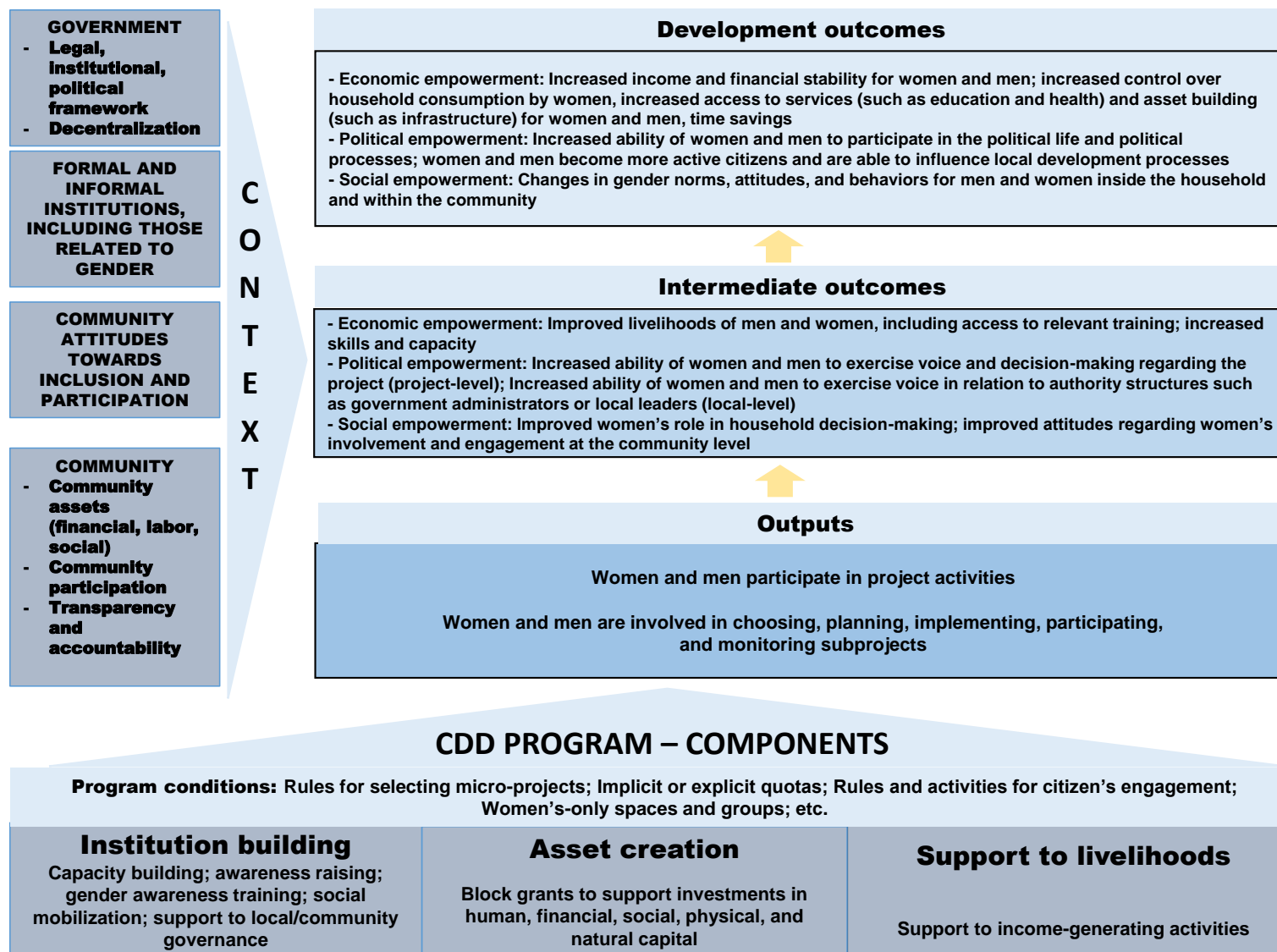
CDD projects can enhance women's *political empowerment* at different levels. Strengthening women's participation in decision making with respect to project activities is crucial if CDD projects want to be inclusive of all community members. Although fundamental, this "lower-level" exercise of voice is not yet defined as political empowerment. At a higher level, though, women's increased participation and decision making regarding project activities may translate into an increased ability to engage in public debate and in a more assertive relationship with power authorities, such as government administrators and local leaders. An even higher level impact could be the increased ability of women to be active participants in the formal political process, which has been more typically considered as political empowerment.

Finally, women's increased ability to access social services and participation in community decisions can enhance their *social empowerment* or confidence and autonomy. Social empowerment, which involves a change in gender norms and increased voice and bargaining power of women in the household and the community,

is – like political empowerment – an impact that is rarely identified as an explicit result of the project.

Impacts at the level of political and social empowerment may occur even if they are not made explicit within the results framework of the project, though deliberate support may be needed to generate positive change. For example, impact evaluations of the Afghanistan National Solidarity Project have documented impacts on women's political and social empowerment (this and other impacts are discussed in chapter 4). As women's needs, preferences, and constraints generally differ from men's (as discussed in the next chapter), CDD interventions that explicitly recognize the critical gender gaps and adopt approaches to address them may be less likely to leave women behind.

Figure 2.2 Community-Driven Development Results Chain, with Reference to Empowerment Dimensions



Source: Adapted from Wong (2012).

## How Do World Bank CDD Projects Address Women's Empowerment?

This report reviews major long-term community development programs in rural contexts. All projects reviewed, explicitly or implicitly, emphasize their empowerment potential and include an empowerment component or some indicators of empowerment. Specifically, of the 20 programs reviewed for this report, eight explicitly include empowerment in the project development objective (Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, and Yemen), most often as “empowering the community,” not necessarily women. In some cases, earlier projects did not have an empowerment goal (Pakistan, Philippines, Yemen), but this was added later in the program. In one case (Tanzania) empowerment as an objective disappeared over time from the Project Development Objective, but not from the intent of the project.

Empowerment means different things in different projects. An analysis of the narrative around empowerment in project documents reveals that most programs refer to a dimension of empowerment that relates to the definitions provided in the general literature (summarized in Appendix C), even if the emphasis is on a few specific dimensions (most frequently the economic one, especially when it comes to indicators included in the results framework), not all of them. For example, in the Nepal Poverty Alleviation Fund project, empowerment is interpreted as voice, decision-making, ability and opportunity for poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, and control the institutions that affect their lives and livelihoods. In the Nigeria Fadama project, it is about empowering communities to take charge of their own development agenda. In Indonesia, an Implementation, Completion, and Results (ICR) observes that “the PNPM has empowered people, made them more independent, capable of collective action, and has developed behavior and mindsets to be involved in solving their development problems compared to before.” Afghanistan and Morocco emphasize aspects related to local governance, decentralization, and representativeness. In a few cases (Laos, Rwanda, Vietnam,) the interpretation is narrower and empowerment is intended primarily as the ability to manage project activities.

All programs specify women as beneficiaries, and several refer directly to the empowerment of women (Afghanistan, Andhra Pradesh, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan). Yet few projects are clear about the specific empowerment aims as they relate to gender. Only in a few instances do project documents clarify the sense in which the project aims to empower women (for example, Sri Lanka and Tanzania emphasize women's economic empowerment; Azerbaijan specifically refers to an economic leadership program for women).

Although they refer to women and women's empowerment, projects do not commonly make explicit the gender-specific outputs and outcomes in the results chain. When they

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do, they do not link output to outcomes to explain how the components they integrate are expected to change the lives of women. Indicators of empowerment are typically limited to outputs of project activities (for example, the percentage of community-based organizations functioning well, or the number of subprojects implemented at the community level, or the number of subprojects proposed by women, and so on). At this level, a distinction is normally made between results achieved “within the project boundaries” and those “outside the project” or “spillovers.” The latter are frequently overlooked, but may nevertheless be important.

Table 2.1 presents examples of indicators of empowerment – at the levels of process and outcomes – that can be mapped to Figure 2.2.<sup>1</sup> The indicators are heterogeneous. Some are quantitative, others are qualitative and better expressed by text (narratives). Some indicators measure observable traits, others measure perceptions and opinions. The sources of information are also different. Some indicators can be easily included in the project’s monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework; others require household, individual, or community (quantitative) surveys or qualitative methods, such as participatory assessments, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews (on the use of mixed methods to measure empowerment, with applications also to CDD interventions, see Rao and Woolcock 2005).<sup>2</sup>

**Table 2.1. Indicators of Empowerment in CDD Projects**

Empowerment as a process (outputs)	Empowerment as an outcome (intermediate* and development outcomes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women and men participate in decision making at the community and district levels (<i>frequency, quality of participation, influence, knowledge</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Economic Empowerment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women and men receive credit or get jobs in public workfare schemes*</li> <li>Women and men receive vocational or entrepreneurship training*</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> These indicators have been mostly derived from the literature on CDDs, gender features of CDDs, and female empowerment (see Appendix 3). Some are frequently used in projects, while others are hardly or never found in M&E frameworks. Chapter 3 and 4 will discuss the actual evidence provided by projects.

<sup>2</sup> The Social Observatory, a collaboration between the World Bank’s South Asia Region Livelihoods Team and government officials in Indian States implementing livelihoods projects, uses participatory methods to develop relevant indicators grounded in the local context that can be tracked, monitored and measured by the communities themselves, and that are also used in rigorous impact evaluation to track impact over time. These efforts require resources, capacity building, inter-disciplinary collaboration, and a high level of coordination, but it is an approach that can generate valuable knowledge (in addition to effective monitoring and program correction) well beyond what is typically allowed by standard monitoring information systems.

Empowerment as a process (outputs)	Empowerment as an outcome (intermediate* and development outcomes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and men prefer/choose subprojects (<i>differences between men and women in preferred subprojects and approved proposals</i>)</li> <li>• Women and men received training in planning, financial management, procurement, operation and maintenance of subprojects (<i>attendance, learning/knowledge acquired</i>)</li> <li>• Women and men are involved in planning, implementing, and managing subprojects (<i>roles, attitudes, compensation</i>)</li> <li>• Women and men are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and men (and girls and boys) have better access to education and health*</li> <li>• Women and men have greater access to infrastructure, such as roads, water, electricity, etc.*</li> <li>• Women's and men's personal income and expenditure and access to assets increase. Stability of income and household consumption increases</li> <li>• Women's and men's livelihoods improve, and they have more productive and more stable employment</li> <li>• Women have more control over household consumption</li> <li>• Education and health outcomes improve (more learning, better health)</li> <li>• Better infrastructure generates time savings for men and women in particular, improved livelihoods, and better access to markets</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Political Empowerment</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and men have greater knowledge of the political landscape, and better access to political institutions</li> <li>• Women and men feel confident in their ability to participate and influence local decision making</li> <li>• Women and men feel that their views are taken into account in the local development process</li> <li>• Women's demands are integrated as much as men's in local development plans and institutional instruments and conventions</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Social Empowerment</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community's attitudes toward women improve</li> <li>• Men and women in particular are able to have greater mobility and freedom of movement.</li> <li>• Women's voice and bargaining power are increased within and outside the household</li> </ul>



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Empowerment as a process (outputs)	Empowerment as an outcome (intermediate* and development outcomes)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Women are less likely to be victims of domestic violence</li></ul>

Source: IEG. Note: \* indicate an intermediate outcome

Based on the analysis of M&E frameworks of the 20 programs reviewed, indicators in the first column (process indicators, mostly outputs) were much more likely to be collected than the outcome indicators in the second column. Output indicators were more easily integrated into the projects' M&E frameworks, while outcome indicators were measured almost exclusively in (a very few) impact evaluation studies (for example, Afghanistan and Uganda). It is probably not feasible for projects to measure all these indicators during project implementation and at the time of completion. And not all CDD projects can or even should be expected to impact empowerment in all its domains. However, CDD projects report surprisingly little information on which gender gaps they aim to address and which results they achieve, especially considering the programs' rhetoric on empowerment and the long implementation period of many of them. chapter 4 gives a more detailed account of the evidence.

### 3. Gender Features in CDD

This chapter discusses the main obstacles that women face in the rural space and the strategies used by CDD projects to address them. It reviews the most common and not so common, but promising design elements in the 20 CDD projects analyzed for this report.

CDD interventions can be successful in addressing gender issues in design and implementation only if they are based on a good diagnosis of how and why the livelihood needs and strategies of men and women differ. These differences exist because of assigned gender roles and responsibilities, and the different ability of men and women to access resources at both the household and community levels. CDD projects that ignore these differences may not be effective in empowering women or may leave women behind, which would limit or undermine their overall effectiveness. By contrast, CDD projects that pay particular attention to gender impacts have the potential to achieve better results on the ground and succeed in empowering the whole community, women included.

#### **Rural Women Face Many Obstacles to Community Participation: How Can CDD Effectively Address Them?**

To ensure that projects match the needs of excluded groups, assumptions about who is poor must be questioned, intersecting inequalities taken into account, and a thorough needs analysis should take place before the menu of CDD subproject options is decided (World Bank, FAO, and IFAD 2009). Depending on the context, women and other groups may experience ethnic and class discrimination as well as gender inequality, or a lack of education as well as a disability, for example (World Bank 2013). Yet, conducting a gender-specific needs assessment to inform the design of a CDD project does not appear to be common practice, at least not until very recently.<sup>1</sup> In the absence of these assessments, projects may operate with implicit assumptions: women are willing and able to participate; derive benefits from participating; have time and control over how they use their time; receive their family support for childcare; and will automatically be involved in the decision-making process once they attend meetings (Azarbaijani and Moghaddam 2010).

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<sup>1</sup> The team found it difficult to locate reports and assessments beyond formal project documents.

## CHAPTER 3

### GENDER FEATURES IN CDD

The constraints to economic, political and social empowerment that place rural women at a disadvantage are especially relevant for CDD projects aiming to empower all members of a community. These constraints have been extensively documented in the literature (World Bank 2011a; World Bank, FAO, and IFAD 2009). If they are ignored, CDD projects can have the undesirable effect of leaving women behind and exacerbating gender gaps. If instead they are understood and addressed through the adoption of specific strategies and design elements, CDD projects have the potential to effectively include women and contribute to their empowerment.<sup>1</sup>

Constraints related to women's *economic* empowerment have to do with women's limited access to resources and women's domestic responsibilities. Women's economic potential is not fully realized in most countries because women are often prevented from participating in the labor market to the same extent that men do. Women tend to work in subsistence agriculture and low-productivity jobs because they have limited access to land; insecure property rights or none at all; low access to credit, agricultural inputs, and extension services; and limitations in physical mobility and in accessing networks and information. When women engage in nonfarm activities, these are often concentrated at the lower end of the market and tend to be less profitable than men's work. In addition, women spend a larger proportion of time on domestic tasks than do men, leaving less time for income-generating activities, leisure, and education (Bhatt and Brown, 2011; De Sousa Amazonas and others, 2011). If women's responsibilities increase, the burden of domestic tasks often falls on their daughters, keeping them out of school.

Constraints related to women's *political* empowerment have to do with restrictions in access to decision-making power and women's low levels of literacy, confidence, and leadership. At the project level, women are less likely to be substantively involved in community projects because they have less skills and experience than men do (World Bank 2007). The complexity, criteria, time, and difficulty of applying for funds all affect women's ability to participate (World Bank, FAO, and IFAD 2009). At the level of local government, women are very often excluded from collective decision-making processes, often because of the inability to speak against the powerful (OED 2005). Moreover, women's mobility restrictions and lack of experience may prevent their engaging with high-level political processes (World Bank, FAO, and IFAD 2009). At the higher political level, women are underrepresented in the formal political sphere

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<sup>1</sup> CDD projects are obviously not the magic bullet for empowering communities and women; other relevant elements that have an impact on empowerment are formal and informal institutions, country conditions, and existing policies and programs. However, the CDD programs highlight the important role they can play in this respect.

everywhere in the world. Patriarchal structures and norms mediate women's ability to access formal, local, and higher-level government fora.

Constraints related to women's *social* empowerment have to do with patriarchal attitudes and social norms regarding women's roles that persistently limit women's ability to participate in community life. In some cultures, women's mobility is restricted, they are expected to stay at home, keep quiet in public meetings, and agree with decisions made by men. Attitudes of local male leaders may be particularly problematic (World Bank 2007). In the home, women typically do not have the same decision-making power as men do – and differences exist also among women with different rank (for example, among wives in polygamous households, or between the daughter-in-law and the mother-in-law).

The literature reviewed for this report suggests that CDD interventions have the potential to address some of these mentioned constraints to women's economic, political, and social empowerment.

At the level of economic empowerment, for instance, CDD investments in infrastructure can improve women's physical access to markets and resources, and subprojects providing microfinance and livelihoods support can increase women's income-generating activities and access to credit (World Bank, 2007). Also, by improving rural infrastructure, such as water supply, CDD can reduce the amount of time women spend fetching water, which in turn could allow them to spend more time in alternative activities – potentially productive ones. By providing training through livelihoods interventions, CDD can increase the quality of goods for market and increase good business practices (Bhatt and Brown, 2011).

In terms of political and social empowerment, CDD can make it easier for women to access decision-making arenas by decentralizing power to the community level (World Bank, IFAD and FAO 2009). CDD can also enable women's voices to be heard, and establishes precedents for women's participation in planning and decision-making which may be replicated in other fora (World Bank 2007). Participation in CDD can build women's skills and confidence through training and capacity-building so that they can take up greater roles in community life. Women-only spaces and groups in CDD projects can encourage women to put forward their ideas and voice their needs in a supportive environment. CDD can support women's groups to present, defend, and lobby for their priorities in the community.

As existing power structures can disadvantage women, not explicitly addressing power relationships does not result in a neutral outcome. Working with existing institutions, such as local government or traditional authorities, risks to mimic discriminatory power

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structures and may not lead to improvements for the poorest people (Cornwall 2003; Lubbock and Carloni, 2008; Poncin, 2012).

By providing gender awareness training to local leaders and community members and allowing women to prove their capabilities through participating in decision-making, CDD projects can help change traditional perceptions about gender roles. The approach needs to be very strategic, because the active promotion of women's involvement and empowerment can meet with resistance from local (male and female) elites if it is perceived as a threat to the established way of doing things (World Bank, FAO and IFAD, 2009).

### **Do World Bank–Supported CDD Projects Address Constraints to Women's Empowerment?**

Several toolkits and reports acknowledge that CDD interventions should take the above discussed constraints to women's empowerment into consideration (World Bank 2007; World Bank 2011b; World Bank 2011c; World Bank 2012; Porter and Zovighian 2014; MCC 2013; ADB 2012; Burjorjee and Jennings 2008; World Bank and DfID 2006). Only a few projects, however, include in official project documents a comprehensive and context-specific discussion of these constraints and their causes to motivate the activities they propose. Projects more and more frequently refer to social or gender assessments, but normally these documents are not easily accessible.

Furthermore, the findings of social assessments that explore the constraints or needs of women are not always reflected in project documents (Azerbaijan, Uganda). Gender "responsiveness" is often found as a guiding principle in operational manuals<sup>1</sup> and gender strategies are sometimes part of implementation plans but little is said in available World Bank documents as to how these are operationalized. This is not to say that CDD projects do not include strategies to "include women" and facilitate women's participation. They often do, but they do not necessarily build these design features to address specific constraints and gender gaps identified in the local context.

Strategies used in World Bank–supported CDD projects have evolved over time; more recent projects tend to be more explicit and deliberate in referring to context-specific gender and other constraints. For example, the first Azerbaijan project's social assessment acknowledged women's needs but made no mention of specific activities in the project document; however, the second Azerbaijan project not only explicitly

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<sup>1</sup> The team was able to consult five operation manuals for this review. None of them provided details on how activities meant to enhance women participation are actually organized and implemented.

supported women's empowerment but also included specific indicators in its monitoring and evaluation framework to track gender-relevant outputs and outcomes.

Recently approved projects provide some insights on how project design has absorbed the lessons and built on them (see Box 3.1).

### Box 3.1. Project Designs Change over Time Building on Gender Analyses and Lessons Learned

Projects that have been approved over the past 3-4 years are much more likely than older projects to reflect on lessons learned from gender analyses and to refer explicitly, in official project documents, to adjustments in design that integrate those lessons. For example, in 2012 the Indonesia PNPM added female village monitoring teams and women in procurement committees to address unsatisfactory results with regard to women's participation.<sup>a</sup> In the Philippines, changes to Kalahi-Cidss in 2014 included: (i) additional diagnostic tools using Participatory Social Analysis; (ii) further capacity building of community volunteers and women's groups; and (iii) greater attention to women's involvement in paid labor. In Nigeria, changes introduced at the time of Fadama Additional Financing in 2013 included the development and testing of: (i) new information and communications strategies and (ii) a series of pilots aimed at helping female farmers to access project resources (for example, financial literacy, peer learning, and mentoring programs).<sup>b</sup>

Projects are also increasingly planning to assess the effectiveness of the different mechanisms used to encourage women's participation. A planned Rapid Assessment of Women's Participation in Indonesia's PNPM aims to examine the strategies that have been adopted to encourage women's participation and the factors that have affected uptake, success, sustainability, and outcomes.<sup>c</sup> In Nigeria, the project plans an impact evaluation to assess the most effective ways to open opportunities for equitable access to agriculture services for all female farmers.<sup>b</sup> Reference to a future process evaluation to review results of gender mainstreaming efforts is also included in the Philippines. Recently approved projects are also more likely to recognize the need to further assess the impact of CDD on the lives of poor women and plans for such evaluation (Brazil, Indonesia).

Nonetheless, recognizing the need of further evaluation is not enough if current projects do not take into account lessons from past projects. An exploratory evaluation of a small-scale pilot<sup>d</sup> included in the Rio Grande do Norte CDD assessed whether investments aimed at reducing time spent by women in household activities (such as water supply systems for drinkable water and productive gardens) created the enabling environment for women's empowerment and helped reduce poverty. The study was small in scale and could not determine causality; it called for further assessments of sex-disaggregated long-term impacts. Yet, its promising results did not appear to be reflected in the design of other CDD projects in northern Brazil. This study was the only one of its kind found for any of the projects analyzed in this report.

<sup>a</sup> Indonesia PNPM PAD (P128832) p.18-19 and Annex 2.

<sup>b</sup> Zovighian 2014.

<sup>c</sup> World Bank 2012.

<sup>d</sup> De Sousa Amazonas and others 2011. Funded by the World Bank Gender Action Plan in 2009, the pilot evaluated 15 subprojects (primarily water supply and productive gardens) in 12 communities, benefitting 35 families.

## Strategies to include Women in World Bank–Supported CDD Projects

CDD projects commonly use diverse strategies to ensure women’s participation in the needs identification process and in subprojects’ selection stages. Strategies adopted by World Bank–supported CDD projects include women’s quotas in community forums and project selection committees; women-only meetings; separate voting for men and women; minimum thresholds or earmarked allocations for the percentage of subprojects coming from women’s groups; recruitment of women’s facilitators and community mobilizers; gender training and support to women beneficiaries and project staff.

The most common strategy found in the projects reviewed for this study is the use of quotas. Almost all projects reviewed include quotas or targets to increase women’s participation in project selection committees (Yemen is among the few exceptions).<sup>1</sup> They are set between 30 percent and 50 percent and are generally reported as met in project documents.

A number of other strategies have been used. A common one is the recruitment of female mobilizers and facilitators to raise awareness among women about the project, increase women’s participation in project’s activities, and help identify women’s priorities (Andhra Pradesh, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Philippines,). Projects often utilize separate meetings for men and women to ensure that women’s priorities are addressed and to assess their needs and priorities (Indonesia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Philippines). Several projects also provide training for women to facilitate needs identification and prioritization. In the Kyrgyz Republic, the project delivered specific support to women to increase their confidence to lobby for their own needs at broader community events. In the Lao PDR Poverty Reduction Fund project a clever voting system was introduced to make it easier for everybody to vote, including illiterate villagers (disproportionately women). Villagers were invited to deposit in a box three seeds for the most preferred option, two seeds for the second best, and one seed for the third best.

Limited evidence is available on the effectiveness of these strategies, however. Despite the widespread use of women quotas in World Bank–supported CDD projects, no assessment is available on whether quotas have a positive impact on subproject selection or women’s (active) participation. Similarly, there is no evidence on the impact that a higher percentage of female facilitators can have on women’s participation in the project’s activities. The only study found on the effect of the sex of the facilitator on the percentage of proposals coming from women’s groups, and the type of proposals

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<sup>1</sup> Quotas may not be present in the beginning but may be introduced later on.

submitted (infrastructure vs. economic activities), is a bit outdated and shows no effect (Wong 2002).<sup>1</sup>

CDD projects try to ensure women's presence in the community needs assessment and prioritization exercise (Table 3.1). They pay less attention to women's participation in the implementation, operation and maintenance, and monitoring of subprojects. Yet, there are notable exceptions. For example, Fadama in Nigeria and the Rwanda Rural Sector Support projects made training compatible with women's daily schedules so as to encourage women to participate (none of the two projects measured the impact of this design feature on female participation, however). As with assessing the evidence, newer projects seem to be doing a better job at this. In Bangladesh and Indonesia a quota for women's participation in village monitoring teams was recently introduced.

Table 3.1 provides an overview of project design features intended to improve women's participation. These features have been identified based on projects documentation and on studies and assessments commissioned by projects. Features more commonly found in projects are listed in the first column, emerging examples of promising practices are listed in the second. The former were discussed earlier in this section; the latter are only found in very large and longstanding projects, with several gender studies (such as Indonesia and the Philippines) and maybe more opportunities to experiment.

Projects recognize the importance of including excluded groups and support female participation, but do not always articulate the benefits of their increased participation. They do not explicitly link women's participation (and therefore women's empowerment) to other project elements or specific outcomes. Sometimes projects refer to "plausible" impacts, such as "more inclusive decision-making processes," which however are generally not tracked or evaluated. Women's participation, for example, is not seen as functional to strengthening the mix and impact of basic infrastructure and social services delivered by the project – or of the outcomes expected from higher social services (as pointed out by, among others, Azarbaijani and Moghaddam 2010). When participation is not functionally linked to specific outcomes, it is hard to determine whether it is meaningful, whether it influences decisions regarding subprojects, and whether, as a consequence, it can bring actual benefits to women (or men).

An exception is represented by livelihoods programs, which have been able to document the positive impacts that group membership have on social capital and

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<sup>1</sup> The sex of the facilitator did not have an influence on the likelihood of women's proposals being selected either. Also, there was no correlation between the percentage of women attending meetings and the percentage of women's proposals being selected.



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various dimensions of women’s economic, political, and social empowerment (see end of chapter 4).

**Table 3.1. Design Elements for Improving Women’s Participation in World Bank–Supported CDD Projects**

Activity	Common Practices	Promising Practices
<b>Gender-informed social analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to key constraints and general assumptions about women’s roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include detailed discussion of context-specific constraints and vulnerabilities, practices related to women’s <b>participation, women’s</b> access to resources, etc. (Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Kyrgyz Republic)</li> <li>• Include detailed discussion of the implications of a gender study for project design and document, including clear articulation of women’s needs and priorities (Afghanistan, Andhra Pradesh, Kyrgyz Republic)</li> </ul>
<b>Community mobilization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use female facilitators</li> <li>• Provide capacity building/training to female facilitators</li> <li>• Provide capacity building through the form of gender sensitization training to community leaders, project or government officials</li> <li>• Set quotas for women’s participation</li> <li>• Monitor sex-disaggregated data on attendance to community meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include gender awareness modules in ongoing training for district- and project-level facilitators (male and female)</li> <li>• Ensure ongoing capacity building for supervision and mentoring on facilitator role</li> <li>• Provide ongoing capacity building for gender sensitization to religious or community leaders               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use media for outreach</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use women’s traditional meeting places (Vietnam)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage existing women’s groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Create optimal conditions for women to participate (meetings location, timing, child care)</li> <li>• Assess the quality of women’s participation in meetings (Andhra Pradesh)</li> <li>• Offer incentives at the local level for innovative ideas to improve women’s participation (Indonesia, Sri Lanka)</li> </ul>
<b>Needs assessment/ Prioritization exercise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create separate meetings and voting</li> <li>• Set quotas for women in project selection committees;</li> <li>• Set a minimum number of proposals coming from women’s groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create optimal conditions for women to participate (meetings location, timing, child care)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train or coach women to actively participate and lobby/defend their priorities (Kyrgyz Republic)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use creative ways of voting/expressing preferences that do not require participants to read or write (Lao PDR, Vietnam)</li> <li>• Ensure that goods and services offered addresses women’s constraints and livelihoods (Vietnam)</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation (including Operations &amp; Maintenance)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify specific activities for women (social infrastructure, microcredits)</li> <li>• Set quotas for women recipients</li> <li>• Provide training for specialized positions/specific skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create optimal conditions for women to participate (meetings location, timing, child care)</li> <li>• Provide equal opportunities to work on project activities, including equal pay (Uganda, Vietnam)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support women’s participation in nontraditional roles/activities (Afghanistan)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide skills training for all, including for project planning and management (Sri Lanka)</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring, supervision, and evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for sex-disaggregated data collection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather women’s feedback independently (Kyrgyz Republic)</li> <li>• Consult women when developing indicators for impact, performance, and process monitoring</li> <li>• Collect and report on sex-disaggregated indicators</li> </ul>

- Evaluate strategies used to improve women's participation and feed into project design (recently approved phases of Indonesia, Philippines, Nigeria)
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## 4. Did World Bank–Supported CDD Projects Empower Women?

This chapter organizes and summarizes the evidence available for the World Bank’s funded projects (the sources and the approach are discussed in Appendix B). The results are organized under general outputs (mostly related to women’s involvement in the project’s activities) and the specific intermediate and development outcomes for economic, political, and social female empowerment.

### **Women’s Empowerment as a Process: Outputs Achieved by Project’s Activities**

CDD interventions aim at increasing women’s participation in project activities and generally succeed in achieving it. All projects reviewed aimed to increase women’s participation and integrated some mechanisms for this purpose, such as community outreach to women, quotas in meetings, separate meetings for men and women, female facilitators, and so on, as documented in the chapter 3. All projects monitored and reported women’s participation, and generally succeeded in mobilizing women to attend community meetings. This is probably the most clear-cut, across-the-board positive result.

Attention has been drawn to the need for more evidence on the quality of participation. Participation is often interpreted as attendance at meetings, which projects regularly track in a sex-disaggregated way. Projects may also track the share of women in community committees or in formal leadership roles (Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Kyrgyz Republic). However, especially when women’s attendance is mandated as a requirement of the project, it is unclear whether participation can be considered anything other than compliance with the rules of the project. A question arises with respect to quality of participation – are women merely present? Do they speak? Are the conditions ‘right’ for them to speak freely? Is their opinion taken into consideration? Does their participation have impact?

Increasingly projects recognize that it is important to assess quality of participation. So far reporting is mostly anecdotal and there is no agreed-upon way to measure it. Already in 2002, Wong observed that quality of participation was an issue in the early implementation of Indonesia Kecamatan Development Program (KDP): in that study quality of participation was reported by facilitators and was interpreted as “activeness” or “ability to lobby for their own group’s proposals.” Problems with the quality of participation were not unique to KDP. A gender assessment of all Indonesian CDD

interventions,<sup>1</sup> prepared to facilitate the integration of gender features in the Indonesia National Program for Community Empowerment (PNPM) (World Bank 2007) recognizes that, although all Indonesian CDD projects had strategies to support women's participation in meetings they all struggled in improving the quality of women's participation. It noted that women lacked confidence and experience in speaking out at meetings and were not comfortable in expressing their opinions in the presence of their husbands or male relatives, which in turn reinforced the stereotype of women being unable or unwilling to participate.

Despite the difficulties, there have been some promising approaches to understanding quality of participation. For example, the Brazil Rio Grande do Norte Regional Development and Governance project uses social experts to assess whether women are truly participating in subproject eligibility and selection, or whether their participation is merely pro-forma. A working definition of quality of participation was proposed by the 2012 PNPM Gender Study (World Bank 2012). It was defined using a combination of output indicators ("Projects proposed by women are funded and funded projects respond to women's need as defined in the local context") and process indicators ("Women are actively involved in every stage of project planning and implementation, as well as in every level of program implementation and management. Moreover all women are heard and involved, not just elite women"). While the approach has potential, no project has adopted a definition of quality of participation to be monitored through the monitoring information system and there is no evidence that this has been solved for Indonesia or for any other of the CDD projects reviewed.

Women's participation may favor elites, which needs to be explicitly recognized when designing and implementing projects. Women are often considered a homogeneous group, but they are not; some of them are in more powerful and privileged positions than others. Elite dominance and elite capture are very possible among women. Indeed, it has been noted that some women, thanks to the status they enjoy in the community, are better able to take advantage of CDD sub-projects and activities. In Bangladesh, the project provided financial skills training to women but the training was mostly limited to the leader and cashier of each institution and therefore skills were transferred to a very limited group of women (IEG 2016a). In Indonesia, more educated and affluent women were likely to get to elected to leadership roles within community organizations and have access to credit groups (World Bank 2007).

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<sup>1</sup> These are the Kecamatan Development Program (KDP), Urban Poverty Project (UPP), Neighborhood Upgrading and Shelter Sector Project (NUSSP), Water Supply and Sanitation in Low-Income Communities (WSLIC-2), Australian Community Development and Civil Society Strengthening Scheme (ACCESS).

## CHAPTER 4

### DID WORLD BANK–SUPPORTED CDD PROJECTS EMPOWER WOMEN?

IEG field assessments in Lao PDR, Malawi, Nigeria, and Tanzania have shown that some women have more influence than others, within the group of women and in the community (IEG 2016b, 2016d, 2014b, 2016c). The IEG project evaluation of the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) II found that women's increased participation made them more self-assured in their interactions within the household and in the community. Interviewees pointed to the increasing number of women who were entering local and even national political life as an effect of this kind of participation. However, it was also noted that this is a small minority of better-off women, not poor women (IEG 2016c). A similar phenomenon was observed in Malawi (IEG 2016d). In Nigeria, only a few women are actually offered the chance to participate in the Fadama User Groups, because group access is highly correlated with interpersonal networks and men's support (IEG 2014b).<sup>1</sup> In the Lao PDR Poverty Reduction Fund this was the case for women who were very active members of the Lao Women's Union, but also for older women (for example, at meetings the daughter-in-law spoke after the mother-in-law, if she spoke at all) (IEG 2016b). This aspect of "capture" within groups of villagers was not recognized by the Poverty Reduction Fund project – and it is not frequently recognized by CDD projects in general.

Project requirements may sometimes inadvertently restrict women from participating in a more meaningful way; these restrictions may be easier to overcome for certain types of women. A review of the Indonesian CDD projects (World Bank 2007) revealed that women from the poorest households were less likely to participate in the project activities because the only individuals eligible were those who were part of groups established for at least a year and, in some cases, individuals who already had a small business. These requirements clearly biased the selection of beneficiaries toward the better off.<sup>2</sup> In other cases, women's participation was limited because it entailed certain tasks requiring women to be literate (this is the case of Indonesia, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, and Tanzania). In Nigeria's Fadama project, for example, it was found that women's education affected the extent to which women could participate in the project (IEG 2014b). Women's lower literacy and education (common in rural, low-income countries) are constraints that can generate asymmetric benefits from CDD. Other factors were also important, such as gaps in land ownership and social capital (e.g., networks, connection to power holders and community leaders).

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<sup>1</sup> Men have helped women gain access to the project because of the high level of interdependency between men (farming) and women (processing) in the sector.

<sup>2</sup> It is, however, unclear whether this was to be interpreted as a negative outcome, that is, whether the interests of women who were excluded were also not represented.

## Women’s Economic, Political, and Social Empowerment: Intermediate and Development Outcomes

### DO CDD PROJECTS INCREASE WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT?

Projects document increased access to livelihoods and services by tracking the number of beneficiaries, disaggregated by sex. Projects that do include a component to support livelihoods and income-generating activities, such as, for example, a microfinance or public workfare component, report the percentage of women recipients of these activities. This is the case, for example, in Tanzania and Malawi (where about half of the temporary jobs created went to women, according to the project-reporting documents), Bangladesh, Andhra Pradesh, and the Kyrgyz Republic. The CDD projects that support the creation of public goods – investments in wells and water points, roads, classrooms, and health centres – typically track the type and number of subprojects and the size of the population living in the villages where the infrastructure was built (the assumption being that all benefit from it).

There is less evidence, however, on the impacts of infrastructure on the lives of men and women. For example, little information is found on the gender-specific impacts of having a water point in the community, or more classrooms, or living close to a new health center. More classrooms and health centers are meant to generate higher enrolment (as well as attendance and retention) rates, which ultimately affect children’s levels of education and learning. Better access to health centers should increase (to the extent they are able to offer a basic package of services) health outcomes (vaccinations, assisted deliveries, etc.).

Of the projects reviewed, only a few provide some evidence of improved health outcomes and improved education for girls. In Afghanistan, the National Solidarity Project (NSP) increased girls’ school attendance and learning, but there was no impact on boys’ school attendance. It was not fully clear what drove this result, because NSP did not fund access to education. In Pakistan, the Implementation and Completion and Results report of the second phase of the project (p.5) reports that better access to education – thanks to greater geographical proximity, affordability, and quality of service – has led to increased enrolment and retention rates of students, especially girls, and better learning outcomes (stronger literacy and numeracy skills). In Afghanistan and Yemen, better access to maternal and prenatal care has been reported.

Although most projects provide anecdotal evidence that investments in water are particularly beneficial to women, only a few reported the time gains in fetching water thanks to the project. In Azerbaijan, better access to water did indeed benefit women, in terms of time saved, according to the Implementation Completion and Results report. The Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) Implementation Completion and

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Results report mentions the positive results of an impact assessment, which found that, thanks to the provision of water, women experienced a reduction in the time spent fetching water. In Afghanistan, the ICR mission's field visits to NSP communities found that women's time in employment was freed up due to mechanized threshing of wheat; moreover, time savings were achieved also in fetching water, owing to the provision of hand pumps for drinking water.<sup>1</sup> In Brazil, quite interestingly, the project produced time savings mostly for young men, because they were (along with women) in charge of fetching water. This case is very instructive because it challenges assumptions that are commonly made about women.

Some livelihood interventions indicate that women can especially benefit in terms of higher employment and earnings. For example, the impact evaluation of Uganda's NUSAF II found that both young men and women receiving vocational training and support to business startups experienced a similar increase in business assets, work hours, and earnings after four years. However, the impacts were stronger for women, because they were poorer than men at the start of the program. The intervention also played a more important role for women; it was found that their earnings and participation in employment would have stagnated without the program. After four years, the income gain of those receiving the intervention was, in percentage, much larger for women than for men (Blattman, Fiala, and Martinez 2014).

In Brazil, it was found that women's participation in income-generating activities increased (as did their income relative to men's) in communities that received both water supply and productive gardens (although it was impossible to isolate the individual effects, owing to small sample size). Moreover, households' income from agricultural activities increased, as did women's income from paid work; but whether women spent more time in off-farm work could not be determined. In Sri Lanka, according to the findings of focus groups discussions conducted for IEG's PPAR (IEG 2014c, p. 20), participation in Village Savings and Credit Organizations supported "enhanced financial literacy, confidence with regard to the use of money, and greater unity owing to the transparency of the process about who received funds and their intended purposes."

Public work programs do measure how many men and women were employed, but not necessarily how this was beneficial in terms of greater earnings, assets, or consumption for women (or men). For example, the Tanzania TASAF does not measure whether the

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<sup>1</sup> Prior to the project, each family used to travel 3 to 4 km and spend a total of four hours daily to get water.

women who got employed through the public work scheme were able to increase their savings, assets, and control over economic resources.

By contrast, in Malawi, where women’s participation in public works schemes and savings-investment groups was relatively high, the program was able to document immediate benefits in terms of higher earnings (from public works) and long-term benefits in terms of asset building through participation in saving-investment groups.<sup>1</sup> It appears that saving-investment groups offered a rare opportunity to directly empower women. The beneficiary assessment found that small business development in savings groups was primarily driven by women. Surveyed villages saw a 55 percent increase in women engaged in business as a result of participating in those groups.

Some dimensions of female economic empowerment are not measured (for a detailed list of indicators tracked by projects see table A5 in Appendix E). This is the case, for example, for income stability, employment stability, or changes in the level of control over household income and household consumption. Moreover, in some cases outcomes that could be measured at the individual level (such as increase in assets, savings, and income) are measured only at the household level, and not separately for men and women, which could provide more meaningful information.

#### **DO CDD PROJECTS INCREASE WOMEN’S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT?**

Projects can provide the right conditions for women to successfully exercise voice and decision making with respect to project activities. In the Indonesia KDP, an early analysis of the breakdown of proposals by sex (Wong 2002) showed that women’s groups overwhelmingly chose economic activities over infrastructure. Specifically, women were more likely to choose loans and savings (51 percent of all proposed activities), while clean water projects represented only a tiny minority of all women’s proposed activities. According to the author, this was probably because women, who run the majority of small businesses in the village were quite familiar with loan programs. Moreover, Wong notes, women may have preferred loans because they needed not only to finance their business but also some of the household expenses.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> An IEG report found that there is limited impact evaluation evidence of public works (IEG 2014a). The report highlights the need to collect sex-disaggregated information of public works results and investing in more impact evaluations.

<sup>2</sup> Other hypotheses were more related to the project implementation modalities. For example, it could have been the perception of facilitators that women preferred economic activities, which would have led them to provide this type of information. The option of choosing economic activities was later removed from the Kecamatan Development Project.



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However, men and women may indicate similar preferences, even when projects are designed so that both men and women can have an independent voice in community decisions. In the Lao PDR Poverty Reduction Fund project, nine times out of 10 men and women were expressing the same priorities for subproject selection, according to the monitoring and evaluation data. It is not clear whether this is because *preferences* coincided, because community needs transcended gender (given the very limited set of options offered to villagers), or because men were able to influence women’s preferences. This was the case in the Philippines too.

Sometimes external circumstances, rather than genuine differences in preferences, can make the project more appealing to women than to men. According to the IEG project evaluation of the Bangladesh Social Investment Program (IEG 2016a), when measures were taken at restructuring to increase community participation of women and youth by integrating them in local rural institutions, women became the *de facto* participants in the project because many of the men residing in these areas were too busy or too uninterested in joining once the project was geared to being truly pro-poor.

Higher participation of women does not necessarily translate into greater control of project resources – frequently a reflection of engrained gender roles that are hard to change. In the Indonesia PNPM, high rates of participation still resulted in dominance of men within the project. The Lao PDR Poverty Reduction Project is one of the very few projects that set a threshold of a minimum percentage of proposed subprojects that need to come from women, in an attempt to explicitly address gender asymmetries in decision-making power. It is also the only project that reports the percentage of approved proposals coming from the women’s list.<sup>1</sup>

When it comes to higher-level impacts on political empowerment, mixed evidence was found by those projects that measured the impact of participation “outside the project boundaries.” In Afghanistan, the National Solidarity Project (NSP) increased women’s participation in the 2010 parliamentary elections, and in dispute mediation and aid allocation decisions. However, the project did not change the way women viewed democratic elections or participatory decision-making. In India, the ICR for the Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project noted that the political voice of the poor and the number of women leaders of the community-based organizations (CBOs) increased.

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of the Lao PDR Poverty Reduction Fund project there is a large overlap between men’s and women’s preferences (90 percent of approved proposals are equally preferred by both). With respect to the early Kecamatan Development Program experience, Wong (2002) also observes that it is not clear whether proposals from women’s groups truly reflect women’s needs and aspirations or whether there has been intervention by men when the proposals were being prepared.

According to the ICR, many CBO leaders from the poorest households contested and won local government elections, and CBO women leaders made up 25 percent of Panchayat (local government) seats at all levels.

In Bangladesh, the Asian Development Bank’s Country Gender Assessment Report (ADB 2010) revealed that women who have been integrated into community institutions have gone on to participate on elected local government councils. In Azerbaijan, women were found to participate increasingly in national multidisciplinary forums on investment, not just in gender sessions. In Vietnam, while women’s participation in village meetings ranged between 45 percent and 67 percent, they still remained underrepresented in decision-making bodies such as the Commune Development Boards and Commune Supervision Boards.

Change in the political sphere requires time, but in certain contexts even small changes can represent substantial progress. In Afghanistan, the first NSP program created women only Community Development Councils which provided the first opportunity for women to meet and discuss shared concerns. The 2009 midline survey of the NSP found that the program increased the engagement of women across a number of dimensions of community life, while also increasing respect for senior women in the village and making men more open to female participation in local governance. The interim evaluation of the second phase of the NSP reports that the project increased the participation of women in local governance and their awareness of village leadership and local governance services. An impact evaluation found that women in the villages where the NSP was implemented were more frequently meeting women from other villages, as well as district government officials. The NSP increased men’s openness to female electoral participation, national candidacy by women, and women holding positions in the civil service and working with nongovernment organizations. The NSP also increased the acceptance of female membership in village councils and of female participation in the selection of the village headman. However, although the role of women in village life had increased, there was no impact on women’s position within the family – for example, on women’s decisions regarding money and assets that women identify as their own (Beath, Christia, and Enikolopov 2013).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> There is a unique reason why Afghanistan NSP discusses political participation. The PDO of NSP 3 aims “to build, strengthen, and maintain Community Development Councils (CDCs) as effective institutions for local governance and social-economic development.”

## CHAPTER 4

### DID WORLD BANK–SUPPORTED CDD PROJECTS EMPOWER WOMEN?

#### DO CDD PROJECTS INCREASE WOMEN’S SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT?

Although changing attitudes takes time, and this is not an explicit development goal of CDD interventions, some projects report change in gender roles, when it comes to household decision-making and women’s role in society.

With respect to household decision making, in Andhra Pradesh Pannushi and Gupta (2014) found improvements over the evolving societal trends at the time regarding a woman’s ability to leave the home without permission, to disagree with her husband, and to participate in village meetings. In Nepal, although the impact evaluation (Parajuli and others, 2012) did not find any statistically significant impact on social capital or female empowerment, the ICR suggests that women gained greater voice in the household as a result of the project, measured by the number of husband-wife joint decisions made in the household (as reported by women). In Yemen’s Social Fund for Development 3, women were the majority of multilateral financial institution clients, and they expressed a high level of satisfaction with microfinance programs, recognizing several benefits from their participation, namely greater independence and self-confidence, greater respect and decision making in the household, improved economic situation, and the opportunity to have a home-based job (Micro Finance Gender Impact Study, 2008, as reported by the Implementation Completion and Results report).

With respect to the role of women in society, some projects report, anecdotally, that women have become more vocal and confident in public decision-making fora, and claim that women’s status has been elevated thanks to their participation in the program (Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka). Several projects also report increased empowerment based on women’s self-assessment, but do not discuss how this information was collected (for example, Rwanda). More robust evidence on the benefits of participation is available for Andhra Pradesh. In Andhra Pradesh, women’s participation in self-help groups led to a greater voice in decision-making within and outside the household. Moreover, the Impact Assessment found that the percentage of women marrying below the legal age was reduced among project participants.

CDD may contribute to increasing women’s social capital by strengthening networks of trust and reciprocity among women, but evidence is more anecdotal and less systematic. The ICR for Rwanda’s Rural Sector Support Project I states that the project has played a key role in creating social capital in the areas where it intervened, and because of the strong participation of women in project-financed activities, it has been instrumental in mainstreaming gender and social equity in the local development agenda. The IEG evaluation of Bangladesh Social Investment Program I (IEG 2016a) indicates that women’s active participation in the project after midterm, in accessing savings and credit activities, had positive impacts in the community and the

households. The findings from the field research suggest that the formation of women-only community institutions, their access to credit, and livelihood interventions helped build women's capacity to make collective decisions and take action. It also helped to strengthen social capital as measured by community cohesion and inclusion in the community institutions, which categorically enhanced women's empowerment – in the form of participation in community decisions and social and legal awareness.

Stronger evidence is emerging for self-help groups (Box 4.1). Women from JEEViKA self-help groups in Bihar experienced significant improvements in empowerment dimensions such as mobility, decision making in the household (regarding, for example, the primary livelihood activity and their own work), and propensity toward collective action (Datta, 2015). A more recent mixed-methods evaluation, Datta and others (2015), confirms that participation in self-help groups has dramatically increased and so did savings, but found more muted impacts on empowerment.

Some indicators of women's empowerment show improvement: for example women in self-help groups have higher mobility to places that are important for the project (such as group meetings and banks) but not to other places. Women are more likely to discuss problems and potential solutions with social contacts outside of their families (with regard to food or health emergencies) and are more likely to participate in decision making within their households (this latter is true also of women in control areas).

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#### **Box 4.1 The Impact of Rural Livelihoods Programs and Self-Help Groups: Lessons from India**

Livelihoods programs provide a grant to individuals or groups for productive investment, often including a training component and multisectoral links (Mansuri and Rao, 2013). They may have a strong focus of women and include one or more of the following elements: self-help groups; microcredit; savings and loans groups; women's community groups for village development; women's groups for management of community resources (World Bank, FAO, and IFAD, 2009). They are antipoverty interventions that contain strong elements of collective action and community empowerment. Self-help groups are small groups of people who make regular savings contributions, and then borrow or loan the pool of funds for productive investments. Cooperatives and self-help groups or project management committees which receive community investment funds, or perform institutional development or skills building, follow the community-driven development (CDD) approach (Tanaka, Singh, and Songco, 2006). There is increasing evidence that these programs have positive impacts on women's economic and social empowerment, as the economic ties they create generate trust, group networks, and group participation (Sanyal, 2009 on West Bengal).

A mixed-methods systematic review (Brody and others, 2015) found that women's economic self-help groups have positive statistically significant effects on various dimensions of women's empowerment, including economic, social, and political empowerment, but not on

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psychological empowerment. There was no conclusive evidence on domestic violence: self-help groups do not seem to decrease or increase domestic violence.

Group membership builds social capital, including self-esteem, solidarity, and shared identity (World Bank, FAO, and IFAD 2009). The systematic review found that the positive effects of self-help groups run through several channels including: solidarity; improved social networks; and respect from the household and other community members (Brody and others, 2015). The empowering effects of group belonging are often stated by women as the most important outcome of their membership (World Bank, FAO, and IFAD 2009). The evidence consistently finds that trust, cooperation, and social capital can be increased through women's self-help groups, though only to a moderate extent (see for example Janssens, 2010, on the Mahila Samakhya program in India, and Koyabu, 2014, on the Community Empowerment Programme for Women in Afghanistan).

Self-help groups also have effects on women's ability to control aspects of their lives, such as family planning, mobility, and controlling household income (Saha and others, 2013; World Bank, FAO, and IFAD 2009). Familiarity with handling money and independence in financial decision making was cited in the systematic review as a route to empowerment (Brody and others, 2015). In Afghanistan, the Community Empowerment Program for Women increased women's income and savings, which increased their ability to make choices, their mobility and their decision-making (Koyabu, 2014). Also notable was that men changed their minds about women's possession of their own assets. In some cases there have also been effects on women's political participation, household decision making, and service provision (World Bank, FAO, and IFAD, 2009).

Improving the enabling environment for women is challenging, however. Neither livelihoods programs nor self-help groups directly address, for example, land rights for women, or changes in the household division of labor (World Bank, FAO, and IFAD, 2009). Most of the benefits accrue to middle-class or better-off women, not resource-poor women, who may not be able to participate (World Bank, FAO, and IFAD, 2009). The systematic review suggests that participation of the poorest of the poor is perceived to be low as compared to less poor women (Brody and others, 2015). In part, this might be because the poorest of the poor are too financially and/or socially constrained to join self-help groups or to benefit from the financial services they provide. Poorer or vulnerable women may not feel accepted by groups that are made up of wealthier or more well-connected community members. Women's other forms of identity such as class, caste, language, age, and marital status mediate the extent to which they are able to gain from group membership.

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Sometimes the projects themselves may inadvertently reinforce traditional gender roles. In the Indonesian CDD program it was observed that the type and size of activities women were engaging were limited and unable to change the traditional economy of the family. They were small in scale and with low returns. Moreover, they reinforced women's traditional roles (such as preparing cakes and snacks, or sewing), which limited the new opportunities that could have made a difference sufficient to lift the household out of poverty (World Bank, 2007). The IEG PPAR assessment of the Gemi Diriya project in Sri Lanka (IEG 2014c) found that loans were often taken by women for needs other than their own, suggesting that more research is needed on intrahousehold

decision-making and its effect on women's welfare. According to an assessment by the Asian Development Bank (ADB 2012), women's significant involvement in the Philippines KALAHI-CIDSS project increased their self-confidence and enhanced their analytical, management, and leadership skills. However, men still outrank women in leadership positions of the various KALAHI-CIDSS volunteer committees. In many instances, women are assigned such roles as documenter, treasurer, cook, recordkeeper, and other traditional roles that are, in effect, extensions of their responsibilities as household managers. More generally, women do not have primary roles in CDD and tend to be in traditional supporting roles. In almost all projects men outnumber women in positions of power and responsibility. These findings led to modifications in the design of the National Community-driven Project.

CDD may produce unintended impacts, including negative spillovers. Changing gender norms may require time and adjustments at the household and community levels. The potential negative behavioral responses to project activities and requirements introduced with good intentions need not be overlooked and, if possible, anticipated, given the context. In Uganda, the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund I ICR mentions that increased women's participation in projects may place an increased demand on their time: "In order to strengthen its gender outcomes, implementation of NUSAF should have taken into consideration the fact that women experience difficulties combining responsibilities in the projects with their other household responsibilities and chores. This was not sufficiently addressed in the project design." (ICR, p. 17) The IEG evaluation of the Bangladesh Social Investment Program noted that the original community groups were not provided with basic gender awareness training, knowledge, and understanding on prevention of violence against women. This was a missed opportunity to raise awareness around such issues as the dowry, early marriage, women's health, pregnancy, and hygiene, as well as violence against women (IEG 2016a).

## 5. Discussion and Lessons Learned

This report analyzed the gender features of CDD projects, the extent to which they respond to women's specific constraints, and their impact on women's empowerment, in the economic, political, and social domains. The key findings and lessons learned are summarized as follows:

### Key Findings

CDD projects aim to empower communities and traditionally excluded groups. Women are increasingly recognized as a group that CDD interventions need to reach out to with specific activities to ensure that they fully benefit.

The review of project objectives, indicators, and results documented in project documents indicates that World Bank-supported CDD projects actively pursue and generate high female participation at the level of specific project activities. Women's attendance at meetings is actively supported. Quality of participation and women's involvement in implementation, management, and maintenance of subprojects is less well understood. Project teams increasingly recognize that they need to pay more attention to these dimensions.

CDD programs track *outputs* of project activities, such as the number of subprojects proposed by women or the number of women who received credit. Very few projects identify and measure *outcomes* in their results frameworks to explain how project activities can change the lives of women. Results at this level are measured by those evaluations that focus on both impacts "beyond the project boundaries" and expected impacts. Evaluations of CDD, especially rigorous ones, are, however, still very few, particularly when compared with other interventions (such as, for example, cash transfers).

Most activities included in CDD projects support economic empowerment, and this is the focus of the majority of indicators in results frameworks. Little information is collected on how CDD affect political and social empowerment, though the principles at the basis of the approach mostly speak to these two dimensions of empowerment.

Impacts of CDD projects on women's *economic* empowerment that are frequently documented include access to credit and training; the ability of women to choose subprojects that address their needs; the number of jobs that went to women in projects that include a public works component. Most projects show improvements in these output-level indicators. Higher-level impacts on economic empowerment, such as

changes in women's income and control of resources, and changes in education and health outcomes, are virtually never tracked. The few existing impact evaluations were able to document some positive results for women at this level (especially in Uganda; in Afghanistan and Andhra Pradesh results were more mixed).

In the realm of political and social empowerment, most impacts occur "beyond the project's boundaries" and are therefore rarely identified and measured.

Positive impacts on *political* empowerment have been documented at the level of higher voice and decision-making in project activities (especially when a share of subprojects is reserved to women), but women's participation in the formal political process is not normally contemplated. The Afghanistan impact evaluation is the only one to measure the impact of the project on women's voting behavior and attitudes to the political system, and this is because political empowerment was part of the project's objective.

Positive impacts on *social* empowerment have been measured in rural livelihood programs and self-help groups, which appear to strengthen trust and solidarity among group members. Little is known about changes that occur at the community level, beyond participation in project committees, and at the household level. It is unclear how these projects change traditional gender roles in *society*. This is obviously highly contextual; in some environments merely participating in project activities can challenge the traditional position of women (a typical example is Afghanistan, where women's physical mobility is severely restricted).

## Lessons Learned

Because empowerment is a key element of the CDD approach it is important to bring it out explicitly in the results chain of the project. Recognizing explicitly the power relationships among groups and individuals in the community helps to understand how project activities can support the inclusion or reinforce the exclusion of specific groups, even inadvertently, and address inequalities; for example through the use of quotas or other design elements. Evidence on empowerment impacts of CDD is thin largely because CDD projects rarely discuss in a systematic way which dimensions of empowerment they aim to affect, directly or indirectly, and how.

The design of CDD projects could benefit from being informed by gender-specific needs assessments to identify the constraints that women face in the rural space. If these constraints are ignored, CDD projects can have the undesirable effect of leaving women behind and exacerbating gender gaps. Conversely, a good contextual analysis of women's needs and constraints can indicate where and how to strengthen the design of project activities to potentially produce positive impact on women's empowerment.



## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND LESSONS LEARNED

It is useful to think of empowerment along the three categories of economic, political, and social empowerment to identify the mechanisms CDD interventions can leverage, and to identify direct and indirect effects. Economic empowerment can be more directly supported by project activities that are intended to strengthen livelihoods or provide infrastructure to improve access to services. Impacts on political and social empowerment are generally more indirect and more likely to be part of the spillover category, but these can nonetheless be transformational. By increasing women's participation, decision making and control of resources, CDD interventions may strengthen women's voice and self-confidence, increase their ability to engage with local authorities, and even contribute to changing perceptions about gender roles in the community. These processes require time, are heavily influenced by the context, and generally need to be deliberately supported to generate positive change.

CDD projects cannot be expected to affect all dimensions of empowerment; hence the importance of defining which dimensions can be affected, through which channels, and how these effects can be measured. Empowerment is both a process and an outcome; it requires both qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure its progress and achievements. In addition to outputs and intermediate outcomes achieved through project activities, it is important to measure change in power relationships, including those affecting women, because these will be altered by the project.

Participation needs to be measured in a comprehensive way by the use of multiple indicators. Participation in community meetings and village committees, which projects increasingly measure separately for men and women, is only one dimension of engagement. Quality of participation and consequences of participation need also to be understood and measured to assess whether and how participation generates empowerment "outside of the project boundaries" (increased voice, social cohesion, women's decision-making power, and sense of citizenship).

CDD interventions should better frame what they can impact both in the short and the long term. It is simplistic to assume that CDD interventions can – easily, in the short term – "empower communities" and "empower women." Impacts at the higher level, "beyond the project's boundaries," are more meaningful and lasting, because they are about deeper change in people's lives; but they depend on elements beyond the project's span of control, such as context, community characteristics, and other existing policies and interventions. Moreover, they can emerge only in the longer timeframe. Projects need to be aware of what can be achieved in their timeframe and in the longer time horizon of the program (what the outcome and what the trajectory toward that outcome is). Projects need to specify the more immediate achievements, such as increased participation in meetings, more active decision making regarding subprojects, and increased capacity to manage funds and activities, but also longer-term and higher-

level impacts – increasing the voice and the agency of communities, women, and disadvantaged groups.

The learning potential of what works to increase women’s empowerment can be improved through more systematic assessment, reporting and evaluation. Although there has been increasing attention to monitoring and evaluation of gender impacts, especially for recent projects, the analysis of project documentation produced a relatively small and scattered amount of statements, facts, and evidence as to the gender dimensions in CDD and the impacts of these projects on women’s empowerment. Project staff indicate that projects do much more than what they report, and produce impacts that are not documented, but this information is lost if it is not systematically recorded. Increased awareness, better reporting, and more assessments and evaluations are fundamental to increasing knowledge and learning.

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# Appendix A. List of Programs included in the Desk Review

**Appendix Table A.1 – List of CDD programs**

Country	Project name	Implementation period	Project objective
India	Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project;	2003- 2011	Enable the rural poor, particularly the poorest of the poor, to improve their livelihoods and quality of life
Sri Lanka	Community Development and Livelihood Improvement “Gemi Diriya” project	2004-2014	Improve livelihood and quality of life of targeted poor communities by enabling them to build accountable and self-governing local institutions and to manage sustainable investments
Nepal	Nepal Poverty Alleviation Fund	2004-present	Improve access to income-generation projects and community infrastructure for the groups that have tended to be excluded for reasons of gender, ethnicity, and caste, as well as for the poorest groups in rural communities
Bangladesh	Social Investment Program	2003-2016	Develop effective and efficient financing and institutional arrangements for improving access to local infrastructure and basic services through community-driven small-scale infrastructure works, social assistance programs, and income-generating activities
Pakistan	Poverty Alleviation Fund	1999-2016	Reduce the incidence of poverty through provision of resources and services to the poor and low-income population, particularly women. PPAF 3 focuses on empowering targeted poor with increased incomes, improved productive capacity, and access to services to achieve sustainable livelihoods
Afghanistan	National Solidarity Project	2003-2015	Lay the foundations for a strengthening of community-level governance, and support community-managed subprojects, comprising reconstruction and development, that improve access of rural communities to social and productive infrastructure and services.
Kyrgyz Republic	Village Investment Project	2004-2014	Contribute to the alleviation of rural poverty by: (a) improving governance and capacity at the local level; (b) strengthening the provision of, and access to, essential infrastructure services; and (c) supporting private small-scale group enterprise development. The second project focus is on empowering communities to improve access to social and economic infrastructure services and employment opportunities
Azerbaijan	Rural Investment Project	2004-present	Reduce poverty, improve living standards, expand economic activities for rural households, and increase access and use of infrastructure services in rural communities
Lao PDR	Poverty Reduction Fund	2002-2016	PRF I: alleviate poverty by: (a) financing community infrastructure activities; (b) building local capacity at the village level to manage public investment planning and implementation; and (c) strengthening the capacity of local



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			institutions to support participatory decision making at the village, Kum Banh, and district levels.
			PRF II: to improve access to and utilization of basic infrastructure and services in a sustainable manner through inclusive community and local development processes.
Philippines	KALAHI-CIDSS	2002-2014	Strengthen local communities' participation in barangay governance, and develop their capacity to design, implement, and manage development activities that reduce poverty. Modified with the Additional Financing to: empower local communities in targeted poor municipalities and selected urban areas to achieve improved access to sustainable basic public services and to participate in more inclusive LGU planning and budgeting
Indonesia	PNPM Rural	2008-2015 (KDP since 1998)	Improve the economic and social welfare of the poor by expanding their employment opportunities through community consultations, revolving funds, and capacity building at the local level.
Vietnam	Northern Mountain Poverty Reduction	2001-present	Enhance the living standards of project beneficiaries by improving their access to productive infrastructure, the productive and institutional capacity of local governments and communities, and market linkages and business innovation
Tanzania	Tanzania Social Action Fund	2001-present	Empower communities to access opportunities so that they can request, implement, and monitor the delivery of services through subprojects that contribute to improved livelihoods. The project development objective was simplified to: improve beneficiary households' access to enhanced socioeconomic services and income-generating opportunities
Malawi	Malawi Social Action Fund	2003-present	Improve livelihood of poor and vulnerable households and strengthen the capacity of local authorities to manage local development
Nigeria	Fadama	2004-present	Sustainably increase the incomes of Fadama users, those who depend directly or indirectly on Fadama resources (farmers, pastoralists, fishers, hunters, gatherers, and service providers), through empowering communities to take charge of their own development agenda
Rwanda	Rural Sector Support Project	2001-2015	Increase agricultural production and marketing in an environmentally sustainable manner. The III project aims at strengthening the participation of women and men beneficiaries in market-based value chains
Uganda	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund I, II and III	2003-present	Empower communities living in Northern Uganda and influence their livelihood through: (a) enhancing the capacity of the communities to systematically identify, prioritize, and plan for their needs; (b) strengthening the ongoing reconciliation process in Northern Uganda; and (c) implementing sustainable development initiatives that improve socioeconomic services and opportunities and support vulnerable groups, including youth and women affected by conflict
Yemen	Social Fund for Development	1997-2009 (fourth phase 2010-2016 suspended)	Improve the living conditions, range of services and options available, including economic opportunities, of the poor

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**LIST OF PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THE DESK REVIEW**

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Morocco	National Initiative for Human Development (INDH)	2006-2016	Improve inclusion, participation, and transparency in decision-making and project implementation at the local level so as to promote the use of social services among vulnerable groups and the poor
Brazil	Rural Poverty Reduction Project - Rio Grande do Norte	2002-present	Improve wellbeing, employment, and incomes of the rural poor through better access to basic social services and economic infrastructure and services, and support productive activities

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# Appendix B. Methodology

1. The questions that guided this analysis were: “Do CDD interventions result in economic, social, and/or political empowerment of women, as well as men’s?” and “What are the conditions (including contextual elements) and the design elements that enhance or weaken these impacts?” More specific questions that the report tackles are:

- a. With respect to *design elements*. Do CDD interventions deliberately aim to enhance women’s empowerment and achieve greater gender equality as one of their main objectives? If so, which dimensions of gender equality do they focus on and what elements do they incorporate in their design to achieve this goal?
- b. With respect to *indicators*. Which indicators do CDD projects use to measure empowerment or social capital? And women’s empowerment in particular? How do these indicators compare to those discussed in the broader female empowerment literature?
- c. With respect to *impacts and results*. What are the impacts of CDD interventions on women’s empowerment? Does participation of women in community decision-making processes increase as a result of CDD projects? What about household decision-making? What about alternative measures of empowerment? Does a higher participation of women result in different choices regarding community projects? Are CDD interventions that deliberately aim to improve women’s empowerment more effective than those that do not target women explicitly? Is there evidence of increased impacts over time with respect to empowering women?

2. Three complementary exercises were conducted to answer these questions:

## **In depth review of gender dimensions in rural CDD projects supported by the World Bank (IBRD and IDA)**

3. The team conducted a desk review of project documents and independent assessments, including impact evaluations (when available) to document the evolution of the approach to gender integration and the results achieved over time. The sample included longstanding CDD programs, defined as well-established programs that have received long-term government commitment.<sup>1</sup> This sampling criterion led to the

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<sup>1</sup> We defined long term commitment as countries with at least two consecutive projects supported by the Bank.

inclusion of 20 programs in as many countries in the desk review.<sup>1</sup> Projects selected have an average of slightly more than eight years of implementation. The team focused on “programs that include community control and management of funds and emphasize community inputs into the planning and decision-making process” (Wong 2012, p. 4). Sector-specific projects with a CDD approach or component were excluded. Only one CDD program was selected for each country (where more than one program existed), but for the selected program the analysis focused on the whole sequence of projects. Appendix D presents the template used to collect the information.

4. Project objectives, components, outcome indicators, and reported results were analyzed using available information from project documents and the broader literature to assess the level of gender integration, the approaches adopted, the types of indicators used to measure and monitor results, and how gender-relevant results were documented. Task team leads were contacted to provide additional information (including beneficiary assessments, impact evaluations, and other evidence on outcomes) as needed to supplement the desk review of project documents, and were asked clarifying questions as needed. Country strategies were analyzed to situate the CDD in the broader country engagement framework. Economic and social work and other relevant analytical work were used to analyze contextual elements (such as specific gender issues in the country or region, type of livelihood, level of government decentralization, and so on). The design of currently active projects was compared to the design of closed projects to assess whether the approach to address gender issues has changed over time.

### **Critical review of the literature**

5. The critical review of the literature appraised three main strands of literature – the literature on CDD, with a specific focus on the mechanisms meant to enhance participation, inclusion, social capital, and empowerment; the literature on gender in CDD, especially the more recent, analyzing the specific gender impacts of CDD projects; and the literature on empowerment, female empowerment in particular, to define the concept and the dimensions that are relevant for CDD projects and are or could be affected (including impacts that are unintended). This exercise was not limited to World Bank projects, but focused on the literature at large.<sup>2</sup> The exercise helped define the

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<sup>1</sup> The CDD Community of Practice shared with the team a list of long-running CDD programs in 25 countries identified in consultations with task team leads, which were used as a starting point for our selection. After further refinement 20 projects were selected, based on the criteria defined for the analysis. These projects are listed in Appendix A, Table A.1.

<sup>2</sup> Two background papers, one on women’s empowerment, and one on the gender implications of CDD interventions have been produced for this report.

## APPENDIX B METHODOLOGY

conceptual framework that guided the organization of the main messages emerging from the empirical analysis.

6. An internet search was conducted to identify relevant CDD impact evaluations and program documents in English, using both search engines and hand-searching organizations' websites. Key search terms were 'gender, women, empowerment, community driven development, CDD.' Hand searching was conducted at 3ie, R4D, and the World Bank CDD site. Individual programs were also re-searched to double-check that all relevant documents had been captured. The results from each program evaluation were then synthesized into major common themes. The literature review relies on published and accessible documentation but, owing to resource limitations, is not a systematic review, and may not capture all available knowledge.

7. Many documents, assessments, and reviews on CDD were examined. These were searched for key gender terms (women, gender, female). If they did not contain any of these terms or only referred to them in passing, they were excluded from the background literature. Both rural and urban contexts were included in the search, but only documents that referred to rural programs were eventually retained.

8. The review of the literature on empowerment helped define meaningful dimensions and indicators that were tracked in the desk review. The team reviewed the recent literature that proposed and piloted a number of indicators comparable across countries, with special attention to the rural context (for example, Alkire and Ibrahim, 2007; Alkire and others 2013). The team also referred to indicators proposed in the toolkit for gender integration in CDD (World Bank, 2011b) and to the few existing impact evaluations that have analyzed the impact of CDD interventions on women's empowerment (a good example is Beath and others 2013; also Beath and others 2015). The identification of appropriate indicators of women's empowerment in CDD allowed the team to prepare instruments for qualitative work (focus group discussions) conducted in Lao PDR as part of a project performance assessment report (PPAR) of a CDD project.<sup>1</sup> This empirical exercise provided the opportunity to test women's empowerment indicators in the context of an actual CDD project, in addition to generating additional evidence for one of the projects in the sample.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The team also drew from the focus group discussions tools used by Munoz Boudet and others (2012).

<sup>2</sup> The focus group discussions tool was also piloted in Nepal toward the project performance assessment of the Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF), a program also included in the sample of World Bank projects analyzed. However, because of the recent earthquake and the subsequent crisis, the PPAR was put on hold, and the fieldwork was only recently carried out, too late for

## Compilation and summary of findings of Project Performance Assessment Reports of CDDs and other IEG evidence

9. This review benefited of the field evidence collected by eight Project Performance Assessment Reports (PPARs): the Nigeria Second National Fadama Development Project PPAR (IEG 2014b), the Gemi Dirya Project PPAR in Sri Lanka (IEG 2014c), the Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiatives Project (APDPIP) and the Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Production Project (APRPRP) PPARs (IEG 2015); the Bangladesh Social Investment Program Project PPAR (IEG 2016a), the Malawi Third Social Action Fund PPAR (IEG 2016d), the Tanzania Second Social Action Fund PPAR (IEG 2016c), and the PPAR of the Lao PDR Poverty Reduction Fund project (IEG 2016b).

10. Most of these projects, more or less explicitly, aimed to reach out to women and enhance their participation in community activities and in the identification and management of subprojects. Often, they aimed to fund investment in micro-infrastructure that meets women's needs or enhances women's livelihoods. The projects' monitoring and evaluation frameworks include variables that are meant to capture several dimensions of participation and empowerment. PPARs assessed projects' achievements with respect to women's increased participation and access to services – as per their explicit design and motivations – and also investigated other empowerment dimensions that may be affected as opportunities and voice increase. PPARs reviewed also evidence on those empowerment dimensions that “extend beyond the boundaries of the project.”

11. Other country and thematic evaluations and learning products provided useful material for this review. In particular, we used material prepared as background analysis for the Evaluation of World Bank Support to the Rural Non-Farm Economy, the Brazil Country Program Evaluation, and the Evaluation of World Bank Support to Fragile and Conflict-affected States.

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the results to be reflected in this report. Evidence for the Nepal PAF was, however, derived from the desk review of project documents and impact evaluations.

# Appendix C. Indicators of Women's Empowerment

12. In discussing indicators of female empowerment, the team was guided by a set of indicators that were organized according to the indications of the theoretical and empirical literature. A compact list is presented below. The indicators are grouped into three main categories: (i) women's economic empowerment; (ii) women's political empowerment; and, (iii) women's social empowerment. There is no clear-cut classification of these indicators, however, and overlaps across categories are possible. So, some indicators can be included under more than one category. The context and goals of the projects can help define the meaning of these variables more specifically.<sup>1</sup>

## WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

- **Income and Expenditure.** It is important to distinguish between the woman's own earned income and other income she may receive; identify its source, type, and regularity, and the share of the woman's contribution to the household income (relative to the man's share). An important dimension of empowerment is manifested by the woman's control over her own and her household income (whether the woman can decide how to use the income she earns and the household income, whether this decision is made jointly with her husband or other household members or whether it is her independent decision).
- **Assets.** Identify women's ownership of housing, land, livestock, and other productive assets, durable goods, or communal resources. As with income it is also important to assess not just the ownership, but also women's control over these assets (who decides the purchase, sale, use, and transfer of women's own and shared assets). It is also important to identify women's access to financial assets, credit, and saving accounts. Formal and informal laws and their enforcement regarding property and inheritance are also relevant dimensions under this category.
- **Employment.** Identify women's participation in paid and unpaid (or family) employment over time. It is important to recognize the type of employment (for a wage, public or private, formal, vulnerable or casual, self-employment, family farm work, and so on); women's participation in "good" vs. "bad" jobs; the

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<sup>1</sup> A more detailed and exhaustive list of variables is presented in the paper "Women's Empowerment: Concepts, Framework, and Measurement," commissioned for this report, which also includes a discussion of why a specific variable is a meaningful measure of a specific dimension of empowerment, and all the references to the relevant literature.

regularity of employment, number of hours worked, benefits attached to her job (child care, maternity, and so on); gender segregation in occupations and industries; and wage differentials. It is important to identify time allocated between productive and domestic tasks.

- **Human Capital.** Identify women's access to education, skills, and training; women's access to health; and levels and changes over time. Identify any gender gap in key outcomes.
- **Access to Infrastructure.** Identify access to basic services such as water, sanitation, and electricity. Also includes access to markets, information, and technology.

### **WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT**

- **Knowledge.** Knowledge of government and the political system, and of the means to access it.
- **Participation.** Exercising the right to vote, strength of women as a voting bloc, participation in public protests and political campaigning. Women's involvement or mobilization in the local political system and campaigns, and in village council. The number of women participating in the political process.
- **Decision Making.** Women's representation in local, regional, and national bodies of government and parliaments. The number of women in position of political influence. Representation of women's interests in effective lobbies and interest groups.
- **Institutions.** International instruments and conventions on civil and political rights ratified. Women's ability to use and access public service entitlements, and local formal and informal justice and dispute resolution systems. Prevalence of crimes rooted in living, customary, or religious laws (honor killing, domestic violence, sexual abuse).

### **WOMEN'S SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT**

- **Mobility and Freedom of Movement.** Identify places where women are not allowed to go alone, if any. Measure women's visibility and access to social space.
- **Status within the Household.** Several indicators give a sense of women's status within the household such as: assets brought to the marriage and a woman's relative contribution to household income; the relative level of education of the husband and the wife; women's financial assets and labor contribution to the household; the mean spousal age difference; help received from the husband and other relatives in domestic tasks; participation in household decisions (health and education of children, own health, purchase of consumption goods,



## APPENDIX C

### INDICATORS OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

purchase of durable goods, visits to family and friends, women's right to refuse sex, contraceptive use, family planning) – both actual participation and perceptions of her ability to make or contribute to a decision.

- Women's Social Status, Social Norms, and Gender Roles. Existence and shifts in patriarchal norms (such as the preference for sons, discrimination against daughters – in education, nutrition, and health), marriage and kinship systems indicating greater value and autonomy for women (such as later marriages, the self-selection of spouse, reduction in the practice of dowry, and the acceptability of divorce); age at marriage and attitudes toward and prevalence of domestic violence; effective local enforcement of legal rights; symbolic representation of the female in myth and ritual (what is considered possible for women), including positive media images of women, women's roles, and their contribution; and women's sense of inclusion and entitlement.
- Social Capital. Kinship structures; participation in extra-familial groups and social networks (type of social network group, roles); and self-perceived exclusion from community activities.

# Appendix D. Desk Review Project Template

13. The desk review of project documents was carried out using this template. One questionnaire was filled in for each program.

## Introduction

14. The unit of observation of each case study is a specific longstanding CDD project (with more than one operation). The review will examine several elements of the CDD focusing particularly on the gender-relevant design and implementation features, and results on women empowerment.

### Appendix Box D.1 Instructions for the Evaluator:

- **Template outline.** The case study has 3 sections and one annexed table: The first section briefly presents the country context over the life of the project; the second section describes the project(s) reviewed and its gender relevant design features and results; the third section describes the governance and institutional arrangements of the project. The annex table includes additional information on the project.
- **Scope.** [Add period and the number of projects that will be reviewed here].
- **Responses.** Do not use passive form. Please answer all questions that are relevant to your particular case study. [Add page limit here]
- **Sources.** You will receive a folder with relevant documents and tables for this country. You are expected to search for additional information to respond to the questions (please document and collect all supporting evidence). Sources that should be consulted for each case study include, as appropriate:
  - **World Bank Group documents:** CASs, PADs, ICRs, ICRRs, PPARs, PAs, gender-relevant ESW and AAA documents relevant to the project.
  - **Other Documents prepared by the government, research institutes or other lending partners:** This may include regional Banks and major bilateral donors. It may also include research or study reports or evaluations.

## I. Country Context:

15. Briefly describe the country context at project design and approval – in relation to the project. Discuss the relevance of design given the country context. Pay particular attention to women’s or gender issues highlighted in the country diagnostics or the supporting analytical background (look at CAS, PAD and other supportive analytical

**APPENDIX D**  
**DESK REVIEW PROJECT TEMPLATE**

underpinnings<sup>1</sup>). These could be, for example, women's poor access to services or assets (finance, land, productive technology, etc.) or productive activities, or gaps in participation in local decision-making, etc.

16. Note any relevant changes on the country context during the life of the project.

## **II. Project Description and Achievements:**

Brief description of the project itself.

State the original and (if appropriate) revised PDOs.

Discuss whether the PDOs has a special gender relevance:

- Does the operation states specifically that it will improve women's life in any way? (e.g., women empowerment, participation, livelihoods, access to services, etc.).
- Does the operation target women explicitly or implicitly?
- Are women included as part of other vulnerable groups?
- Are there any other particular groups targeted?
- Does the project aim to solicit/enhance women's participation in deciding upon, managing, and controlling project's resources?
- Does the project aim to change the relationships between men and women as members of the community, as producers, as individuals?

Report any changes in the targeting and/or project focus over time.

Focusing ONLY on gender relevant results:

- What are the stated expected results?
- What are the indicators to measure achievements?
- Report the actual results (if available). Make sure to refer to the source of information and check the original source if possible.
- Report any information on how it was possible to achieve the results achieved, what elements of design and/or implementation contributed to the success (or not) in changing relationships between men and women and women's standing in the community.
- Discuss any potential missed opportunities, (e.g., indicators that are not presented in a disaggregated manner, other elements that were not reported or discussed but would have been important to understand how something was or not achieved. Also report elements of design that, based on the experience of the evaluators, appears to have been overlooked)

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<sup>1</sup> For example, poverty assessments, gender assessments, beneficiary assessments, relevant analytic and advisory activities and economic and social work. Also, research material prepared by other donors and institutions (especially if they were also involved in the project).

Sub-project activities:

- Briefly describe the sub-project activities including any changes over time, categorizing the sub-projects in: (i) livelihood (income generating activities), (ii) infrastructure, (iii) capacity building, and/or (iv) a mix.
- Discuss the process of sub-project selection (at design stage and what actually happened during implementation). Note any gender relevant feature.
- Report on the intended mix of sub-projects and the actual realization.
- Discuss any specific gender benefits or costs (implicit or explicit) associated with the sub-project activities. Were these costs or benefits noted in the project documents?(both at design and completion)
- Discuss the specific gender relevant results of the sub-project activities (if any).
- Were those results expected at entry?
- Report the source and review the original work if possible (e.g., impact evaluations)

Participation:

- Was women participation encouraged or mandated at the design stage? How? (e.g., attendance quotas, informal networks, information channeling, representation in project's implementation agencies, etc.)
- How is participation (and in particular, participation of women) monitored? Discuss indicators and other supporting information
- Was there any evaluation of or reference to the type and quality of women participation?
- Did women participation translate into decision making/empowerment (within or outside the project)? What is the evidence of this?

### III. Governance and Institutional setup:

*This section has two goals: 1. allowing for a classification of the type of CDD (is the emphasis more on improving rural infrastructure? Decentralization? Supporting livelihoods? Etc.); and 2. understanding how the institutions in the country internalize gender issues and gender messages emerging from the project and respond to them.*

Describe the project institutional arrangements/management; please note any change over time.

- Was there any new institution created?

**APPENDIX D**  
**DESK REVIEW PROJECT TEMPLATE**

- Describe the level of community involvement (expected and effective). Describe how women's instances are diagnosed and taken into account.
- Do communities make decisions on planning, implementation, O&M? (communities could do all or just some of these activities, specify and describe). How are women and men involved?
- Do communities directly manage the funds? What is the role of men and women?
- What is the role of the project management unit and government?

## Appendix E. Economic Empowerment in CDD Projects

Appendix Table A.5 – Economic empowerment. Documented results

Country	Project name	Economic Empowerment	Better Access to Services
India	Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project;	<p>Access to finance: millions of women accessed formal banking finance, over which many had at least partial allocative control (PPAR). Data at the household level (not individual).</p> <p>Access to assets: Increased livestock and durable assets for the poorest; increase in nonfarm assets (poor)</p> <p>Consumption: Increase in overall consumption, and especially education expenditure</p>	<p>Positive impact through village health centers which focused on teaching visitors, especially women, about nutrition, as well as maternal and child health. The centers were accessible to both self-help group participants and nonparticipants. Data on health-related outcomes are mostly unavailable in project documentation. Children were slightly more likely to attend school, but indicators of maternal and child health did not show much improvement.</p>
Sri Lanka	Community Development and Livelihood Improvement “Gemi Diriya” project	<p>Access to finance: one-time grants provided to the poorest, including widows without income and single mothers, to “bridge” access to microfinance.</p> <p>Employment: Skills development training program allowed access to employment for men (mostly as wage earners) and women (mostly as self-employed)</p>	
Nepal	Nepal Poverty Alleviation Fund	<p>Increased Income: Beneficiary households increased their income by at least 15% compared to the base year.</p>	
Bangladesh	Social Investment Program	<p>Skills: saving and credit management training was provided but mostly leaders and cashiers received it because women did not rotate.</p> <p>Women took up nonfarm livelihood activities thanks to credit and infrastructure (better access to markets)</p>	<p>Time savings: expected but not measured.</p>
Pakistan	Poverty Alleviation Fund	<p>Access to credit: about half of microcredit loans given to women</p>	<p>Education: increased girls’ enrolment</p>
Afghanistan	National Solidarity Project	<p>Higher involvement in income-generating activities.</p> <p>No evidence on impacts on asset ownership.</p> <p>No evidence on impacts on household decision-making.</p>	<p>Women’s time: time savings in employment (thanks to mechanized wheat threshing) and to fetch water (thanks to provision of hand pumps for drinking water).</p> <p>Health: health-related problems caused by waterborne diseases decreased after the project.</p> <p>Health: modest improvement in women’s access to professional medical services.</p>

**APPENDIX E**  
**ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN CDD PROJECTS**

			Education: Some evidence of increased girls' school attendance rates.
Kyrgyz Republic	Village Investment Project	Employment: small businesses for women were created through micro-projects.	
Azerbaijan	Rural Investment Project	Skills: increased women's leadership skills and increased number of households in which women were consulted on financial matters.	Time savings in fetching water: almost cut in half thanks to the project.
Philippines	KALAHI-CIDSS	Employment: Women's employment increased thanks to the project, but they got only 5 percent of the total employment generated by the project.	
Indonesia	PNPM Rural	Increase in loans disproportionately for better-off women. Insufficient training activities funded. Little improvement in income generation.	
Vietnam	Northern Mountain Poverty Reduction	Employment: Lack of gender-disaggregated data on beneficiaries of paid labor opportunities (ICR).	Health: women were the main beneficiaries of the rural health component. Investments: equal benefit for men and women.
Tanzania	Tanzania Social Action Fund	Employment: half of the participants in public works were women Access to credit: women were the majority of participants in savings-investment groups Small businesses created, thanks to loans obtained by women public works participants from the savings and investment groups. The large majority of participants were women (82%); nearly all women who created an enterprise were earning income.	Education: the conditional cash transfer component had strong impacts on primary school completion rates for girls.
Malawi	Malawi Social Action Fund	Employment: short-term gains in jobs and earnings thanks to public works schemes; long-term gains in building assets thanks to savings-investment programs. Small businesses creation: villages in the program saw a 55 percent increase in women engaged in business (thanks to the savings-investment programs).	Health: reduced mortality among pregnant women in areas where MASAF III was implemented.
Nigeria	Fadama	Access to assets: it was difficult for women (especially poor ones) to make the contribution for asset acquisition. Several indicators (household income, access to markets, asset acquisition) measured only at the household level. Assets: women's private asset value increased less than	

**APPENDIX E**  
**ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN CDD PROJECTS**

		men's; however, but women's group assets increased much more than men's group assets. Female farmers were more likely to invest in milling machines, while male farmers were more likely to invest in irrigation pumps.	
Rwanda	Rural Sector Support Project	Women farmers benefited from training in crop management, inputs use, and integrated pest management practices; no information on the impact of that training	
Uganda	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund I, II and III	Incomes: profits from business startups supported by training and grants. Higher gains from women (who were starting from a lower base than men) Employment: business startups Skills: training provided. Productive assets: increased	Time savings: in fetching water, owing to the provision of water points Education: intermediate outcomes (better dormitories for girls) Health: intermediate outcomes (midwives improved services for pregnant women)
Yemen	Social Fund for Development	Access to finance: increased access to microfinance (borrowers were 75 percent women)	Education: increased education for girls (enrollment) Health: increased probability that women would seek a midwife for delivery; majority of women think access to health care has increased Time savings: average travel time is reduced by about 30 minutes per round trip, benefiting mostly women
Morocco	National Initiative for Human Development (INDH)	Income: half of the beneficiaries of income generating activities were women (1/3 of agricultural projects), but no evidence of impacts on incomes	Access to infrastructure and services increased, according to more than 2/3 of men and women
Brazil	Rural Poverty Reduction Project Rio Grande do Norte	Off-farm paid work (agricultural) for women increased and women's salaries increased (no significant change for men); women's income rose 124% while the income of women in the control group fell 7%	Time savings for women and young men thanks to water points
Laos	Poverty Reduction Fund	No evidence of impact collected	Education: It was noted that girls now go to school as much as boys, though the girls' drop-out rates are high in grade 5 (IEG focus group discussions)