FSN Network Gender Task Force Meeting

June 15, 2011

1. Follow up from previous meeting
	* Comments about documents that were sent out from Melissa T. to the participant email list
		+ The tools from the *Gender in Agriculture Bibliography,* which were compiled by Women Thrive Worldwide was helpful
		+ Mara Russell will share details about a useful UN website that has a list of gender training programs
		+ Mara Russell also described a new GEWE index tool under development to measure change in women’s empowerment in agriculture
		+ Jillian Jensen to send out the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action and its online training program as an additional reference.
		+ Kavita Sethuraman also offered to circulate numerous country profiles on the state of gender, which she says are useful basic snapshots to consult when developing gender programming
	* Field Solicitations
		+ Have not added new members to the Task Force as yet
		+ Task Force needs to develop a more effective strategy to reach out and attract new participants, either as task force members or field personnel with valuable lessons and insights to share
		+ It was briefly discussed whether a more precise or better defined invitation should be prepared in order to give potential participants a clearer idea of what the objectives are for the task force, its information needs and plans. TF members are encouraged to again try to increase awareness about the group and solicit participation.
	* It was decided to follow definitions of gender recognized by USAID to minimize confusion. Accordingly, the task force will follow the definitions that were provided in the glossary of the Operational Paper #7 <http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/ffp/gendemainstreaming.pdf>
2. Presentation by Kavita Sethuraman, AED
	* The TF invited Kavita to present on the Operational Paper #7 since it provides a very current analysis of the state of gender in DCHA/FFP policies and programs. It identifies the TOPS program and the FSN Network as potentially valuable contributors in helping DCHA/FFP met its new gender objectives. Therefore, this paper provided a springboard for discussion about more narrowly defining the tasks and core competencies important to the FSN Network Gender Task Force.
	* Summary highlights about the paper. For more information see the PowerPoint slides.
		+ The purpose of the Occasional Paper #7 is to provide a framework on how to mainstream gender, through various stages of integration
		+ Background
			- Previously in USAID, gender was acknowledged as important but was not a threshold issue
			- The ADS and Title II Proposed guidelines show the increase of focus in Gender
		+ Process and Approach to report preparation
			- Did reviews of documents and proposals to see how gender was integrated into food security
			- Spoke with relevant stakeholders and survey mission staff
		+ General Findings
			- It was seen that gender was often added in a throw away paragraph
			- Issue of Women vs. Gender
				* People do not understand the constraints in which they operate
				* Implementers can unintentionally reinforce gender discrimination or biases
* Programs are typically too service-focused and not concerned with sustainable and substantive social change
	+ - * + Women often need permission to do things, and these need to be negotiated before a program starts; cannot assume they have permission to participate as may lead to gender-based violence
				+ When change happens it is not recorded
				+ Title 2 has a unique ability to make sustainable social change in 5 year programs, but this is not harnessed
1. Discussion inspired by presentation
	* Broadly applicable causal model showing impact of gender integration on food security outcomes is still lacking
		+ Challenge: there is little hard evidence of the linkages between gender and food security or gender, agriculture and nutrition
		+ Mainly anecdotal evidence, and field testimony
		+ This may account for the lack of organizational buy-in and spotty leadership
		+ Need to strengthen the empirical evidence to support presentation of a conceptual/theoretical model to show the causal relationship between gender and expected outcomes
	* Gender Transformation through social change programming
		+ We discussed the contrast between approaching gender from the perspective of service delivery (more of a WID approach) versus substantive social change perspective (gender transformative GAD approach)
		+ Because of the activity areas of FFP programs, it was felt that there are unique opportunities to achieve GAD outcomes by focusing more on social change than just service delivery
		+ One example of such programming is the inclusion of men and boys in training in order to sensitize, foster behavior change, and avoid competition erupting between men and women
		+ Men also need to be included in analysis in order to have complete contextual understanding of decision-making over resource allocation
		+ Need to see whose job it is to do what to understand the social context and begin dialogue among men and women
		+ TOPS and the FSN Network can play a role by bringing forth IMT that deal with this shift in thinking from WID to GAD strategies
		+ Need to promote shared responsibility from the beneficiary level to the organizational level
	* Operational process and technical needs for effective gender integration
		+ Need to give guidance on steps on how to operationalize gender
			- Gender power scales and implementation tools can be adapted and used
	* It was discussed that the FSN Network Gender Task Force should focus initially on developing technical capacity on integrating gender into formative assessments and problem diagnosis
		+ Show how gender relates to different sectoral positions
			- Possible task force activity: Compile case studies, results surveys, gender analysis, excerpts from proposals (e.g., ACDI/VOCA Uganda program)
		+ Gender analysis should be done latest in the 1st year of a program, since it is hard to reorient later. Time and sequencing are critical to achieve results.
			- The task force agrees this is doable, but may take time
			- PVOs and FFP need to work together to move forward on this
		+ Organizations need to show that they value gender integration into programs for staff to move ahead on it
		+ Proposed stepwise approach to TF activities:
			- Assessment Phase
				* How to integrate gender into formative investigation (qualitative and quantitative tools)?
				* How to interpret data especially indicators related to power and social change?
				* How to integrate these findings into problem analysis?
			- Design Phase
				* How do you use this information to design a program?
			- Implementation Phase
				* What activities are required?
	* Importance of listening to concerns from the field
		+ We discussed how the voices of field personnel are not always heard in appraising the social concerns, challenges and constraints of WID and GAD interventions
			- This can lead to limited support by fieldworkers
		+ Some local perceptions that gender is about “liberal feminism” is a challenge that can be addressed by demonstrating how new approaches differ from the past and help to effectively implement programs
2. Mozambique Meeting in September
	* Joan Whelan, a member of TOPS, expressed interest in having some events pertaining to gender on the agenda for the TOPS Capacity Strengthening Workshops and FSN Network Technical Meeting in Maputo in September. Ideally these should be highly interactive sessions based on lessons and experiences of local/regional field personnel. There is also an opportunity to offer a training session. Sylvia Cabus was mentioned as a possible trainer. Once more clear definition about the proposed sessions is determines, discussions with MYAP partners can begin.
	* The meeting in Maputo will most likely contain a gender session around service delivery
		+ Need real examples and lessons learned from the field
			- Perhaps can make technical sheet from this
		+ Will be reaching out to MYAPs to see what the needs are
	* Would like to build from this and take the results to design an experiment that could be perhaps funded by a small grant
3. Work Plan and Core Competency Matrix discussions
	* Initial working copies of a proposed work plan and core competency matrix have been prepared for review by task force members.
	* Melissa Teuber to send out an email with a draft of each.
	* Task Force Members are requested to respond with comments.
		+ Please add, subtract, and edit whatever is needed
	* Task force should aim to have these documents completed for the next monthly meeting so that planning can begin for specified activities.
4. Next steps before next FSN Network Gender Task Force Meeting
	* Task Force Members to comment and add to the Work Plan and Core Competency Matrix
	* Reach out to possible field staff who could contribute to the Task Force discussions on gender in their work
	* Develop training and knowledge activities on gender for the TOPS meeting in Maputo