Women's Rights Thematic Review

December 2008 – July 2009

*"ActionAid will seek to empower women
& girls in everything we do"* -

*Rights to end poverty,
International Strategy, 2005/2010*

Report compiled by
Penny Plowman

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Acronyms

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AAI	ActionAid International
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AWID	Association of Women's Rights in Development
CD	Country Director
CP	Country Programme
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
GFTAM	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria
HF	HungerFREE
HFW	HungerFREE Women
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resources
ICARRD	International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
ID	International Director
INGO	International Non Governmental Organisation
IWRT	International Women's Rights Team
LGBTi	Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Trans-Gender and Inter- sex
MBI	Movement Building Initiative
OD-G	Organisational Development and Governance
PEPFAR	The U S President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
RBA	Rights Based Approach
RTEP	Rights to End Poverty, ActionAid International Strategy 2005/2010
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session (on HIV & AIDS)
VAW	Violence against Women
VAG	Violence against Girls
WR	Women's Rights
WRC	Women's Rights Co-ordinator
WLR	Women's Land Rights
WLWHA	Women Living With HIV and AIDS
WWW	Women Won't Wait (campaign).

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

Introduction

In 2005, AAI launched its Women's Rights Theme, one of six themes that form the central delivery pillars for ActionAid International's strategy for 2005 – 2010, 'Rights to end Poverty'. The other Themes are Right to Education; Right to Food; Right to Human Security in Conflict and Emergencies; Right to Life and Dignity in the face of HIV & AIDS; and Right to Just and Democratic Governance. The purpose of the WR Theme is to deliver the women's rights specific commitments to 'Rights to end Poverty'.

Between December 2008 and July 2009, an external evaluation of the WR theme was undertaken. The objectives of the Review were to: 1) Evaluate the impact of the International Women's Rights Strategy on women's rights work in AAI, 2) Explore the outcomes and quality of AAI's women's rights work at national and international level, 3) Analyse AAI's partnerships and AAI's contribution to women's rights struggles, 4) Gather learning on how AAI has been working on women's rights and 5) Analyse how AAI's organisational culture, and systems have impacted on WR work.

The Challenge

The naming of a 'women's rights' focus, presents a fundamental challenge to everyone in the organisation. Putting women and girls' rights at the centre elicits strong feelings, professionally and personally. These feelings run along a continuum from those who advocate strong support on one end, to those who question the centrality of a feminist analysis in the fight against poverty. The challenge for the organisation is therefore, how to build support for working on women's rights for both, the goal of poverty eradication and for women's rights in and of themselves. This is a significant challenge in an organisation made up of individual women and men with a diversity of opinions about the place and politics of women's rights in development. To do this means a re-orientation, personally and professionally, since putting women's rights at the centre is not a slogan but a challenge to the way the organisation conceptualizes and does its work. The Review findings show that important steps are being taken through the work of the WR Theme.

Key findings and recommendations

There were a number of key findings and recommendations summarized below:

1. Value of standalone WR Theme and Budget:
While most INGOs have chosen to go the mainstreaming route, AAI has rightly chosen to have a specific, standalone WR theme, plus mainstreaming WR into all other themes and functions. This approach has contributed in large measure to the achievements and changes identified during this evaluation. It is this dual approach that has contributed towards the complex and slow process of institutionalizing the organisation's commitment to putting women's rights at the centre of its 'being and doing'. The Standalone Track, as outlined in the WR Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010, has enabled the IWRT to identify specific WR issues that it could work on, lead on those, and implement specific programs, or campaigns. There are a number of pieces of work which stand out;

1) Women Won't Wait Campaign which links HIV & AIDS and violence against women; 2) Violence against Girls in schools programme, 3) Women's Rights to Land 4) Inter-thematic collaboration with the Human Security Theme in post conflict and emergency contexts; 5) Partnership building with women's rights movements, a strategy which cuts across the Standalone Programming Approach. Each of these examples provides evidence of the impact of the Standalone WR. It also shows the way the IWRT and WR staff have worked successfully in collaboration with other themes.

The value of the Standalone Track is therefore that it carves out space and resources to develop and lead on WR work in ways that raise the profile of WR in the organisation. For example staff who have been in the organisation for a long time and over 5 years, report that there has been a significant shift in the internal discourse as a result of the organisation's decision to engage with women's rights and support a WR Theme.

- AAI must continue to have a Standalone WR theme, a specific international team, and a specific budget allocated to it. The same must continue in CP/affiliates. It is not yet time to only "mainstream" women's rights. The approach provides leadership and good practice on what it means (for AAI and others), to work with a Women's Rights and Gender Equality Approach.
- At the same time, AAI must increase its investment in Mainstreaming women's rights across all International secretariat, geographic and functional units, and in all its programs and campaigns. A good foundation has been built, and the rhetoric is now everywhere. The task of "putting Women and Girls at the centre" depends on every single ActionAid staff member's efforts.

2. Raising AAI's profile:
The Standalone interventions have also contributed to the way in which the organisation is seen by outsiders; the general public, potential employees, donors, women's rights organisations and feminist movements. The organisation is now seen as an international NGO that is committed to work on WR in and of itself and when it intersects with poverty and injustice.

3. Strategic choice of WR issues:
The strategic priority WR issues identified in the international strategic plan were innovative, cutting edge and indeed very strategic. These too have also raised AAI's role and profile in WR. Women's human rights issues are very complex and the problems women face, intersect with one another. There is no magic solution. Neither is one issue more important than the other. Therefore choosing what to focus on is often a challenge for organisations. The WWW campaign focusing on the intersection of VAW and HIV is innovative and shows cutting edge thinking. Land rights have risen to the top of the international policy agenda given global trends such as land grabs and the food crisis. These two examples show the value of making strategic choices on what to work on in the very wide basket of "women's rights".

- As the IWRT begins to think beyond R2EP more strategic thinking needs to happen as to what issues to focus on which can engage all parts of the organisation – South and North, mobilize partners and supporters and also make a big difference in women's condition and position.

4. Value of the IWRT:
The setting up and development of an International Women's Rights Team has been critical to advancing the organisation's work on women's rights and gender equality. The appointment of a team made up of feminist activists, some of whom are well known leaders in the movement has strengthened the organisation's work on women's rights and gender equality. This is a big leap from four years ago when there were a handful of individuals with a small budget. Evidence of the team's impact within the organisation is summed up when the majority of staff interviewed said that they have high regard for the team, noting in particular its strategic leadership and its capacity to lead and develop programmes and campaigns at all levels.

In addition, there is now a Women's Rights coordinator in almost every country program/affiliate. This has created a women's rights community in the organisation, with whom the IWRT works.

Another significant impact of the work of the IWRT has been in its efforts to change the organisation's culture. Evidence of this work is found in the Feminist Leadership Forum initiative and in the ways in which the IWRT was instrumental in the setting up of the Sunnyside Group.

- AAI must continue to have a strong International WR team whose specific mandate remains to provide leadership on WR. Every country program/affiliate must also continue to have a full time WR theme leader.

5. Strengthening AAI's partnerships with feminist and women's movements:
The work of the IWRT has significantly raised AAI's profile as a partner to women's movements. This has opened up a number of new strategic alliances for AAI, and at the same time contributed to raising AAI's profile as a good partner to these movements. The strategic partnerships with others who work with a feminist set of principles have ensured that AAI is taking important steps to be able to participate in the global women's rights movement.

- AAI must continue to build strong partnerships with feminist movements, and women's movements led by strong feminist principles. This adds value to what AAI does. In the long run it will make AAI the partner of choice to these movements.

6. Value of strengthening internal capacities:
The IWRT has invested a lot of its collective time and energy over the last three years strengthening capacities of various units and staff internally, to be able to deliver on WR. Using a range of strategies and entry points; training, intensive country visits, peer reviews, inter-thematic collaboration/mainstreaming WR into other themes and functions, and leadership development; the IWRT has strengthened the capacities of individual women's rights staff, other thematic and function teams, IDs, and CDs.

- IWRT must work in collaboration with the Organisational Development/Effectiveness team to come up with long term strategies for internal change processes that are required to make WR the centre of AAI. Organisational transformation of the kind that is required cannot be the job of the WR team. There is also a danger that the WR team would end up being a

training or support unit, which is what has often happened in many other development INGOs.

7. Programmes:
This Review shows that a great deal of programming and campaigning is going on in almost every CP and affiliate. Some of it is standalone WR theme and some is mainstreamed. A good foundation has been built in a critical number of countries. The challenge ahead is about deepening the WR work and in this regard much more needs to be done;

- AAI must continue to build staff skills and provide guiding frameworks for programme planning, project cycle management and in particular qualitative and quantitative indicators for measuring change in each of the strategic priorities.
- The calls from CPs for more support in programme and campaign planning, design, together with the reflections by the IWRT itself indicate that this is an area of weakness.
- IWRT must work with other themes, IASL, and the Program Quality team, in the development of programme management tools and methods based on a Rights Based Approach. All this will ensure that interventions are not experienced and seen as one off events – which in some contexts is the current practice.

8. Policy and campaigns:
The IWRT has implemented its own standalone campaigns and carried out its own policy research to support these campaigns; WWW, VAG, and WR to land. The same has happened in several country programs and affiliates who have similar or linked campaigns. Examples include; Kenya, Malawi, Sierra Leone, UK, Italy, Haiti, Guatemala, India, and Nepal to mention just a few.

The evaluation showed that going forward, policy and campaigning capacity in WR needs to be strengthened across the organisation and in the IWRT. For the IWRT, balancing the external/mission related work with internal capacity building and support to CPs has been a big challenge. It was important for the IWRT to spend a lot of time in these early stages focusing on the internal support.

It would appear however that WR is not yet effectively mainstreamed into all of AAI's policy and campaigning. Many documents still only have one or two sentences on WR in the analysis of problems/issues, and very few policy solutions or messages for what policy makers need to do. WR is mostly an "add on".

- The IWRT must now make decisions about how it divides its time and resources between the internal support and mission related leadership. The team together with their line ID must discuss; How much more internal support is needed and by whom? How to restructure the current team, in particular the role of Regional Coordinators?
- The IWRT should invest more in policy research and provide necessary leadership on the key issues that AAI works on at any one time.
- However, it is also the responsibility of ID policy and the whole policy and campaigns community across AAI to strengthen their own WR analysis,

> research, and policy messaging and campaigning. The current practice of inviting WR to comment on already decided projects, reports etc is not satisfactory.
> - The IWRT must provide more targeted support to CPs/affiliates to build up their policy and campaigns.

9. Questioning of WR Approach:

Running alongside findings the above findings are also perspectives within the organisation which question the value of the WR Approach. Comments which reveal concerns about the "F" word, a perception that the organisation is now "unbalanced", that is, the focus of work is more on women than men, and questions such as, "what about working with boys and men?" reveal significant tensions and signal some resistance.

> - It remains critically important that the work of building conceptual understanding continues. This means that there is a need for long term commitment to knowledge building across all functions and themes. This challenge is not the sole job of the IWRT but rather the shared responsibility of the WR Theme, AAI leadership/s and the organisation as a whole.
> - It also means that AAI leadership/s must remain vigilant to deal with backlash and resistance to WR, traits of which are already evident. IDs must come up with strategies for dealing with this resistance, particularly when it comes from other senior leaders such as CDs.

10. Future directions:

Responses to a question about strategic priorities for the next WR Strategic Plan and its Standalone Track elicited a number of ideas; Women and the economy; women and social protection; reproductive and sexual rights; women and work; expansion of work with excluded groups, and women and climate change, were some of the ones highlighted. Furthermore there are the overall outcomes of this Review which indicate the importance of consolidation and strengthening of the current work, namely the WWW Campaign, VAG, and WR to land.

> - The IWRT needs to be careful about taking on completely new areas of work, while the current ones need consolidation.

11. Profiling WR:

The IWRT has only recently recruited a Documentation and communications officer to lead on the profiling of WR inside and contribute to external profiling. This was based on realisation that there was a lack of good material – of various kinds; case studies, program lessons, basic facts and figures, information that can be given to supporters and fundraisers etc.

> - The IWRT must strengthen its work on documentation and communication so that the work of the WR theme is well known within the organisation and externally. The team must engage with various units to identify specific products and tools that will effectively profile WR.

Organisation of the report

The report is organized into 5 sections. Findings and recommendations appear in each section.

The detailed Objectives and Expected Outcomes for the WR Strategic Priorities and examples from country programmes for each priority are given in separate annexes.

Section 1 introduces the WR Theme and sets out the Review purpose, objectives and methods used. This section also comments on the review methodology and provides an input on organisational learning and change.

Section 2 brings together findings on what AAI staff and external actors think about AAI's shift from 'Gender and Development' to a 'Women's Rights Approach', and how this has made an impact on AAI's work and perceptions of the organisation internally and externally.

Section 3 focuses on the core programmes and campaigns which have been the main body of work for the IWRT over the past four years. These are the WWW Campaign which links violence against women and girls and HIV & AIDS; the violence against girls in schools programme; women's rights and land; and building partnerships.

Section 4 focuses on the work of the Core International Women's Rights Team and addresses the achievements and key challenges that this team has experienced over the past four years.

Section 5 summarises the key recommendations emerging from this Review and identifies who should take the responsibility for implementation, and shares some ideas for possible future strategic priorities.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION, REVIEW PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

1.1.   Rights to End Poverty

The Women's Rights Theme is one of six themes that form the central delivery pillars for ActionAid International's strategy 2005 – 2010, "Rights to end poverty".

Strategic Rights Based Themes

Our work worldwide will be driven by programmes and policies aimed at achieving the follow six strategic rights-based themes:
1. women's rights
2. the right to education
3. the right to food
4. the right to human security during conflicts and emergencies
5. the right to a life of dignity in the face of HIV and AIDS
6. the right to just and democratic governance

Source: RTEP AAI Strategy 2005/2010

Building on the success of AAI's previous strategy, "Fighting Poverty Together", "Rights to end Poverty" seeks to deepen the organisation's focus on poverty eradication by addressing unequal power relations and strengthening its rights based approach. The strategy calls for "improving our commitment to, and action on, women's rights and gender equality" (Introduction, RTEP, 2005/2010) and working with a 'power analysis". The following statements capture the essence of AAI's thinking:

"Women's rights and gender equality offer the key to poverty reduction and achieving them is a central focus to our new strategy. Over the next six years, we will invest significantly more time and effort in securing equal rights for women and girls around the world."

"In addition to embracing women's rights as one of our overarching goals, we place women and girls at the heart of our work around the world. We will also address women's rights directly, for example, by seeking to work with women's organisations to transform gender relations. Our hope and aim is to witness women worldwide growing in confidence, skills and knowledge so that they may decide their own destiny, live without fear of violence and participate effectively in decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods."

"Our frontline experience working with poor and disadvantaged communities the world over has led us to conclude that it is the unequal and unjust power relations that lie at the root of poverty. Poverty and injustice are not inevitable – they result from structures and processes of human-made social, economic and political systems, and thus from the choices made by some individuals, communities, institutions and nations to discriminate against, exclude or exploit others. Unequal power relations are systematically imposed in both rich and poor countries on the basis of gender, age, caste, class, ethnicity, HIV status, race and disability." (RTEP 2005/2010).

1.2. Review Purpose

The purpose of the Women's Rights Thematic Review is to understand the impact of the WR international strategic plan on country programmes; national and international campaigns; partnerships; inter-thematic collaboration; strengthening internal capacity building, and how the work of the WR Theme has made an impact on AAI's organisational culture. The stand alone programmes and campaigns were the main focus of the thematic review.

Findings about the impact of WR Track Two 'Mainstreaming' and Track Three 'Linking mainstreaming and Standalone' have been and will be gathered from the other Theme Reviews: Human Security Theme (2007), Education (2009), HIV Theme 2009, Food Rights and Governance (2010). Also, findings from CSP reviews, which have been encouraged to take up a strong WR theme, will feed into the final picture. Because WR cuts across and by organisational mandate – must be in every unit's work - this exercise could not possibly look into all things WR in AAI.

This Review is the only and final review of the WR Theme (Annex 5) during this strategy period. Noting that there are other sources of information is important and makes sense of the choices that the IWRT made in designing this Review, that is, the use of illustrative case studies, desk review of programme and campaign documents/ evaluations and survey style interviews.

1.3. Review Objectives

The specific objectives of the review were;

1. Evaluate the impact of the International Women's Rights Strategy on women's rights work in AAI
2. Explore the outcomes and quality of AAI's women's rights work at national and international level
3. Analyse AAI's partnerships and AAI's contribution to women's rights struggles
4. Gather learning on how AAI has been working on women's rights
5. Analyse how AAI's organisational culture, and systems have impacted on WR work

1.4. Process and methodology

The review was carried out in two phases;

Phase 1: December 2008 – March 2009, Consultant, Atsango Chesoni. The focus in this phase was to develop a methodology for the Review and to carry out a Case Study on the WWW Campaign. The details and scope of the Review process in this period are captured in the report of the WWW Case Study – international and Sierra Leone by Atsango Chesoni (Annex 1).

Phase 2: March to July 2009, Consultant, Penny Plowman. The focus in this phase was to continue the process of interviewing AAI staff and external actors, conduct two site visits, one to AA UK and one to AA India, analyse findings and compile the report. In addition the IWRT developed four illustrative case studies: Guatemala – WWW; Uganda

– Women and Land; Sierra Leone – legislative changes; AA Brazil – Farmer to Farmer Exchange Project (available separately on the HIVE).

In Phase 2, it was hoped that Penny could meet with the IWRT to discuss the review and restructuring. Unfortunately such a face to face meeting was not possible and telephone interviews were conducted instead. In the writing up phase, the IWRT commented on a draft of this report.

The Review was conducted as a 'light touch' using survey style methods. This meant that the Review did not go into the 'how' of WR work in CPs for example. The outcome is therefore a broad picture of the achievements and challenges experienced by the IWRT in its task of implementing the Standalone Track.

1.5. Methods

The Review used a mixture of methods:

- Interviews: Telephone, face to face and group with AAI staff, management and Board and external actors. Annex 6 List of interviews; Staff briefing and Survey Questionnaire; Questions for External Actors.
- Visits: AA UK and AA India. AA UK as a Northern Affiliate does different kinds of work from Southern CPs/affiliates, and AA UK plays an important role in fundraising. AA India is one of the older and very big associates, and India works differently from other CPs, focusing on particular excluded groups and not Themes. The focus was on Women's Rights to Land and HIV &AIDS.
- Case Study: Women Won't Wait Campaign – international and Sierra Leon
- Desk review: AAI and IWRT documents (Annex 6)
- Process meetings: Regular meetings between the Lead Consultant with WR Theme Head and the Technical Advisor in Phase 2.

The methodology was framed by a feminist critique of organisations which shows how organisational hierarchies, decision-making and participation are shaped by gender power relations, encouraged staff to reflect and talk about their personal views on AAI's new women's rights approach and its impact on the organisation's structure, function, practice and culture.

1.6. Data set

Phase 1: Briefing interviews and interviews for the WWW Case Study took place with 9 members of AAI staff. In addition to three members of the IWRT – WR Co-ordinator Campaigns and Policy and WR Co-ordinators for America and Africa, interviews took place with the CEO, ID Policy and Women's Rights; ID for Organisational Development & Governance; Head of Impact Assessment and Shared Learning; International Human Resource Manager; HIV and Education Adviser. In addition there was an interview with the HIV&AIDS Co-ordinator, Africa Region plus 6 AAI staff in Sierra Leone, 2 staff in AAI Malawi; 2 AAI International Partners; 6 AAI Sierra Leone partners and 4 Focus Group Discussions. For list of names see WWW Case Study (Annex 1).

Phase 2: See Annex 6 for full list of names for telephone interviews and face to face interviews which took place at the International Secretariat in Johannesburg, in India and

in London. In summary the following numbers of interviews took place in Phases 1 and 2.

- CEO – interviewed in Phase 1 and Phase 2
- IDs x 8
- Theme Heads x 4
- CDs x 7
- Women's Rights Co-ordinators x 7
- IWRT x 7
- Functions x 5
- Focus Groups – International Policy Team
- AA UK x 4 plus meeting with Policy Group (5 staff)
- AA India x 3, plus meeting on Land Rights with representatives from 5 States, plus field visit to Mangalore, SGA and Koraga Federation, AA Partner and HIV& AIDS Theme Head India
- Non AAI staff: International Trustee x 1; Donor x 1; External partners x 5

1.7. Limitations

The combination of the scope of this evaluation, a thin slice of the WR Theme but still complex in terms of programmes, campaigns and internal capacity building, and the fact that it did not work out in practice to be a team of evaluators working together, made the task of meeting the IWRT's expectations difficult. The design of the light touch review, using survey style methods and short visits, has led to important insights into achievements and barriers to WR work but has not enabled a depth of analysis. Feedback from the IWRT on the draft report indicated for example, the importance of a face to face meeting with the evaluator, a process which would have assisted in going deeper. However this was not possible due to financial constraints.

Recommendation
- AAI to relook at how to design international themes. IASL, together with IDs and Theme Heads to agree on the best methodologies and frameworks. Given the size of AAI and where thematic work "happens", what is the best way to carry out a theme review which goes deep into issues, engages a wide spectrum of staff, and more importantly ensures that there is a lot of face to face discussion and collective analysis.

1.8. Managing expectations

In addition to the expectations from the IWRT about its own work, there were also expectations expressed among senior leadership, about the Review coming up with new 'solutions' for transforming AAI's organisational culture. In this regard it is important to note that the solutions, not necessarily new to everyone, are about long term support to a change process that taps into the roots as well as the top echelons of the organisation. The solutions are bound up in processes which build knowledge and practical skills, and in systems which hold the organisation, in particular its leadership, to account. The following input about organisations, organisational learning and change, points to why the task of transforming AAI's organisational culture is complex and requires

commitment to building and implementing change strategies, in both, the formal and informal spheres of the organisation.

1.9. Methodology - Organisational learning and change

The Review sought to hear the voices of a wide range of actors within AAI and externally. The design and implementation process gave an opportunity for staff to pause and think about women's rights and gender equality and the work of the WR Theme. The Review process was therefore both a means of gathering data and an intervention. In the moment of pausing, staff put the value of reflection as identified in the cycle of learning and change into practice (Change Management Strategic Plan 2005). The diagram below shows the point of reflection within the learning cycle. Note the inner circle shows the cycle of learning for individuals and the outer circle shows the cycle of learning for teams and the organisation. For AAI to change, both cycles need to be in motion continuously. The process of reflection in the action learning model is not a one off event but a process which is foundational to building organisational best practice.

Learning cycle
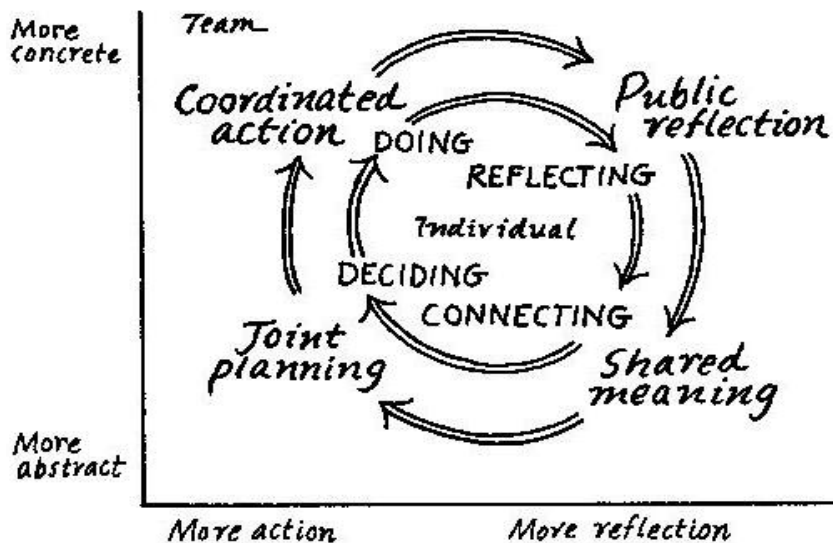
Diagram taken from The Wheel of Learning in <u>The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook, Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organisation</u>, (1995) by Peter M. Senge, Art Kleiner, Charlotte Roberts, Richard B. Ross, Bryan J. Smith (pp. 59 – 64).

1.9.1. Finding
Comments by AAI staff on what they think about the WR Approach indicate a range of views from acceptance through to resistance (see Section 3). This finding reaffirms what has been found in this Review and in the Gender Review in 2003, hence the on-going recommendations for building conceptual clarity and skills to apply the new concepts in practice. Saying that the organisation is working on/with WR and doing it are two

different things. Bringing-in a WR perspective means that AAI needs to give time to building a women's rights practice and this means the continuous process of self-reflexive practice, doing and learning from the field and changing as a result. This process starts with self and needs clear inputs on the core concepts of women's rights, gender equality and gender analysis. AAI is clearly a 'doing' organisation and learning how to pause and reflect is important if a new way of working is to be built and sustained.

1.9.2. Gender and Organisational Change

AAI's Change Management Strategic Plan (October 2005) draws attention to multiple entry points for change inside and outside the organisation. Three methods are identified for implementing the change management strategy:

> 1)'Re-defining and re-interpreting norms and values and developing commitments to these; 2) appealing to the rational self-interest of staff by communicating desired changes and attendant benefits, 3) using authority and sanctions when required to safeguard the values and standards of desired change.'

Implementing these methods requires change in two levels. The first is at the level of official policy and the second is at the level of informal/unofficial practice. Examining these two levels and the interface between is a complex process. Using the metaphor of organisations as an 'iceberg' can help make sense of what needs to change at both levels. What lies above the water line is what you see and refers to the formal/official sphere of the organisation. This level is made up of the women and men who constitute the organisation; the formal positioning of women and men in the organisational hierarchy; the written rules and policies, mission, vision and values statements. What lies below the water line, hidden from view, refers to the unofficial /informal practices. These include how women and men and different groups of women and men relate to one another and most importantly the practice of unofficial codes of behaviour. Looking at what goes on beneath the water line in the unofficial levels is particularly important in the context of seeking to address unequal and exclusionary gender norms.

Getting to know above and below the water line from the perspectives of women and men in AAI and different groups of women and men, up and down the organisational hierarchy, is therefore important for understanding the impact of the Women's Rights Approach for everyday practice.

1.9.3. Gendered organisations

The challenge of transforming AAI's culture, systems, structure and people is also helped by a recognition that organisations are inherently 'gendered'.[1] This means that practices of decision-making, who is in leadership, which women and which men occupy which jobs e.g. women as support staff and secretaries, family/work balance and the belief systems, for example, on women's rights and gender equality, are embedded in the DNA of organisational structures and norms. In other words the gendered makeup and the way organisations operate mirror the gender order in society. Understanding this helps makes sense of why the change that AAI seeks is only in part solved by increasing the numbers of women in senior positions for example. The process begins with *self-*

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[1] See "Getting Institutions Rights for Women in Development", Anne Marie Goetz. Zed Books 1997

recognition, meaning every staff member going through a process to understand how gender power relations have shaped and continue to shape who they are, what they do, how they think and so on. It is only when there is this personal understanding/recognition, that it is possible to know what to look for, when examining the impact of gender power relations, inside the organisation and in the external work of AAI. Learning what to look out for is the first big challenge when everything about the gender order appears 'normal'.

1.9.4. Change agendas – internal and external

Another aspect of organisational change is about the link between internal and external change agendas. Staff in development agencies are often heard to question why valuable time is spent on internal change strategies rather than the core business of eradicating poverty. Understanding the link between internal and external change agendas and why they cannot be separated, conceptually and practically, is important for understanding why the work of the WR Theme has only just begun.

Lessons from analysis of internal development practice show that what goes on inside development organisations matters for equitable development. For example the choices and decisions that individual staff take, influenced by their own experiences and backgrounds are known to shape projects, programmes and partnerships. Hence AAI's commitment to ensuring that staff and managers are well informed about women's rights so that they, as the internal agents of change, are equipped to deliver on Rights to End Poverty. The internal capacity building is not an end in itself but is about building an organisation 'fit for purpose', that is the delivery of RTEP.

Internal change processes are equally important for external actors seeking to steer AAI in a direction to advance women's rights. The women's lobby can only make a mark if the internal organisation is willing to listen. The complex process of transforming AAI on the inside is therefore essential for addressing women's rights and unequal power relations on the outside. Understanding the fit between the internal change processes and the change AAI wants to see in society is therefore critical.

The capacity of AAI to re-orient and take up women's rights and build a gender analysis across the organisation therefore requires engaging with the notion of gendered organisation, building a self-reflexive practice and working at change above and below the waterline.

Recommendations:
- The OD-G unit, in collaboration with the IWRT to engage with these ideas about gendered organizations and change not only for the purpose of understanding AAI but also for recognizing what it means to transform all organizations.
- The OD-G unit must take leadership and engage the organisation in these inputs on gender and organisational change and particularly in respect of the OD and Shared Learning Functions and Change Management Strategy.
- The IWRT can provide support and technical input into organisational processes, but for them to have more sustainable impact and buy in, leadership must come from the unit whose mandate is organisational systems, processes and managing change.

SECTION 2: WOMEN'S RIGHTS APPROACH

The aim of Section 2 is to bring together findings on what AAI staff and external actors think about the shift in approach from 'gender and development' to 'women's rights' and how this has made an impact on AAI's work and perceptions of the organisation internally and externally.

2.1. AAI's Women's Rights Approach

The Women's Rights Theme is relatively new in AAI. Established after "Taking Stock 2" (2004) and the shift to a Rights-Based Approach (RTEP 2005 -2010).
Prior to the WR Theme, work on 'gender equality' was framed- in AAI's previous strategy Fighting Poverty Together- by a Core Objective, 'Gender Empowerment' and a 'Gender Policy', developed in 2000. Findings from a Gender Review in 2003 and an organisation-wide review in 2004, 'Taking Stock 2', which had a specific review of the 'gender' component contributed to further developments of how the organisation might best engage with women's rights and gender equality work. AAI's decision to use a Rights Based Approach, encapsulated in the International Strategy Document, 'Rights to end Poverty', enabled 'women's rights' and gender equality to be positioned centrally.

The WR Theme is guided by its own international strategic plan which serves as the framework for decision-making and mobilizing resources. It provides a basis for more detailed planning for women's rights staff and focal persons across AAI, explains the Women's Rights Theme to others in order to inform, motivate and involve, and assists in performance monitoring across the organisation. Key to the implementation of the strategic plan is the belief in and commitment to the following feminist principles: women's and girls' personhood and autonomy; individual rights and entitlements and citizenship; bodily integrity; sexual rights; reproductive rights; choice and informed choice (Framework for AAI's work on Gender and Women's Rights, Version 2, June 2004 and Annex 4).

The goals for the WR Theme, stated as key actions, are as follows:

1. Strengthen the capacity of women and girls to claim their rights and meet their basic needs

2. Take actions to protect women and girls from violence and provide support if they suffer violence

3. Strengthen women's leadership and participation in governance and decision-making

4. Build and strengthen women's organisations and movements and support them in connecting with broader alliances

5. Advocate and campaign for laws, policies and practices that advance and protect women's rights

6. Raise consciousness and change attitudes so that men and women relate to each other as equals, and men and boys support the cause of gender equality (AAI Women's Rights Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010)

The WR Approach is thus shaped by a gender power analysis and seeks to address power imbalances through a range of interventions targeted at transforming institutional rules for decision making; transforming political agendas by building and strengthening women's/girls' voice and their demand for accountability, and transforming gender norms which underpin women's/girls experience of subordination at multiple levels. To do this the WR Approach uses three tracks.

2.2. WR Three-Tracks

The WR Theme operates both independently on its own projects and across every AAI project and programme, using the following three tracks.

Track 1: Stand alone Women's Rights Initiatives – ' Pursuing the Broader Agenda' – addressing specific issues within the Women's Rights Theme priorities that cannot be dealt with through mainstreaming; addressing emergent women's rights issues; strengthening and facilitating the work of women's rights organisations and their coalitions/alliances and embark on and /or support selected women's rights campaigns

Track 2: Mainstreaming Women's Rights – 'Leveraging Programmes for Women's Rights' – every step of intervention design, implementation, management and evaluation needs to be approached using a women's rights perspective.

Track 3: Linking standalone and mainstreamed actions – 'Strengthening complementary actions and synergies' – identification and work on common threads that link related issues across and beyond Themes. Interventions to address violence against women and girls cut across all the themes, for example in the HIV/AIDS Theme brings perspectives on VAW and girls as a factor in HIV/AIDS; the Human Security Theme works on sexual violence, including rape as weapon of war, and the Education Theme addresses sexual harassment and sexual violence on the way to and from school.

2.2.1. Finding

These three tracks reflect the difficult task of finding appropriate strategies for developing a practice that consistently uses gender analysis and addresses women's rights. Lessons from Oxfam GB and other INGOs indicate how important it is to have a Standalone Track running alongside a mainstreaming track. This finding is affirmed by this Review which shows how important it is to have dedicated WR staff and budgets for the process of 'bringing- in' a women's rights agenda, into what is effectively a 'mainstream', that is, not a feminist organisation. The Review also found that in practice the organisation talks about a 'twin-track', rather than a 'three-track'.

> **Recommendation:**
> * AAI and the IWRT to retain and strengthen the Standalone Track and review the scope and meanings of Tracks 2 and 3 in light of findings from this Review. The time is not right to mainstream WR without having a standalone track.

2.3. Development Approaches

AAI's decision to put Women's Rights at the centre of its work needs to be understood in the context of AAI's overall Rights Based Approach and as a response to some of the lessons emerging from 'gender mainstreaming'. Feminist critiques of gender mainstreaming,[2] the strategy adopted at the United Nation's Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing (1995) to address unequal power relations and women's rights, show a bias towards 'technical' fixes in implementation rather than measures to transform. [3] One of the reasons why this has happened is because in practice mainstreaming has been implemented in ways that avoid the *transformation* of unequal relations between women and men. AAI's approach is therefore informed by some of the pitfalls of mainstreaming and also by its commitment to a rights based approach. From a feminist perspective this means putting women's rights at the centre, alongside the goal of gender equality. The following box highlights the AAI Women's Rights and Gender Equality Approach:

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY APPROACH

In AAI, the four key factors for implementing a WOMEN'S RIGHTS Approach are:

1. An understanding of how civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights affect women and men differently, and of rights that are particular to women because they are women
2. A reminder that rights cannot be enjoyed in the public sphere if they are not also present and upheld in the personal or private sphere
3. Recognition that strategies must link change at an individual level, with change at a community, national, and even global levels
4. A deeper understanding of the many ways in which power works, both to violate rights and to claim and uphold rights

Source: Power, Inclusion and Rights-Based Approaches, The ActionAid Gender Equality and RBA Resource Kit, 2006

Understanding the choices that AAI has made regarding its women's rights and gender equality approach is important because of both the insights from feminist critiques of the

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[2] The full UN definition reads: 'Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (UN Report of the Economic and Social Council 1997).
[3] The implementation of Gender Mainstreaming has led to the setting up of gender desks, gender focal points and other pieces of 'gender machinery' in governments, the UN and in large INGOS. The feminist critique challenges such interventions by showing that 'technical' solutions are largely irrelevant for political problems. See "Introduction: Repositioning feminisms in gender and development" *Institute of Development Studies Bulletin* **35** (4) 1-10.

RBA, and feminist critiques of popular development approaches, most notably Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD).

The feminist critique of RBA shows how women were effectively excluded in the original thinking by three major factors: 1) Women were not catered for in the definition of "human" in the liberal rights discourse; 2) that the individual bearer of rights was in the image of men, and 3) that human rights violations in the private and human rights violations by non state actors were excluded. Hence the needs for a separate women's rights approach.

The feminist critiques of WID, a popular development approach in the late 1970s and 1980s, typified by 'income generation projects' for women, show how this approach analytically failed to look at the reasons for and the nature of women's disadvantage, leaving women effectively on the margins of development. Furthermore, the WID approach left the 'mainstream' of development wholly untouched. The feminist critiques of GAD, an approach which focuses on the socially constructed basis of differences between women and men and the need to challenge existing gender roles and power relations, show how 'gender' as a concept became depoliticised in the practice of 'gender mainstreaming'. The result, as noted above, has been a development practice which has avoided transformation of unequal relations between women and men.

These changes from WID to GAD and the positioning of women's rights in the RBA, reflect significant struggles in women's liberation, the development sector and in the academy. Learning about these gives an understanding about why AAI decided to use a women's rights and gender equality approach. Building knowledge about the core concepts becomes a central theme in this Review. It is important that everyone within the organisation knows why their own organisation talks about women's rights, both for the goal of eradicating poverty, and for why the WR Strategic Plan says, 'women's rights in and of themselves must be promoted and protected'. [4]

2.4. AAI Change Management Strategy

In setting out the WR Approach, it is also important to look at AAI's organisation- wide strategy for managing change. The approach, as set out in the AAI 'Change Management Strategic Plan' (October 2005), identifies various strategies for addressing change in the structure, systems and culture of the organisation. Among these strategies is the stress on knowledge building for delivery on RTEP, something that the IWRT is doing through its priority on strengthening internal capacity to deliver on women's rights.

2.5. Finding: Organisational transformation is necessary and a long process

Learning from the IWRT's experience of strengthening internal capacity and engaging with what it means to transform structure, systems and organisational culture from feminist perspective, (see Section 2 under methodology), is important if the organisation is going to be able to bring about change in mindsets and in practice.

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[4] Thanks to Shamim Meer for her power point presentation on 'Women's Rights', presented at the CD Meeting in Copenhagen in July 2009, for this Finding Section on RBA and gender approaches.

Recommendation:
- The IWRT working in collaboration with OD unit, to be involved in the planning and design of formal organisation-wide change strategies which seek to address structure, system and organisational culture change in order to build a feminist perspective of organizations and change. It will be necessary to document how the present change has happened.

2.6. Finding: WR approach has made a difference

The majority of AAI staff reported that working with a women's rights focus has been helpful. There is a sense that with a women's rights focus there is greater clarity about what is expected of them in their work and that this is different to when they were working under a GAD approach. The term 'gender' by itself was referred to as being 'vague' and staff commented that 'not much happened' under a GAD approach. This finding about the term 'gender' fits with findings in previous AAI reviews. For example, in Taking Stock 2, (2004), the report states that there is conceptual confusion around the term "gender" and points out that 'gender' is not a ' struggle concept and that is why is has depoliticized feminist agendas' (Taking Stock 2, p.25, 2004). The following quotes from interviews with staff highlight the value of a women's rights approach:

- The WR theme looks at the root causes of inequality and injustice
- WR pushes the power analysis
- AAI is taking a stronger position now, before WR the organisation was talking about 'gender' and nothing changed
- The WR approach has been helpful for the organisation to acknowledge the issues and to clarify and to put WR on the agenda
- The WR Approach has provided an effective tool for increasing knowledge and understanding of women's entitlement and position within their communities. This has led to an acknowledgement that power relations at different levels of a woman's life impact and affect their ability to enjoy and demand their rights
- WR framework has helped us to be clearer on targeting for women's empowerment

At the same time the shift from GAD to women's rights has met with resistance. This finding is not something new nor should it be unexpected. For example, in previous reviews on 'gender' (see Taking Stock 2, 2004, 'Gender Review', 2003 and in the WR Annual Reports), findings show that not everyone agrees with the shift to women's rights. In this Review, some managers and staff, expressed concerns about feminism, special attention to women and why the WR Theme does not work with boys and men. The following quotes signal the types of questioning and anxiety that exists:

- Is AAI meant to be promoting feminist ideology?
- The balance is too much on women now, what about men?
- The use of the 'F' word creates a tension, you don't have to be a feminist to deliver on WR
- Some supporters walk away when they hear feminist
- The "WR police" make us feel uncomfortable - are you with us or against us? There is a bit of a "bullying culture" on WR

Such thoughts and questions reveal significant tensions and signal resistance. As the work of the WR Theme continues it will be important that the organisation opens spaces for dialogue to explore what lies behind these tensions and provide a platform for engaging with key debates, for example, the working with boys and men issue came up a number of times in the course of the Review. At the same time it is important to also note that lessons from other organisations and women's rights struggles globally show that as soon as there is progress on WR there will be various forms of resistance, and backlash. And the sites of resistance and backlash are families, communities, and even organisations.

> **Recommendation:**
>
> - It is critical for not only the IWRT but the leadership of AAI to be cognizant of these forms of resistance/ backlash and develop strategies to address them.

2.7 Finding: Impact of WR approach on CP/affiliate programs

Whilst it was not the remit of this Review to go into depth about CP/affiliate level programs, staff took the opportunity to share some thoughts regarding capacity building, leadership and programme design. For example it was noted that where there have been WR assessments and where a CD is personally committed to leading on the WR Theme there has been progress. This signals the importance of both Standalone WR interventions, for example the Intensive Country Support Visits as well as leadership by CDs to drive the (new), WR Approach.

Another point for WR work at CP level was about the indicators being used to measure change on women's rights and gender equality. For example, concern was raised about the use of 'participation' as a measure of change, when participation is only talked about as numbers of women. This point is important because just having more women in a room or more women in leadership does not, by itself, make a difference. So what are the qualitative indicators to measure changes in accountability, access and control? Linked to this are also questions about how lessons on WR work impact on project design? In other words the project design has to take into account a new set of needs once the problem being addressed is being examined through a gender analysis lens.

2.8. Finding: Shift in the way the public see the organisation

Several members of staff reported that as a result of AAI's work on women's rights the profile of AAI has risen. The following comments were made;

- AAI is now seen as a serious agency for promoting WR
- Makes our Brand stand out
- Women's Rights Groups are now partners of AAI and this was not the case five years ago
- Public image of AAI has changed, AAI is known to take a stand on women's rights
- We have changed the face of the organisation because of who we work with – women's movements, women's rights organisations, women living with HIV

Such comments indicate an important change and one that is verified by the types of comments made by partners. For example:

- ActionAid is known to take a stand and lead on women's rights in the donor community – the organisation employs people who are very public on issues, it comes with a kind of political understanding, they have a position on women's rights.

All of these findings therefore indicate that the shift to a women's rights approach has made an impact on the organisation. This is found in two ways. The first is that the 'Women's Rights and Gender Equality Approach' provides a clearer path for staff to 'get into' WR work, when compared with the previous 'gender' approach. It is now clearer whose rights, and which rights, in line with AAI's RBA. The second is that public sees the organisation now as an international agency that stands for women's rights. These findings are testimony to the work of the WR Theme and the specific achievements through the Standalone Track 1 Programming Approach. At the same time, some of the findings remind the organisation that the WR Approach is also contested, often results in resistance and backlash, and that much more work needs to be done to get and KEEP everyone on board. Internal resistance, in both its visible and invisible forms, presents a significant barrier to change.

Recommendations:

- The IWRT to continue with its work of building clarity on what women's rights and gender equality mean/s in theory and in practice.

- AAI Leadership to be consistently vigilant and manage the backlash and resistance to WR. IDs and CDs to use every opportunity to 'speak out' on the AAI Women's Rights and Gender Equality Approach and say WHY this is essential for delivery on RTEP.

- IWRT to work with IASL to develop indicators of change, as well as strengthen programme and project design. This can be done on each of the standalone strategic priorities, (see more below).

- AAI leadership must hold onto the RBA generally and WR specifically. At the same time, the organisation must develop more frameworks, guidance tools and generate knowledge as to what an (H)RBA with WR means in a development organisation like AAI means. Such knowledge and tools will ensure sustainability and internalization of concepts by staff, partners and other INGOs.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMMES AND CAMPAIGNS

3. 1. Background

The WR Theme is guided by 4 externally focused Strategic Priorities:

Strategic Priority 1: Reduction of violence against women and girls
Strategic Priority 2: Increase attention and action on women's rights in relation to HIV/AIDS
Strategic Priority 3: Contribution to greater recognition, realization and protection of women's land rights;
Strategic Priority 4: Enhance women's participation in politics

It is important to note at the outset to Section 3 that Strategic Priorities 1 and 2 are worked on together. Also, due to pressures of work and lack of financial resources, Priority 4 has not been pursued actively by the IWRT. At the end of 2008 the IWRT already took a decision to drop Priorities 2 and 4 as stand-alone international priorities. This means that the Review focuses on the WWW Campaign; violence against girls in schools programme; WR to Land and the cross-cutting work of building partnerships.

3.2. WWW - Women Won't Wait Campaign

The WWW Campaign straddles Strategic Priority 1: Reduction of Violence against women and girls and Strategic Priority 2: Increase attention and action on women's rights in relation to HIV&AIDS. The WR Theme's main contribution in respect of addressing HIV & AIDS is through the WWW Campaign.

3.2.1. Background

The WWW Campaign is a comprehensive campaign that works at international, regional and CP levels to address HIV and to end all forms of violence against women and girls. Gender analysis shows that gender based violence against women and girls, and particularly intimate partner violence, is a leading factor in the 'feminisation' of the global AIDS pandemic. Simultaneously, HIV & AIDS is both a cause and a consequence of the gender based violence, stigma and discrimination that women and girls face in their families and communities, in peace and in conflict, within and outside of intimate partnerships, and by state and non-state actors. Global efforts with the AIDS sector have historically been largely gender blind. The overall purpose of the Campaign is to influence policy change and implementation, as well as, increase resource allocation and donor accountability through policy analysis and publication of reports, building alliances, and movement support. The ultimate aim, though not achievable by this campaign, is to reduce HIV&AIDS and end violence against women and girls.

Launched in March 2007, the Women Won't Wait is an international coalition of organisations and networks from the global South and North committed to – and working for many years to promote – women's health and human rights in the struggle to comprehensively address HIV&AIDS and end all forms of violence against women and girls. The Objectives of the Campaign are as follows:

- To formulate and improve policies, programmes, advocacy and services that better integrate HIV&AIDS and VAW/G and guarantee that women's and girls' vulnerability to HIV& AIDS with an emphasis on building gender equality and women's empowerment, address violence against women infected and affected by HIV&AIDS, and bring greater public attention and political will to address gender based violence.
- To increase the level of resources committed by governments, donors, multilateral institutions and civil society (including NGOs) to addressing violence against women and girls, in and of itself as part of the HIV&AIDS response.
- To improve the legal framework to better address, prevent and combat/contest/challenge violence against women and girls and allocate requisite resources and services to support women's and girl's empowerment
- To build mutual accountability among women's rights, sexual and reproductive health/rights, human rights and HIV groups to each other (Violence against women and girls and HIV & AIDS Campaign)

The Campaign is run by a 17 member coalition. AAI facilitated the development and implementation of the campaign, hosts the campaign's international secretariat and largely provides the funding.

3.2.2. Findings: External achievements

3.2.3. Building an international network

In a three year period, the WWW Campaign has built international, regional and national networks (Annex 1). The strength of the membership is that a lot of the members have been working on the intersection of HIV&AIDS and VAW and Women's Rights from a feminist perspective for a long time. Some of the members are insiders of the target institutions and are able to influence from within, and so the campaign has shown the importance of insider/outsider strategies for influencing change.

The WWW campaign was launched and is being implemented in 12 AAI countries; Brazil, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda, UK and Zimbabwe.

3.2.4. Changes as a result of the campaign

The changes are many. The following list of achievements shows the build up of successful outcomes during the period 2006 to 2009:

- In 2006, the declaration from the UNGASS review for the first time, included a strong reference to the role played by VAW in increasing women's vulnerability
- In 2007, the G8 communiqué also for the first time recognised that the AIDS epidemic is feminising and acknowledged that VAW is a cause of this and directed the GFATM to institute a gender sensitive response.
- In 2007, the GFATM made a public a high level policy decision to institute a gender sensitive response to the three diseases and a greater attention to gender and HIV.

- In 2008, the High Level Meeting on HIV, included as one of three a panel on women and AIDS. The panel highlighted the intersection of VAW and HIV.
- In 2008, the International AIDS Society, the organisation responsible for organising the International AIDS conferences for the first time, included a separate track on gender based violence and its impact on HIV. This resulted in an unprecedented number of sessions on gender, women's rights and VAW in the conference.
- In 2008, at the International AIDS conference, the plenary included a speaker on women and AIDS and the speech highlighted the importance of working to end VAW in order to respond to HIV&AIDS
- In 2008, the new DFID HIV strategy consistently referenced VAW as a driver of HIV,
- In 2007, UNAIDS for the first time included costed VAW response interventions as part of prevention programmes in the Global Resource Needs Estimates.
- In 2009, UNAIDS and its co-sponsors included VAW/G as one of 8 priority actions.

3.2.5. Strong focus on accountability: The campaign strategy has made specific recommendations for each of the targets. For example, there are now funded anti-violence programmes because of targets and the insistence that it is not good enough for a donor to say "we have programmes" there has to be money attached.

3.2.6. Movement building: The WWW campaign has facilitated Movement Building Initiatives for women living with HIV & AIDS so that they can build capacity to set their own agendas. This has been the case in Malawi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guatemala. This is an important achievement responding to the fact that women living with HIV & AIDS have not been substantially included in mainstream movements and dialogue, hence the need to set up specific movements for women living with HIV & AIDS. WLWHA movements are now strong partners in the WWW campaigns in country programs. The following box highlights this IWRT achievement:

Movement Building Initiative (MBI) in Africa

Two MBI Institutes have been held, one held for Southern Africa held in November 2007 and one for West and Central Africa held in Sierra Leone in 2008. In Southern Africa the MBI was co-hosted by Just Associates (JASS), the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) and AAI. In WACA the MBI was co-hosted by AAI and the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF). Both MBIs were very successful as interventions to develop political skills, build confidence and networks, and raise the visibility of WLWHA activists' work. In Southern Africa, the space was also used to develop an advocacy agenda for the region as an entry point for strengthening the capacity of International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW) in the sub-region, building on AAI and OSISA's work since 2005 to support ICW (WR Annual Report 2008 & MBI Report November 2007). In both workshops, participants worked on draft country strategies to support and build local movements.

The Campaign has also facilitated the building of networks of women living with HIV & AIDS and brought together different movements; of women living with HIV&AIDS, groups working on anti- violence and other human rights organisations. Together these are important platforms to push for and bring about policy and program changes. .

3.2.7. The IWRT's work on leading and managing the WWW Campaign has led to important lessons about what it means to build effective coalitions and the importance of working with organisations that share a feminist agenda. These lessons include the groundwork that went into identifying a common understanding and set of working principles among potential coalition partners; the importance of transparent and participatory processes and the significance of trust for building and sustaining the coalition.

3.2.8. AAI and working with movements: The campaign has also generated some important lessons on the challenges for an INGO such as AAI and how it works with (very strong) movements. While it is a specific aspiration stated in R2EP that AAI will work with movements, the organisation now needs to draw these lessons and reflect on them;

- How to manage the AAI branding/profiling needs versus the greater objective of strengthening and giving space to movements
- How to work with groups that don't necessarily need AAI, but AAI needs them
- Managing power relations – visible and invisible power

The IWRT has documented some of these lessons and needs to continue to do so as a matter of routine.

3.2.9. The Campaign has been successful because it has been focused, monitoring five agencies: 1) the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, 2) the President's Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR/US); 3) the UK Department for International Development (DFID); 4) the World Bank; and 50 UNAIDS (the Joint UN Programme on HIV&AIDS).

3.2.10. Some Northern Affiliates have identified clear entry points for mobilizing on the WWW Campaign e.g. the UK lobbying DFID. This has provided an example of how Northern affiliates can find their own strategic entry points to a shared agenda within AAI.

3.2.11. Some country programs were able to raise donor resources for their campaigns; Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, and Uganda. This shows the potential that exists externally. It also shows that the innovativeness of the campaign.

3.2.12. Findings: Internal challenges

- Lack of an AAI position on LGBTQI and sex workers, which would have added value to and strengthened the organisation's partnership with marginalized groups working on these issues

- Capacity to do follow up work after launch of events/activities in country programs. In some countries there has not been much activity beyond launches.

- Building a framework to capture everything that is going on within and across all the coalitions.

- Due to limited staff and resource capacity the IWRT as hosts of the secretariat have not been able to consistently maintain the WWW website, and provide on going information about the campaign.

- 'Also due to lack of resources it has not been possible to consistently translate materials into Spanish and French.

- Sustaining the campaign and the role of AAI: The process of the WWW Campaign establishing an independent secretariat is underway. Beyond the 3 year life span of the campaign it will not be possible for the IWRT to invest this much time and financial resources into WWW.

- Failure to raise external resources for the campaign, despite several efforts by the IWRT and some affiliates, (US & Sweden). This has hampered the growth of the campaign internationally and within the CPs.

It is therefore clear from the above findings that the WWW Campaign has been successful in re-positioning thinking on women's rights, HIV&AIDS and VAW at international, regional and national levels. The reporting on outcomes shows that there is now greater recognition of the links between VAW and HIV&AIDS as found in the changes in donor policy discourse. The evidence affirms that this is indeed a WR flagship campaign. Furthermore, the IWRT's lessons on coalition building are important for AAI as a whole. It will be important for the IWRT to be strategic, as the day to day running of the Campaign moves away from AAI, in order to institutionalize the lessons and deepen AAI's policy work in this area as intended.

Recommendations:

- IWRT to continue to build and deepen the work of the WWW Campaign through research, campaigning, advocacy and coalition strengthening, to address the wide range of issues and gaps identified in the WWW Review Meeting (November 2008). This includes for example issues debates about working with men, the need to work more with LGBTQi groups, sex workers and taking up advocacy on issues such as criminalization and feminisation of the epidemic.

- IASL to draw out the lessons on coalition building, lobbying, campaigning and advocacy to inform other campaigns by AAI

- There is a need to monitor the impact of the shift in funding vis a vis HIV/AIDS work and in particular its ramifications on funding for addressing the intersection of VAW and HIV&AIDS as well as gender sensitive responses to the epidemic.

- Develop monitoring and enforcement mechanisms for the new laws and policies that are being enacted to protect women from VAW. The IWRT and WWW international partners need to provide support to WWW coalitions in countries where progressive woman friendly legislation and policies have been instituted; this will enable concretisation of the campaign gains.

- Develop a strategy to address the criminalisation of HIV transmission which is likely to have very negative impacts on women's rights and specific groups of women, e.g. sex workers.

- Develop and agree monitoring mechanisms and indicators for measuring the WWW campaign outcomes in national level campaigns. This would include the conducting of baseline surveys in each country, so that there are benchmarks etc. against which to measure changes. This may necessitate selecting pilot areas to try out these monitoring mechanisms.

3.3. Violence Against Girls in Schools Programme

The Violence against Girls in schools Programme refers to the work that has been undertaken by the WR Theme in collaboration with the Education Theme and refers to a spectrum of interventions including campaigns and community/school based activities. AAI has been implementing programmes and running campaigns in a number of country programmes focusing on violence against girls in schools since 2003. The focus is to address girls' rights "to, in and through" education. Various methods and entry points have been identified for change. These include research, formation of girls' clubs, programmes in schools and policies to deal with structural factors. The countries with experience of working on VAG include Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda, DRC, and India. Although Guatemala carried out a study which showed the prevalence of the problem, they were not able to implement a program due to lack of resources.

Findings

There are a number of achievements summarized here (for more detail see Report of the VAG shared learning forum and facilitators' report 2008 and Annex 2).

3.3.1. Key achievements
- AAI scoping studies carried out prior to implementation of activities in several countries, (Kenya, India, Tanzania, Guatemala, Mozambique, etc), revealed a number of common threads on the problem of VAG and how it impacts on girls' access to and participation in education. This is irrespective of diverse country contexts. Therefore VAG was a strategically chosen issue to focus on.
- The scoping studies also showed the width and depth of VAG as being quite huge, although governments and law enforcement systems do not keep or track data. Evidence from newspaper reports, counselling centres and school systems show the extent of the problem.
- In almost all countries where programs were initiated AAI has been able to mobilize girls, teachers, women's organisations, education movements, and the media. This shows the importance of the issue and that there has been a gap in advocacy on a fundamental problem affecting girls' rights to education.
- IWRT and International Education Team (IET), supported several countries to raise external resources with which to implement substantive programs; Cameroon, DRC, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique. The biggest is a grant of over £5million for a project in 3 countries.

- AAI has put VAG on the policy and public agenda. The regional meetings held in 2006, 2007 and 2008 – bringing together all the major stakeholders in education and girls' rights- showed that AAI's intervention was timely and the need is there.
- In the examples of Kenya and Mozambique, the AAI VAG programmes have developed clear linkages between school and girl-driven initiatives to end violence against girls and the struggles of the broader women's rights movements. For example, this means AAI VAG programmes work with non-school actors like law enforcement agencies, legislatures, women's legal advice and counselling centres.
- AAI and partners developed a Model policy to address VAG. This is meant to be used as an advocacy tool by movements campaigning for change.

3.3.2. Key challenges:

- VAG appears to be a huge problem, and yet in the countries where programs are being implemented, AAI supported school based programmes are dependent on a few teachers

- In some countries AAI did not do a careful stakeholder analysis in order to work with actors who support RBA and transformation of gender power relations. As a result some of the interventions' impact and intentions were questionable. For example working with organisations whose values are all about blaming girls for their "bad behaviour" which in turn causes VAG!

- Building capacity of AAI staff and partners to engage with the complexity of the problem using RBA and gender analysis. Discussions at the VAG shared learning forum showed that the approaches tend to be simplistic and once off.

- Moving beyond addressing individual cases of rights violations and looking   at the school as a gendered organisation which needs transforming. At present the tendency in countries is to focus on individual cases/incidents.

- Absence of key AAI guidelines for working on VAG (values/principles).

- Absence of concrete data from government institutions which would provide evidence of the extent of VAG, tracking of trends and which could be used by NGOs and movements to back up their claims.

- CPs and their partners also do not have system for tracking who the VAG programmes reach, neither were baselines comprehensively done, and changes brought about through program interventions tracked. This makes the programs very weak and will not enable AAI and its partners to hold the state to account in the long run.

- Deepening analysis of VAG by putting the work in a wider context – whilst it is important that girls 'speak out' for example, AAI needs to be addressing empowerment strategies in context of institutional reforms.

- Building common messages through a communication strategy (each CP seems to have its own approach to communicating on VAG and it is not clear if all are giving the same/consistent messages)

- Some country programs are "working with boys and men", in the VAG programme. The discussions in Mombasa showed the urgent need for collective clarity amongst AAI staff as to when, how, and to what end working with men and boys is/can be a strategy to achieve girls' and women's empowerment/rights.

These findings therefore suggest that whilst there is good work going on, there now needs to be a deepening of analysis, using a feminist perspective. This means that the WR and Education Themes must build the necessary political capacity for this type of work. This means everyone working with a feminist empowerment theory and practice and where the long term target of change is institutional and societal transformation.

Recommendations:

- Using the Big Lottery Funded multi country project, IWRT and IET must build a strong programming framework, built on solid feminist analysis and principles. This can then be replicated by other countries which are starting similar work.

- AAI to build staff and partners capacity in programming, campaigning and advocacy on VAW and VAG, using RBA. The two are part of the same continuum.

- CPs must be supported to move from reaction to incidents as well as once off interventions, to building a programme that address structural causes/factors.

- CPs and partners to lobby or work with human rights organisations in their countries to include systematic documentation of VAG in schools as a human rights violation.

- IET and IWRT must invest in strengthening CP and regional/international partners' capacities for building an evidence base for programs as well as tracking program impacts, so that strategic choices and priorities correspond to actual needs.

- IET and IWRT to jointly think of scaling up the Big Lottery funded project.

3.4. WR to land

The WR Strategic Priority 3: Contribution to greater recognition, realization and protection of women's land rights, focuses on consciousness raising about women's land rights; advocacy and campaigning for legislation to promote and secure women's land rights; movement building of landless women; and mainstreaming attention of women's land rights and associated livelihoods questions within the Food Rights Theme. See Annex 3 for ActionAid India Case Study.

Findings

3.4.1 The priority is strategic

 Priority 3 is highly strategic and relevant and has opened up the possibility for AAI to work on the land question. Prior to the IWRT's leadership and development in this area, the importance of land rights had been underplayed within AAI, reflecting a significant gap in the organisation's policy work. Land rights have risen to prominence lately with reports some countries "selling" or leasing out huge tracts of land to others for the purposes of growing food. At the same time, within the debates on the food crisis stalking millions of poor women and men, access and control over the means of food production – i.e. land and related resources becomes paramount. AAI is now well positioned to play a leadership role in repositioning the land question in national and international policy spaces.

3.4.2. Expansion of scope

In the course of implementation, the focus of Priority 3 has expanded to programming and campaigning on women's rights to land and *other productive resources*. The objectives, as outlined in the Strategic Plan, Programme and Campaign on Women's Rights to Land and other Productive Resources (2007) focus on 1) securing more land and related resources in the hands of women; 2) women gaining enduring rights to land and natural resources in their own right as citizens; 3) the political power of rural women is strengthened through supporting effective movements, and 4) governments to protect and uphold the rights of women by putting in place regulatory frameworks. This expansion was necessitated by collective new knowledge generated by the WR and Food rights team showing the need to encompass all these areas outlined above.

3.4.3. WR to land is a "campaignable" issue

The HungerFREE Women initiative, a one year campaign, conceived as a project to give a communications push to the HungerFREE campaign, has produced some significant outcomes for advancing the women's rights to land work. The following points, taken from the HFW Project Evaluation, are examples:

- Evidence of strengthening alliances and leadership among rural women's groups and networks: Formation of a South Asian Network on Women's Rights to Land; mobilization of partners in seven countries in the Americas under the banner of 'Muheres por un Sin Hambre' (Women for a HungerFREE future) and alliance building in several African countries. In almost all countries, a demand and a space has been created to mobilize women farmers, rural women in DAs, together with other national and regional partners.
- Evidence of work to improve laws and policies around the rights and needs of women farmers at national, regional and international levels: Consultations and research in several CPs and development of women's rights to land charters.
- Evidence of mobilization to push the rights and needs of women farmers onto the political agenda: HungerFREE Women mobilizations in 21 countries, some of which drew significant attention from the media and politicians. The Charters were an important vehicle for articulation of demands by poor women, mobilization and lobbying.

- Evidence of pushing women's rights to land, livelihoods and food onto the agenda of regional and international fora and debates: Regional office in Africa convened consultation on the Africa Union draft land policy framework and FAO regional conference; Americas and Asia regions mobilized around the regional FAO conferences, .
- There is a niche and demand to work on the issues of women and land and livelihoods
- The HungerFREE campaign now has a strong women's rights focus and has built an understanding about the role of women farmers in relation to ending hunger.

All of this goes to show that women's rights to land is a strategic and "campaignable" issue, with massive potential to achieve many objectives; mobilization of women farmers, landless women; land hunger is a problem affecting poor rural women; legislative and policy changes need to be pushed for much more strongly. As one AAI staff member pointed out land is the new trade! Current trends of "land grabs" as the sales of land by African, Asian and some Latin American governments have been dubbed, indicates the need for AAI to develop stronger campaigning on land rights broadly. And within that, AAI must push more Women's rights to be promoted, protected and upheld.

3.4.4 The Challenge – maintaining a strategic focus

While the HFW campaign and the "mainstreaming" of WR to land in Hunger Free are both achievements, they also bring out the challenge of how to maintain a strategic focus on a WR issue. Access and control over land, while it is related to food rights and agriculture, should not be conflated or limited only to that. The WR strategic plan had identified land rights as an important issue for gender equality and women's empowerment; women's ability to negotiate in the household, inheritance rights, livelihoods, land as property, etc. For example the IWRT published a policy brief which shows the linkages between WR to land and HIV& AIDS. Therefore while the IWRT must work with the Hunger Free campaign and its framework, there is a danger that WR to land will become limited only to its relevance for food production and (sustainable), agriculture.

3.4.5. The value of a WR focus in AAI campaigning

As in other Standalone Women's Rights Interventions, the IWRT is playing an important role in both internal capacity building and consciousness raising, and shifting the strategic direction and content of how AAI works. The work of the IWRT, bringing-in a women's rights focus and gender equality analysis into AAI's work on hunger and food rights, therefore needs to be strengthened and supported.

Recommendations

- The IWRT to continue deepening its work on women and land by supporting more specific policy and legislative change campaigns in particular countries like what happened in WWW; consolidating and strengthening partnerships with landless women's struggles through movement building particularly in Africa and

Asia; developing stronger programming on the ground through Country programs and ensuring some tangible gains also for women.

- AAI International policy team must take leadership and develop an AAI wide policy position land and agrarian reform. This is very urgent in the current context and it will provide the WR to land work a bigger "home".

- IWRT and international policy to invest more in international campaigning, by pushing for more opportunities and discussion on land rights as a key issue globally.

- IWRT to carefully ensure that WR to land is not conflated with and or limited to food and hunger angles. This can be done through more research and evidence on the importance of land rights to wider women's empowerment goals. This can also be done by partnering with other women's movements which are not only food or farming focused.

3.5. PARTNERSHIPS[5]

3.5.1. Partnership building as a key strategy:

Building partnerships and working through partnerships with women's and feminist movements is an intrinsic part of the WR Standalone Track. This approach is highly strategic, not only because of the support that AAI gives to WR partners to build these movements, but also because of the ways in which WR partners have the potential to strengthen AAI's Women's Rights and Gender Equality Approach. In other words WR partnerships can influence the direction and content of AAI's approach. The experience of the WR work in partnership building also has some important generic lessons for AAI on what it means to build sustainable partnerships.

Evidence of partnership building as a key strategy has already been noted in the review of findings on the WWW Campaign, VAG and Women's Rights to Land. Partnership building is a long term strategy aimed at contributing to women's rights struggles and cuts across all of the WR Standalone work. This section therefore builds on the findings in respect of WWW, VAG and WR to Land and draws out some of the intentions and questions which arise around the complex process of partnerships between an INGO (perceived in many contexts as a "donor"), and women's rights organisations and movements.

Findings

3.5.2. Partnering is essential

For the IWRT, WR partnerships are essential for 'pursuing the broader agenda' (Track1). As was shown in the WWW campaign and the HFW (particularly in Americas region), working with strong feminist partners, with shared values, and sharing platforms and space are critical to effective delivery of the ambitions articulated in R2EP.

3.5.3. Different kinds of partnerships

The IWRT's shows that its partnerships are not just about providing resources. AAI does not give large grants, and therefore the team has negotiated partnerships such as the one leading WWW which is more about collective delivery of a project and shared values.

In some instances the team has given small grants (maximum 20k GBP), to women's movements. Examples include; grants for the hosting of the AWID forum (twice), to the African Feminist Forum, (twice), to women's organisations' campaigning around the Aid Effectiveness Agenda.

In other instances the IWRT has co-hosted or co-sponsored activities with women's groups/women's funds, also as a way of strengthening the movements and WR organizing at regional and international levels; the Movement building initiatives mentioned in WWW, Feminist G-GAP.

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[5] Partnerships in this context refers to relationships with rights holder groups, feminist movements and women's organisations, and not external donor funding "partnership" as is normally used in AAI..

The same kinds of partnerships also take place in CPs.

Partners interviewed expressed appreciation for the different ways in which AAI thinks of and partners with them.

- Women from an NGO partner in AA India, Samagra Grameena Ashrama, put it this way: "It is not only about the money that we get from AA India. After the intervention of AA they gave importance to women organizing and we are now able to organize as women in our own right. AA also gives us support on leadership and decision-making for women… the very thought that women are equals has contributed to our empowerment. Now we are not afraid to take things up."

- A WWW partner and member of the International Steering Committee said; "the partnership with AAI provides new avenues to link up with other partners and access resources. Our organisation's participation has also been very focused around specific areas of work and responsibility e.g. mobilising constituencies in Africa; taking the lead on communication and developing a database to address information needs. The impact of the partnership has been experienced in many areas of our work – we have generated interest in the issues; raised awareness amongst women's organisations which weren't necessarily working on VAW or HIV and with the list-serve we have been able to share some good stories and the African Position Paper on HIV & AIDS and VAW. The campaign is complementary to the work that we were and are doing. We appreciate the space within the WWW Campaign to take different directions in different regions."

- A founder member of the WWW Campaign and member of the International Steering Group commented on how the partnership provides an important platform for sharing information and influencing donors and decision-makers. "There is a need to invest in and prioritise actions to study, prevent and address VAW and HIV & AIDS in women's organisations, as well as recognise the intersections between them and that is why we, along with other organisations, collectively chose to partner on the issue. The partnership with AAI is easy and they are open to ideas. AAI has helped to strengthen women's rights movements because the problem of VAW constitutes the main violation of women's rights and when it is associated with HIV, this is reinforced. That is why the WWW Campaign and ActionAid have contributed to strengthening the movement for women's rights."

- A WWW Partner said; "the partnership has made a huge contribution to advancing women's rights; when we have not had the capacity before. WWW gave us a vehicle to connect with what we were already working on, for example the 16 Days Campaign. We have now got the 16 Days Campaign to have a deeper focus on HIV & AIDS and women. We can now do our work better and contribute to a project (WWW) that works at different levels. The importance of the partnership is that the WWW Campaign has breadth of influence. The Campaign has worked at UN and Regional levels, as well as local and this is important for making a global impact."

3.5.4. The challenges of an INGO' partnering with movements

Comments by an external partner point to some of the inherent tensions in the partnership between INGOs- who are most often seen as donors, and civil society organisations and what these mean for advancing women's rights:

- As a donor, ActionAid faces a conundrum, how to support local activism by standing alongside and not standing 'over'. All INGOs who disburse money have to face the reality of the hierarchical donor-grantee relationship alongside the political/ideal 'horizontal' partnership. From a local perspective, INGOs are often seen more as donors than partners. If ActionAid grows in the next ten years to be the 'international voice on women's rights/poverty etc what does that mean for the local/national activists who have always been there?

These insights are important and challenging for how AAI perceives itself in partnership with others in taking a stand on women's rights, and how it needs to always think through what it does and how it does it.

3.5.5. Sustaining and institutionalizing partnerships

Reflecting on current partnerships and looking ahead at how these might be sustained and expanded, also raised a question about what happens longer term. This question was posed when thinking about the current partnerships and how these are perceived as being very dependent on individual feminists in AAI. And so there is a concern, what happens when these feminists leave? In other words, how does AAI institutionalize existing partnerships?

3.5.6. Building partnerships in all regions where AAI works

Another point that emerged in the discussion of partnerships among AAI staff was about scope of partnerships across Regions. There is a perception that in the Americas, partnerships with the women's movement are strong, in Africa they are developing and in Asia they are weak. Unpacking this and understanding which partnerships are being referred to will be an important next step. Is this only about WR and Land? What about VAG and what about WWW? What are these different programme and campaign areas telling AAI about the politics and practice of WR partnership building?

Overall this review suggests that further research is called for, to find out what the newly formed partnerships with women's rights organisations and women's movements mean for the partners, and how these are shaping the direction of AAI's work on WR. Also to bring out in more detail the lessons from the WWW, WR and Land, and VAG about the politics of partnering and what these mean for working with feminist values and working principles. It is very clear in the example of WWW that partnerships built on shared feminist principles are critical for success and sustainability. To begin deepening the analysis, it might be helpful to define more clearly what the different types of partnerships are and what the strategy of partnership building means for different types of interventions. Also to address questions about criteria for measuring what it means for AAI to be a 'good partner'.

Recommendations:

- As AAI generally rolls out its partnership policy some of the lessons emerging from the IWRT's work are very important to draw on. These issues need to be discussed within the whole organisation not just the WR theme.

- Also more analysis of partnerships, as a distinct piece of work, it will be possible in the agency wide Taking Stock exercise to come out with a more detailed understanding of what partnership means and how success can be measured. This will enable AAI to know if it is being a 'good' partner.

- IWRT to strengthen partnerships with strong feminist and women's movements in all the regions. This will be possible with a strengthened external agenda in the next iteration of the strategic plan.

SECTION 4: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS TEAM

The focus of this section is to review the IWRT's achievements and challenges in policy and campaigns; regional work; strengthening internal capacity building to deliver on women's rights; inter-thematic work; fundraising and resources, and how the collective work of the IWRT has impacted on organisational culture. The section ends by looking at ideas generated in the course of this review for future work.

4.1. The Team

The International Women's Rights Core Team consists of 7 members: Theme Head, Policy and Campaigns Co-ordinator; Technical Adviser; Communications and Support Officer and 3 Regional Co-ordinators, one of Africa, one for Asia and one for the Americas. In addition the team has shared responsibilities for mainstreaming WR into other themes as follows; Africa WRC leads on HIV& AIDS; Americas WRC leads on Food and Hunger, the Asia WRC leads on Governance, Technical Adviser on Human Security, and the Theme Head on Education.

Findings - Achievements

4.1.1. Effective team

Staff speak very highly about the leadership, skills and knowledge of the IWRT. The IWRT is seen as one of the most effective teams in AAI. The IWRT is experienced as being strategic and pragmatic in its own operations and in the way that it leads and drives women's rights in the organisation. The following comments from staff, touching on a wide range of issues, reflect a shared valuing of the work of the IWRT:

- Considering the size and complexity of the organisation, nowadays, everyone is talking about WR!
- IWRT makes you feel supported and part of a women's community
- IWRT gives support for knowledge building, establishing issues and for linking national level agendas globally, the work of IWRT has made it easier for our policy and programme work
- IWRT has reshaped the priorities on Food Rights, education and HIV/AIDS
- IWRT provides good trainings and opportunities for exposure visits

The team has therefore been successful in making its presence felt in a range of ways, something that has been achieved in a relatively short period of time (three years). Even staff who questions the WR Approach, respect this team and how it has got them thinking.

4.1.2. Visible Feminist Agenda

In addition to the programme and campaign work which has raised AAI's profile on women's rights, it is striking to find that a number of women staff said that the primary reason for wanting to stay or join the organisation is because of AAI's WR work and the visible feminist agenda.

<u>Challenges</u>

4.1.3. Work overload

The scope of work undertaken by the IWRT is vast and the team is overburdened. One of the most striking reasons why this happens is because of the "way we do things around here", in other words AAI's organisational culture. Even when staff take holiday they still feel the need to be available and notions of a work-life balance appear unachievable. For example, in the WR Annual Report 2008 there is a comment about the inability of IWRT to implement self-care resolutions, for example travel less. The problem of excessive workload was highlighted by the team specifically in relation to the Regional Co-ordinators' posts and in respect of the demands for strengthening internal capacity.

The IWRT is clearly overstretched because of its own standalone work, and the demands for "mainstreaming" or integrating WR into other themes, functions, etc.
All team members also raised the challenge of balancing internal AAI needs and external leadership roles. In this early phase of the team's work, a great deal of time has been spent building a WR community inside the organisation and strengthening capacities of various units. At the same time there have been very high expectations on the team to deliver high profile campaigns and programs, working with partners and women on the ground. Balancing these two is definitely a massive challenge.

From the outside it looks like the pace and amount of work is unsustainable. This means, as per the recommendations which follow at the end of this section that AAI has to increase the capacity of this team, whether by strengthening numbers in the existing set up or by re-arranging the division of work. These are questions for the follow-up restructuring discussions that are proposed should take place after this report. The following staff comments highlight the problem:

- AAI compromises quality and quantity of support – internal and external responsibilities are very demanding – 50 countries and 7 members in the IWRT
- Structure of WR team is good but capacity is stretched

4.1.4. WR Voice and Accountability

The team wants to make sure that a WR voice is heard in every space across the organisation but obviously cannot be physically present everywhere, nor is it possible for the team to mainstream and integrate WR into all projects – even just in the International Secretariat alone. This raises questions about how to manage organisation wide invitations to sit in meetings, comment on reports, TOR etc, <u>and</u> do the WR standalone work. Hence the need to continue building a much bigger WR community, but with strong feminist politics.

4.1.5. Fundraising

Everyone in the core team is expected to fundraise and there are various examples of successful fundraising that has been achieved. However it was found that this is an area that needs more capacity and should be a priority in the next strategic plan.

4.2. Policy and Campaigns

Achievements:

4.2.1. WWW Campaign

As noted in Section 3.2. the outcomes from the WWW Campaign, particularly at an international level have been many, hence this piece of work being seen by the IWRT and outsiders as its flagship. One of the most important achievements for the WWW Campaign is making the links between VAW and HIV& AIDS and the contribution this has made to a strengthening of the discourse of women's rights and the HIV&AIDS pandemic and VAW within the donor community

4.2.2. The HFW campaign has also been heralded as a campaign success and is seen as an important stepping stone for AAI's continued engagement with women's rights to land, and the inter-thematic work on Food Rights. There is now a more nuanced AAI understanding about what it means to work on Land, Food and Hunger with a women's rights and gender equality approach.

Challenges

4.2.3. Information dissemination

The Review heard that the full extent of the success of the WWW might not be as well known inside AAI, as it is externally. It will be important in these last few years of R2EP to address the challenges of information dissemination, internally as well as externally. Also as noted in Section 3 there are many lessons to be learnt internally about the achievements of the WWW Campaign in relation to lobbying, advocacy, coalition building and so forth which need to be communicated and used in the organisation.

4.2.4. Linking micro to macro:

There is a gap between policy and campaigns work at an international level and CP level. For example Women's Rights staff would like more support from the IWRT at CP level. Some staff said that after the initial roll out of WWW, CPs needed support for growing and developing their campaigns.

4.2.5. IWRT capacity on policy and campaign work:

The main challenge is about limited human resource capacity within the IWRT to carry out play the leadership role that it is supposed to in terms of mission related work. Currently there is only one Policy and Campaigns Co-ordinator position to lead on policy analysis, research, and integrating WR into other policy work internationally. As already indicated the team must now re-look at how it will allocate its time between internal and external work. It is time to be much more externally focused.

Challenge:

4.3.1. Findings show that the systematic documenting of programmes and campaigns is an overall weakness in AAI (not part of AAI organisational culture). The general culture has been documentation of individual stories of poor women/men telling their personal stories of change. While these are useful for fundraising and supporter mobilisation, there are other needs; shared learning, improving program quality, strengthening campaigns etc. This area of IWRT work needs to be strengthened. The recent recruitment of the Communications and Support Officer is therefore welcomed and staff expressed the hope that this resource will assist with the complex task of 'lesson sharing' across the organisation and some of the needs indicated above.

4.4. Regional work

Achievements

4.4.1. Regional Work has been successfully developed, to varying degrees in all three Southern regions, Africa, Asia and the Americas. The content of this work has been the implementation of the WR Standalone Work (Track 1) and mainstreaming through the entry point of inter-thematic work. Evidence of the achievements in partnership and movement building have been pointed out in Section 3. Evidence to inter-thematic work is addressed in 4.6.

4.4.2. AAI Europe

There is a concern among Northern AA Affiliates about how best to co-ordinate WR work in the North. There is a suggestion that there should be a 'Europe WR Regional Plan'. This raises a number of points about how Northern AA Affiliates work together on WR. Taking into account that one of the major tasks in the North is lobbying European Governments and giving inputs into the European Policy Group and the Concord Gender Working Group, it may well be more strategic to develop an advocacy and lobbying strategy, identifying specific WR targets which Northern Affiliates can collectively works towards, rather than developing a Europe WR Regional plan. The context is different from the South.

Challenges

4.4.3. Division of work across Regions

One of the key challenges is about the need for additional capacity in Africa. Staff repeatedly said that in the Africa region it does not make sense to only have one Regional Co-ordinator, there needs to be two. The number of countries in Africa (24) and the diverse contexts make the demands on a lone Africa Regional Co-ordinator and the IWRT, too great. In practice the experience for the post holder has been 'overwhelming' and the knock on effect is that 'some processes get ignored'. The situation in the Americas is different, one Regional Co-ordinator responsible for 5 countries and in Asia, one Regional Co-ordinator for 10 countries. But differences in numbers of countries per

Regional Co-ordinator are only one part of the analysis. The IWRT did do a mapping in 2007, which showed that different countries are at different levels of WR programming. Another round of mapping needs to happen to inform the team how much investment is needed where, in terms of internal CP/affiliate support.

It must also be taken into account that the notion of "regions" means very different things, for example Africa as continent has strong continental bodies and structures; AU, SADC, ECOWAS etc, but the picture is different in the Asian regions.

It follows that the roles of regional coordinators must be re-thought, based on the different contextual factors that the IWRT now knows from three years of work, and linked to how the entire IWRT can be restructured to deliver more on the external agenda.

Recommendations:

In light of the above, the following key recommendations emerge;
- AAI to increase the size of the IWRT. At least one more member of staff for the Africa regions specifically.
- The current IWRT to think of how to restructure the regional coordinator's roles in light of lessons learnt over the last four years, specifically, look at how to increase focus on external policy and campaigning leadership, while decreasing internal support.
- IWRT to re-analyse where each Southern region is, and how best to reshape roles and work-plans of regional coordinators.
- Europe region to be supported to develop a regional WR plan, around which the Affiliates can collaborate or collectively deliver.

4.5. Strengthening internal capacity to deliver on women's rights

The entry points for strengthening internal capacity have evolved in the course of the last four years, in terms of support to CPs, WR Theme staff and other themes and functions. The main forms of support have focused on programme design, shared learning on WR programming using a rights-based framework, supporting themes and functions to ensure achievement of their WR objectives and the development of women's leadership internally. Specific activities in 2008 for example were; Regional WR Workshops; Intensive Country Support Visits and 'General Support' to countries which includes the provision of technical support in CSP review processes and strategy development.

Internal support is led by the Technical Adviser, working together with the 3 Regional coordinators and back up from the Theme head.

Achievements:

4.5.1. Capacity building

Capacity building happens through Regional WR Workshops and the Intensive Country Support Visits and through a myriad of other interventions. Much of this work is about

the provision of technical support, for example into CSP Review processes and strategy development and WR training for all staff in CPs.

In addition the IWRT supports WR Co-ordinators with informal mentoring and coaching.

In 2006 and 2008 regional workshops were held for WR staff and others to reflect, learn, generate new knowledge and strengthen practice. The IWRT uses the AAI Global Monitoring Framework, power analysis, RBA from a WR perspective to address questions of change and how change happens for women. The methodology is participatory, using story telling and case studies to analyse change, programme site visits and conversations with women in the organisation (WR Annual Report 2008).

An important point to highlight is that the IWRT tries to identify specific needs among different constituencies and tailor designs interventions to meet these expressed needs.

4.5.2. Intensive Country Support Visits

Starting out as "Women's Rights Self-Assessments" conducted in Cambodia (2007); Guatemala, Mozambique, and Pakistan (2008) the team renamed the methodology, "Intensive Country Support Visit". The intervention is 10 days and IWRT works with the international OD team. The impact has been beneficial at multiple levels and builds knowledge and practical skills at individual, team and organisational levels. For example, the impact of these intensive support visits is illustrated in the outcomes of the process which the Cambodia team went through in 2007. These include the setting up of a Feminist Leadership Forum, a quarterly women staff meeting, improved gender sensitivity in the office, re-enforcement of Anti- Sexual Harassment Policy, and more measures to improve the security of female staff during field visits (AA Cambodia in WR Annual Report 2008). The intensive support visit has become a model which other teams in AAI have learnt from. It is based on mutually agreed objectives between the country and the IWRT, building ownership and national-international linkages.

4.5.3. Resources

IWRT has developed tools on WR. These include the manual, *Power, Inclusion and Rights-Based Approaches, The ActionAid Gender Equality and RBA Resource Kit* (2006). This was one of the first resources in AAI aimed to strengthening programming capacities on Rights Based programming; WR Self Assessment tool; Women in Politics Package; Women and Land campaign tool-kit. Interviewed staff indicated that they had found these tools very useful in shaping their own programs.

Challenges

4.5.4. Programme design

This area, as noted in Section 3, is an area of weakness in AAI and needs to be strengthened. Lessons from 'Impact Assessments' for example show that CPs have 'lots of anecdotes' but are weak on analysis linked to a comprehensive change analytical framework. The challenge for the IWRT is finding the time to build frameworks and models from the WR community in AAI's own practice which can be used in the organisation. Addressing this problem also relates to another feature of AAI's organisational culture which is an apparent aversion to what are mistakenly seen as

'templates'. Yet at the same time, CP staff, ask for these "templates". The detailed work that IWRT has developed over the past four years contributes to an important body of knowledge and training material about how to do women's rights work in a development context. Pulling this together in accessible format will be the first step and training on how to use the material will be the second.

4.5.5. Gender budget analysis

The introduction of a gender budgeting tool to track resource allocation for WR work has yet to be institutionalized. The WR Annual Report 2008 notes that this tool is not fully acknowledged as an important accountability mechanism. There is still an ongoing debate about who owns the tool which WR and IASL helped to create in 2006 and who should foster accountability. It is also noted that failure to do a gender budget analysis has no consequence for CPs or CDs.

The Gender Budget Analysis is an important instrument for accountability and for lobbying for more resources for the Women's Rights Theme. Looking at programme expenditure by theme, it is evident that the WR Theme has the lowest expenditure when compared to the other themes (AA Annual Report 2007). Work to increase the allocation of money to the WR Theme is therefore a matter of immediate concern. The organisation needs to re-engage with the gender budget analysis as an instrument to hold itself to account. Just as in the WWW Campaign, it is one thing to say that AAI has put women's rights at the centre, what is needed is the money to do the work – 'Show us the money for WR work in AAI', to borrow the strap-line from the WWW campaign!

4.6. Inter-thematic collaboration and working with other functions

<u>Achievements:</u>

4.6.1. Support to other functions

The IWRT has successfully provided support to the Communications Function, Impact Assessment and Shared Learning, using entry points such as Peer Reviews. The presence of a WR member in the country peer review exercises has brought attention to women's rights and helped staff engage with what putting women's rights at the centre of AAI's work means in theory and practice. In the process the IWRT has facilitated shared learning with colleagues and the IWRT has had the opportunity to build a more comprehensive understanding of the CP work and different contexts.

4.6.2. WR and Human Security

The IWRT has contributed to the integration of WR into the Human Security Theme. Evidence of this is found in the development and implementation of the DANIDA funded multi-country project on VAW and Policing in UN Police Keeping Missions (Sierra Leone, Burundi and DRC). The joint collaboration has resulted in the revision of core program design framework of the HS Theme, the Participatory Vulnerability Assessment guide, to ensure the there are sufficient gender analysis tools to support their work. And in the example of working on human security issues in the context of conflicts and emergencies, evidence of which is found in the example of the Asia women's rights team working with the Human Security team in post tsunami emergency work.

4.6.3. WR and Food Rights

In the Americas, the Hunger Free Women Campaign provided an opportunity to work inter-thematically. WR and Food rights have systematically collaborated on the WR to land agenda.

4.6.4. WR and Education

Another successful example of inter-thematic collaboration is in the work with the Education Theme in designing and implementing the VAG programme. .

Challenges

4.6.5. Key challenges for inter-thematic work centre on broad organisational change practices, as this type of working means moving from working in silos to inter-disciplinary teams. In this shift, questions arise for example about 'ownership' of programmes. This has come up repeatedly in Country Programs in particular. However what is key for the organisation to understand is that the work of women's rights cuts across everything and so the question of 'ownership' is not the issue. At the same time there is a need to acknowledge and attribute certain changes to the input of WR staff, something that doesn't happen very easily.

The main gap at present appears to collaboration with the Right to Just and Democratic Governance Theme.

4.7. The IWRT and its impact on AAI's organisational culture

4.7.1. The following comments reflect what staff had to say about AAI's organisational culture:

- When all is said and done at the end of the day we are still a very patriarchal organisation, with inadequate maternity leave, women being told if they want to travel with a child it's at their own expense ….
- The ideal AAI worker remains a single person, free of child care and other family responsibilities
- AAI directorate needs to recognize power relations as central to on-going organisational transformation agenda and not just say it but say it and support it, the political will is there but now the organisation needs to build competencies
- There is a gap between the organisation's emphasis on women's rights as a thematic focus and actual internal commitment, prioritization and women's issues in the organisation. Externally this is our drive, internally there is not sufficient similar will and organisational commitment, especially to support women in senior positions
- The internal culture is ambivalent about promoting women

These comments reflect what many in AAI know already. The culture is not an enabling environment for women. As noted in the input on methodology (Section 2) changing organisational culture requires a comprehensive change strategy, above and below the waterline, that is, in the formal and informal spheres of the organisation.

Achievements

4.7.2. Feminist Leadership Forum

The IWRT initiated and held a Feminist Leadership Forum in 2007. The thinking behind this was to provide a space for senior women to come together and discuss internal issues affecting women in AAI and develop solutions. The process leading up to the Forum and the follow ups have been instructive about the challenges for building a feminist leadership. One of the key challenges for the IWRT was how to bring senior women, IDs and CDs into the process since not every woman in senior leadership wanted to participate, nor wanted to identify themselves as feminists, (WR Annual Report 2007).

4.7.3. Sunnyside Group

One of the outcomes from the 2007 experience was setting up the Sunnyside Group by the IDs. This group, made up of six members drawn from all geographic areas of AAI, an ID, plus international HR and OD managers as support, was mandated to address women's leadership, recruitment and retention, the same issues that have come up repeatedly in the WR Review. The outcome from the Sunnyside Group is a 'Framework for Recruitment, Retention and Career Advancement of Women Staff 2008 – 2015'. IDs have taken ownership of this change process and are leading its implementation.

4.7.4. Women's Leadership Development
The IWRT has given support to the design of AAI's Women's Development Course. This is now implemented by international OD unit.

Challenges

4.7.5. The challenges for building an enabling organisational culture/workplace environment for women are many and include: AAI's inability to retain women; excessive workloads; enormous travel; and work/life balance.

4.7.6. Systems change in the formal sphere e.g. Sunnyside Proposal, is only one part of what needs to change, and this is particularly so in an organisation that in large part, runs on informal/unofficial ways of working. Understanding this is important for directing energies at both the formal and informal spheres, that is, above and below the waterline. In other words the successful implementation of the Sunnyside Proposal (2008- 2015) requires an understanding of daily practice in the relationships and day to day decisions which are shaped by the informal sphere.

Recommendation:

- International Directors need to provide a clear mandate and message as to what the role of IWRT is in internal organisational development and policy issues. While a lot of what has been done by the IWRT is commendable and has in fact led to a number of systemic changes, which are now being led by IDs/OD (as it should be), the IWRT often finds itself drawn into various issues. The CEO and ID for OD need to define clearly what they need from IWRT in this regard so that the team has clear mandate, and can allocate the necessary time and resources.

SECTION 5: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE PRIORITIES

A. Summary of Key Recommendations

This section summarises the key recommendations emerging from this review and identifies who should take the responsibility for implementation

5.1. The AAI Board, CEO and International Directors to ensure the continuation of a Standalone WR theme/program, team, with a specific budget.

5.2. IDs to strengthen the capacity of the IWRT's Core Team, in particular add one more staff member for the Africa regions.

5.3. ID for WR and the IWRT to agree on how to restructure the team, with a view to increasing attention to policy and campaigns delivery internationally.

5.4. The AAI Board, CEO, International Directors, Theme Heads, CDs and Function heads to use every opportunity to 'speak out' on the centrality of WR to AAI's mission as well as WR within the organisation. Every leader must also show by example, through concrete initiatives, and day to day practice in their sphere of influence.

5.5. IDs to develop sets of core WR standards that are non-negotiable for the whole organisation, and below which nobody is allowed to operate. These should build on some of the core standards already in process; RBA programming and campaigning standards, HR/OD standards, policies, etc.

5.6. IASL to work with IWRT in systematically gathering and disseminating some of the lessons learnt in implementing WR agenda.

5.7. IWRT to strengthen program design, implementation, and change tracking processes at CP level, with a view to consolidating what has been done so far and building strong programming frameworks built on feminist values and principles.

5.8. IWRT to urgently prioritize fundraising, and focus on building partnerships with donors.

5.9. ID for OD and CEO to agree with IWRT what role the IWRT should play in internal OD issues; structure, systems, organisational culture, and agree on time and resource allocation for this task. This with a view to formalising the role of IWRT and the extent of their involvement.

5.10. The IWRT to review the current Standalone Strategic Priorities and agree on what to carry through into the next WR Strategic Plan in light of the overall finding, which is, that current programmes and campaigns need to be strengthened and consolidated to sustain momentum, deepen analysis and build conceptual knowledge and practical skills, particularly in Country programmes.

5.11. The IWRT to review the suggestions for future Strategic Priorities under the Standalone Track and open these for wider and detailed discussion within the organisation and with external WR partners.

5.12. The IWRT to continue strengthening internal capacity using the Intensive Country Support Visits, WR Regional Meetings and other entry points and institutionalize lessons from the past four years by writing up WR frameworks and models for use by the organisation as a whole.

5.13. The IWRT to strengthen its work on documentation and communication so that the work of the WR community is well profiled and known within the organisation and externally.

B: Possible future Strategic Priorities

This section contains suggestions of future strategic priorities i.e. WR mission related issues that the IWRT can develop in the next strategic plan. These will need to be discussed by the team as well as other key stakeholders inside and outside the organisation.

- Women and the economy: this would include women's economic empowerment and the challenges facing poor women in the context of the financial crisis. References were made to gaps in AAI policy work on economic redistribution and the need to work with feminist economists to deepen the analysis. This will mean for example, critiquing concepts such as the 'care economy' and the 'reproductive economy' using feminist analysis.

- Women and social protection – focusing on the impact of the economic downturn poor women in relation to food, fuel and livelihoods, and the impact of privatization of public services which result in lack of access to health, education, shelter and so forth. There is a need for research and policy advocacy.

- Sexual and Reproductive Health and rights – this would build on the present WWW campaign, to take into account a holistic understanding of women's rights reproductive rights, and an integrated view of health. There are many other intersections that need to be addressed in addition to the intersection of VAW and HIV& AIDS.

- Rights of women workers – several countries in Asia are already working on this e.g. India, Cambodia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Thailand.

- Expansion of work with certain excluded groups – points to need for WR work to be more explicit on which 'excluded' groups it prioritizes. Examples include; Dalit women, single women, widows, women with disabilities, WLWHA, urban poor, sex workers, and lesbian/bi-sexual/transgender women. Such an expansion is important for building inclusive women's movements. This point on 'excluded' groups has already been identified in the WWW Campaign for example.

- Women and climate change – AAI has already identified this as an emerging organisational priority. The WR team should link into it.

- Women and participation in politics. As already noted in the report, although this was a priority in the current strategic plan the IWRT was not able to do any work on it for the past four years. Reports covering work since 2005 show CP interventions for women entering the political arena in Ghana, India, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Zimbabwe, etc. Other approaches focus on undertaking civic education programmes for women, influencing/changing laws and policies that affect women's participation and observing elections to ensure that they are "free and fair" from a women's perspective (WR Annual Report 2007). In 2007 the IWRT commissioned Jo Beall to conduct a mapping exercise of AAI's work in this area, (see Jo Beall report). The key message from Beall is that there is much to be done on women's political participation at the local level, and this is work that AAI is well placed to do. This is an area that may also open the door for WR to work with the Governance Theme.