

## BENIN

## STRATEGIC COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT

(Briefing Note for the PRSP and the CAS)

**I. Introduction and Overview**

1. This Strategic Country Gender Assessment (SCGA) summarizes relevant gender issues in Benin both to support the dialogue with the government and to inform our own country strategy. This note is meant to be a starting point for the inclusion of gender in the country work program. It is not an end in itself, or simply background information for a box on gender in the CAS. It should prompt discussion

*Box 1: Gender: What Does It Mean?*

Gender concerns the roles and power relations between men and women as socially and culturally defined. Gender relations, therefore, are contextually specific and often change in altering economic circumstances.

Sources: UNU/INIRA<sup>1</sup>, and Moser.<sup>2</sup>

in the country team of how gender issues may be included across all sectors. The note will not restate all the reasons for including gender in our work; these are more eloquently laid-out in other documents.<sup>4</sup> This note will concentrate on issues in Benin and how we address them. A summary gender profile of Benin is in *Annex 1*.

2. The timing is opportune in that the CAS is being finalized, the PRSP is in process and the government has recently completed its own gender strategy. This note presents gender-disaggregated data, where available, and highlights the key gender issues in each sector and those that cut across sectors. It also references relevant sections of the government's own gender strategy. Subsequent versions of this note will include recommendations based on discussions with the country team, which will be summarized in *Annex 4*.

3. The SCGA for Benin is organized as follows. Part II contains a profile of core gender issues in Benin. Part III discusses the country context, including the country's policies, priorities,

<sup>1</sup> Working Group: UNU/INIRA Agenda for Gender and Natural Resources Conservation and Management, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Moser, C 1993: *Gender Planning and Development: theory, practice and training*. Routledge, London and New York. p. 230.

<sup>4</sup> See, in particular, *Engendering Development: Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources, and Voice*, A World Bank Policy Research Report, World Bank, Washington, D.C. 2001.

legal and regulatory framework, and institutional arrangements for implementing its gender and development goals. Following consultations with the country team, Part IV will outline a set of suggested gender-related activities important for poverty reduction and development effectiveness.

4. **Summary of key findings/conclusions.** Available data for Benin suggest that gender disparities persist, and that gender inequality is costly to Benin's economic and social development and to the realization of its growth and poverty reduction objectives. Poverty has significant gender dimensions in Benin, where women predominate among the core poor. Gender differences in labor force participation and earnings, in time allocation, in schooling and literacy, in health and the impact of HIV/AIDS, and in access to and control of a wide range of human, economic, and social capital assets (see *Annex I*) are impediments to growth and poverty reduction in Benin. Because men and women differ in their access to, and control over, these assets, economic capacities and incentives are strongly gender-differentiated in ways that affect supply response, resource allocation within the household, labor productivity, and welfare. These differences have implications for the flexibility, responsiveness, and dynamism of the economy, and directly limit economic growth; a point reiterated in the recent study, *Can Africa Claim the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?* (Box 2).<sup>5</sup> A country development strategy informed by a better understanding of these gender differences can prioritize actions that reduce gender disparities significantly, in ways that lead to higher growth and more effective – and inclusive – poverty reduction.

*Box 2: Can Africa Claim the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*

Women are one of Africa's hidden growth reserves, providing most of the region's labor, but their productivity is hampered by widespread inequality in education and access. **Thus, gender equality can be a potent force for accelerated poverty reduction.** (p. 2).

### Basic overview

5. In 1997 the population of Benin was estimated at 5.8 million inhabitants. Of these, one in four (1.4 million) was a woman 18 years or older, and one in two (2.8 million) was a child 15 years old or younger. Twenty-two percent of the overall population is located in the four major urban areas (Cotonou, Parakou, Bohicon and Porto-Novo). With increased migration, this number is growing at a rate of 4.2%/year – or between 35,000-45,000 people. Studies have found that women are the majority of the new migrants and much of the recent movement is to periurban areas, where agricultural land is increasingly scarce and there is a lack of transport and sanitation facilities (UNICEF, 1998).

Women head more than 20% of urban households, and it is estimated that this percentage may be even higher in the new periurban areas. The rural situation varies, but a monograph on Kandi found that 41% of women were solely responsible for themselves and

<sup>5</sup> *Can Africa Claim the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*, Report prepared jointly by the African Development Bank, African Economic Research Consortium, Global Coalition for Africa, Economic Commission for Africa, and World Bank, Washington, D.C. 2000.

their children. It is difficult to clearly define female-headed households in Benin because while social norms dictate that a husband's primary responsibility is to provide for his family in the economic sphere and women are responsible for the domestic sphere, in reality women are obliged to feed the family and care for their children regardless of the husband's contribution<sup>6</sup>.

Women in polygamous unions are often effectively heads of households since it is each woman alone who is responsible for herself and her children with sporadic assistance from the husband. Fifty percent of women live in polygamous households and are subject to further hierarchies in their capacity for decision-making (UNICEF, 1998). The majority of these households are concentrated in rural areas.

Women's inferior position in Benin greatly limits their abilities to engage in profitable economic activities. Their role as an important labor source for husbands and fathers, legal discrimination, poor access to schools, cultural definitions of men's and women's responsibilities, lack of voice within their communities and a socialization process which undermines self-esteem and initiative combine together to limit access to land, credit, extension, information, training and labor<sup>7</sup>.

## II. Profile of Gender Issues in Benin

6. Gender issues in Benin are addressed along three interconnected axes. These are (i) the structural roles of men and women in the Benin market and household economies; (ii) the nature and extent of gender-based disparities in access to and control of a range of human, economic, and social capital assets (this latter provides a basis for addressing the gender dimensions of poverty and inequality in Benin); (iii) laws, institutions, and norms in Benin which lead to gender discrimination and/or inequality. These will be addressed in turn, along with a summary of the policy and operational implications of this analysis for Bank-supported work (PRSP, CAS, ESW). Reference will also be made to analytical and data issues relating to deepening understanding of gender issues in the Benin work program.

### Structural Economic Roles of Men and Women in Benin: Toward Economic Inclusion

7. A distinguishing characteristic of Benin's economy, shared with other SSA economies more generally, is that both men and women play substantial economic roles. The economy is dependent on agriculture, which contributed 36% of GDP in 1990 and 38% in 1999.<sup>8</sup> Export earnings from food exports account for 15% of total exports; another 80% come from the

<sup>6</sup> *Benin: Toward a Strategy for Poverty Alleviation*, 1994. The World Bank.

<sup>7</sup> *Benin: Toward a Strategy for Poverty Alleviation*, 1994. The World Bank.

<sup>8</sup> Data from World Development Indicators 2001 (WDI 2001).

export of agricultural raw materials in 1999. Agriculture is an important source of employment for 69% of women and 66% of men;<sup>9</sup> inputs into agro-industrial processing are an additional economic contribution of the sector.

Table 1: Benin - Structure of the Productive Economy (Preliminary Estimates).

Sector	Share of GDP (1990)*	Gender Intensity of Production**		Contributions to GDP by Sector and by Sex**	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>49.2</b>	<b>50.8</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>34.3</b>
o/w Smallholder Sector					
Exports (specify)					
<b>Industry</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>18.6</b>
o/w: Manufacturing					
<b>Services</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>50.6</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>55.4</b>	<b>47.1</b>
Informal Sector (estimates)					
<b>Total/Share:</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>46.6</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Gender Intensity of Production: female and male shares of employment.

Source: Preliminary estimates based on a methodology developed in Elson and Evers 1997.

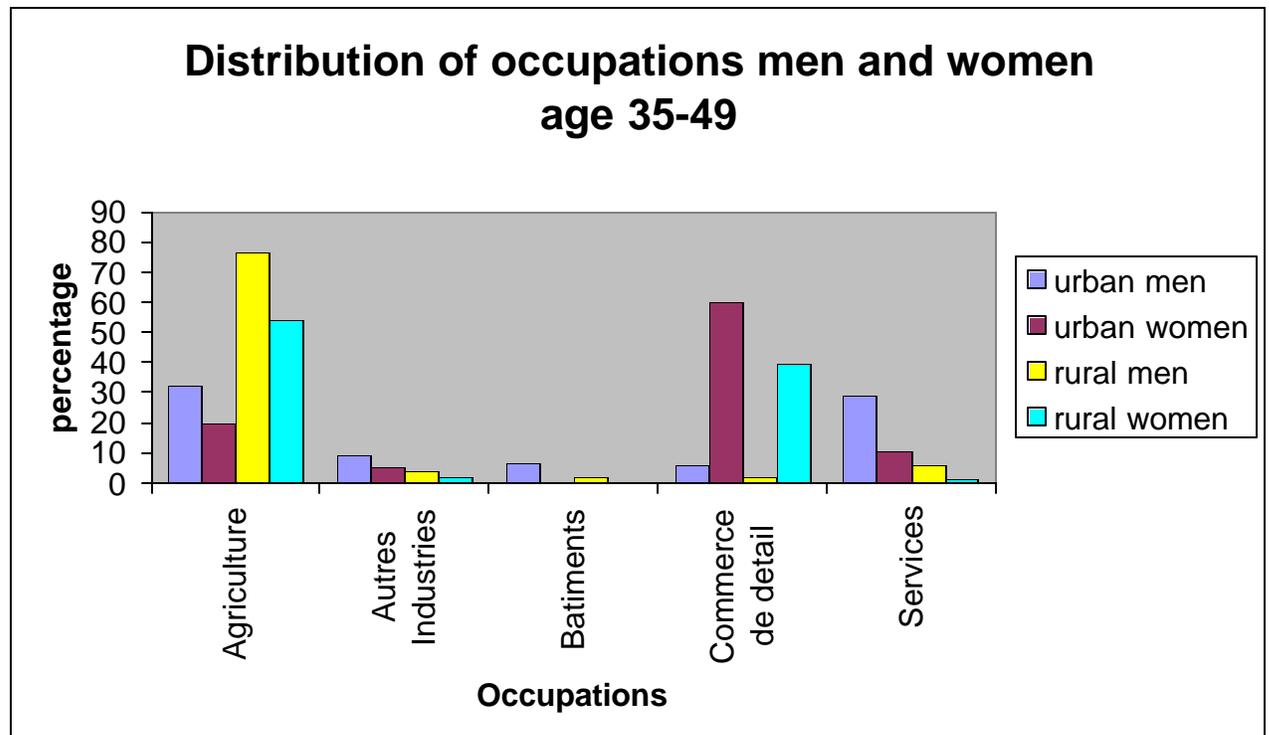
Principal data sources: \* = WDI 2001; \*\* = Africa Country Gender Database (ACGD), staff estimates.

8. Table 1 above provides a preliminary assessment of the “gender intensity of production” in Benin, and the respective shares of each sector in men’s and women’s contribution to national product. It indicates an approximately even distribution of employment among women and men in agriculture and in the services sector, while men predominate in the industry sector. These data suggest that men and women contribute respectively around 53% and 47% to Benin’s GDP.

9. Like much of SSA, there is an uneven distribution of men and women across the economy and this is further affected by rural/urban distinctions as well as by age. These gender differences have important implications for the division of labor, distribution of income, and control of assets. The structural roles of men and women in the agricultural cycle reveal that **women** are more active in agriculture than men, specifically in food crop production, marketing, and processing of agricultural products (90%). Men predominate in cash crop farming, as this requires individualized land ownership (not easily accessible to women), though women are an important, and often unacknowledged, source of labor in this sector.

10. The formal sector in Benin employs a small percentage of the country’s population, about 20.9% of females and 28% of males in 1996. In contrast, the informal sector provides employment for 86.4 percent of females and 69.8 percent of males (Tableau du Bord, 1998).

<sup>9</sup> Data for 1980, from WDI 2001.



(Tableau de Bord sur la Femme au Bénin, Juin 1999, Tableau D.25)

### Agriculture

11. In Benin, primarily smallholder agriculture provides 40% of the GDP and employs 70% of the population. Seventy percent of the female population lives in rural areas where they carry out 60-80% of the agricultural work and furnish up to 44% of the work necessary for household subsistence (FAO, 2001). Work in fields takes up approximately 200 days/year with women devoting 10-12 hours/day to agriculture-related tasks (UNICEF, 1998, Tableau du Bord, 1999). Four factors are paramount for appreciating gender constraints in the agricultural sector.

*Women lack control of and have limited access to land.*

12. The law governing the right of access to land in Benin is found in art. 22 of the Constitution (1990), statutory law (French Civil Code, 1804) and customary law. The constitutional provisions and statutory law do not explicitly distinguish between men and women when regulating the acquisition of and transactions in land: acquisition is presumed to be governed by the general law of contract in which contractual capacity is determined by the age of majority. Acquisition of land may be on first registration, through inheritance under statutory law, or through direct purchase. Property rights and land tenure are defined as individual rights. Under customary law, the role of women is inferior to that of men: women are for the most part prohibited from owning and exercising proprietary rights over real property. In societies where

livestock is an important productive resource, rural women face the same kinds of restrictions on ownership, control and inheritance of livestock. The resulting insecurity for women, especially in periurban areas that are rapidly being bought up by outside settlers, has yet to be addressed within the legal system. The draft Family Code, which still has not been passed by the National Assembly, does not specifically address the issue of property rights. However, there is hope that, with its adoption, the ambiguity of inheritance rules and land access can be addressed and codified.

13. Cultural rules of inheritance regarding animals and land, as well as regional availability of agricultural land combine together to marginalize women's opportunities for control of resources. There are enormous variations in ethnic rules of inheritance throughout the country and it is important to stress that they are often changing and transforming as well. Women depend upon men (fathers, husbands, brothers and sons) to determine where their personal fields will be and these are often not in the best areas. The push for women to own land is primarily in the south, where women have more autonomy and where increasing land shortages mean that it has become a commodity. With increased financial opportunities arising from access to microcredit, the AGEFIB gender study found that women in the south wanted to join local land markets and invest in fields— either as individuals or as groups. They view uncertainty about their abilities to secure the resource over time as an important limitation to the opportunity for economic expansion.

*Labor and time constraints.*

14. Throughout Benin, there are many local systems for selling or trading labor to others within the community. Women often use these inter-aide groups as a strategy to expand their own fields, but they are also constantly limited by the need to reciprocate in kind. Other systems that exchange labor for money also exist, but individual women often do not have the capacity to hire workers for their fields unless they are involved in the production of a cash crop such as cotton. However, such systems do provide opportunities for groups of women working together for limited periods of time. The gender impact study of the AGEFIB project found evidence of microcredit groups using systems of labor-for-money to perform seasonal work on cotton fields, and through this, to quickly raise funds for group activities.

15. Unlike petty commerce, which, especially for women, is gradually entered into and expanded over time, girls begin to work on their parents' fields from an early age and upon marriage are obligated to transfer their principal labor to their husbands fields. Only after that work is accomplished are they able to work on personal fields, which are often divided between vegetables for family consumption and crops for personal revenue. The seasonality of crop harvests makes the resulting competition for local labor especially difficult for women to negotiate and considerably limits their abilities to expand their entrepreneurial aspirations in the shape of personal fields. Women get assistance in their personal fields mostly from their children and occasionally from aid raised between women or from young people. Their ability to pay back is constrained by lack of cash and their own limited amount of labor capital.

*Sexual division of labor, products and revenue.*

16. Within the agricultural growing cycle, there is a sexual division of labor: men clear the land and perform the heavy tasks, while women seed, weed and help in harvests. Some products, such as onions or peanuts, are primarily women's domains while others, such as cotton or palm trees, are primarily viewed as men's crops. There is also a sexual division of labor in the transformation of agricultural products that is the base for almost all petty commerce in rural areas. For example, women are responsible for the transformation of palm sap into wine or karite nuts into karite butter. These activities often involve purchasing the raw products from their husbands or other men in the community, performing the labor to transform the product, and then transporting the finished product to market to sell. Two issues are most important in determining women's abilities to expand along these lines. First is the time constraint. Women can only engage in transformation activities after their other obligations for labor in husband's fields and personal fields have been fulfilled. Second, the ability to participate in income generating activities such as transformation of raw materials depends very much on where a woman is in her own life cycle. Women with young children normally do not have much time to participate and do not benefit from the extra income. Lack of storage facilities and lack of women's control over such assets are also important impediments to their abilities to expand. Women must ask men for the right to use existing structures or for the land to make new storage structures.

*Cash crops.*

17. The expansion of cash crops such as cotton has important and often unexpected gender implications locally. Male ownership of these fields means that there is male control of the resulting revenue. Women are obligated to work on their husband's fields and the labor intensive work of cotton harvests can coincide with times for other agricultural tasks more closely associated with household needs. This occupational conflict can sometimes make it more difficult for women to provide the nutrition base for their families (UNICEF, 1998). There is evidence that some individual women and women's groups are beginning to enter into cotton farming, but their expansion is limited by: 1) sure tenure of the fields, ; 2) money to pay for labor; 3) money to pay for transportation and 4) a perception that fertilizers and other chemicals can be particularly dangerous for women<sup>10</sup>.

The rapid influx of money into the local economy can have significant reverberations on local social relations. The AGEFIB gender impact study found evidence of increasing bride-prices in new cotton areas in the north. The result is that women are often left in the position of being more "indebted" to their husbands and therefore having less personal autonomy. If a

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<sup>10</sup> Noted in village interviews for the AGEFIB gender study.

woman wants to divorce, her parents must repay the husband fully. In addition, the husband may also make her work harder on the cotton crops to raise funds for his next wife.

### **Private Sector**

18. Ninety percent of Beninese women are active in commerce (Politique Nationale de Promotion de la Femme, 2001:13). By far the majority is found in the informal sector, engaging in petty commerce of vegetables and processed foods. Textile trade is also a very large and lucrative occupation for women and one that requires significant capital to expand. Very few women are working as professionals in the public or private sphere. There are several impediments to women's entrance into the private sector.

#### *Credit access.*

19. Entrance into commercial life for a woman varies depending on local traditions. Most often, a young girl helps her mother in the transformation of products to be sold in the market place or reselling and redistributing goods between markets. Older women kin such as a grandmother or mother will eventually loan or give a small sum to a teenage girl for her to begin a business. Growth of her activity depends on the profits from this initial small investment. Since profits are also used to pay for healthcare and education expenses for children, young women are often not able to increase their businesses significantly.

Traditionally, women have used *tontines* to help raise capital over time to increase and change their activities. The long cycle for return and seasonality of *tontine* adhesion are often limitations to their usefulness. Women's access to formal credit institutions has been difficult, in large part because they lack the assets to provide collateral and their activities are generally deemed too small to justify the necessary administrative work. The growth of microcredit programs throughout the country over the past five years will, no doubt, significantly change the opportunities for women. However, the seasonality of crops, limitations in mobility, and lack of access to and control of basic resources such as land and transportation still significantly limit the horizons for expansion.

#### *Education.*

20. Clearly, lack of access to education beyond primary school is a major limitation for women's entrance into the private sector. Moreover, lack of basic literacy is also an impediment to the microcredit programs as they are currently implemented.

#### *Life Cycle.*

21. While entrance into commercial activities may begin very early in life, it is normally interrupted during the childbearing years when women's household tasks become overwhelming. It is important to emphasize that entrance into economic life is a slow process,

with minimal profits that must be divided between assisting the household and investing in the activity.

#### Implications for Benin's Poverty Reduction and Development Strategies

- ❑ Gender is an **economic** issue in Benin, not just a social (or social sector) issue. It affects economic performance and growth.
- ❑ Men and women both play important roles in the Benin economy, and these roles are relevant for poverty reduction, and for policies aimed at rapid, sustainable, and better-distributed growth.
- ❑ The uneven distribution of men and women across the economy means that different sectoral investment and growth patterns make different demands on men's and women's labor, and have different implications for the division of labor and the distribution of income.
- ❑ Improving labor productivity and access to and control of economically productive assets, especially for females, is important for growth, agricultural performance, food security, household welfare, and poverty reduction.
- ❑ Documenting men's and women's economic roles, including in the informal sector about which little is known, is an important building block for country work so as to develop gender-inclusive and pro-poor growth strategies.

#### **Interdependence of Household and Market Economies: Minimizing Trade-Offs & Building on Externalities**

22. The different structural roles of men and women in the market economy (notably agriculture and the informal sector) are coupled with their equally different—and unbalanced—roles in the household economy. Female time loads overall are estimated as being approximately 10-12 percent higher than those of males.<sup>11</sup> Typically, women spend 32.25 hours/week (to men's 6.20hours/week) on housework.

23. In 1998 an extensive time-allocation study was carried out in Benin under the auspices of the UNDP. Significant differences in time use were found between men and women. Annex 5 is a breakdown of weekly work hours for urban and rural women and men in Benin created from the full data set. From the data, it is clear that the differences are most pronounced in the time devoted to domestic and social activities and movement. Women's physical and economic lives are centered on the household, while men's social interactions and mobility bring them into a much larger sphere of engagement. These are important considerations as one of the persistent comments in the AGEFIB gender study was that since women lack mobility and social connections beyond their domestic sphere, they are limited in their relations with middle-men in the marketplace. Without sure buyers that they can trust, the risks of expansion resulting from their involvement in microcredit projects are borne almost entirely by the producers.

Rural women have a very heavy burden of household tasks. Fetching water (8 hours/week), collecting fuelwood (4 hours/week), and pounding grain involve arduous physical work and must be performed daily, in addition to agricultural and other productive work (see

<sup>11</sup> Time Allocation Study, 1998. UNDP.

Annex 6). In 1997, 89 percent of total energy needs in Benin were met through traditional energy sources (WDI 2001). Because of the distances involved in fetching wood and water, especially in the northern regions, the time required is high. Processing of agricultural products is also very labor- and time-intensive, in the absence of basic domestic technology. Using local mill facilities to grind household grains is a cost that is generally assumed by women.

## **Transport**

24. The transportation sector is dominated almost entirely by men. Few women own means of transportation or are involved in working for transport services. The Tableau de Bord, 1999 states that only 0.1% of urban women are involved (and 0% of rural women) in transport as an occupation. In 1997, women held 9.69% of the category A drivers licenses and 10.10% of the category B (Tableau du Bord, 1998:13). Access to transport is a key issue for women and several factors are important for assessing gender in the transport sector.

### *Cultural constraints.*

25. Throughout Benin, there is a strong reluctance to grant women mobility to travel away from their communities. Despite their important economic roles as market women, abilities to expand are often limited by the cultural impediments to the movement necessary to conduct extensive commerce or participate in other activities such as training.

### *Division of transport tasks.*

26. Within the rural sector particularly, women spend a great deal of time transporting water, wood, traveling to their fields, and taking produce to local markets. Access to local rotating markets is most often accomplished on foot. With a lack of storage facilities, travel to markets increases during times of harvests. In addition, renting important equipment such as tractors and carts to help with harvests is something that most women cannot afford – even those involved in cash crops such as cotton. Lack of access to such facilities also inhibits their opportunities for expansion. Rural women with extensive market ties normally use the local *taxi brousse* services to move their produce. This is probably more expensive than transporting by truck, but is the only option as they lack the volume of produce to fill a truck.

### *Urban transport issues*

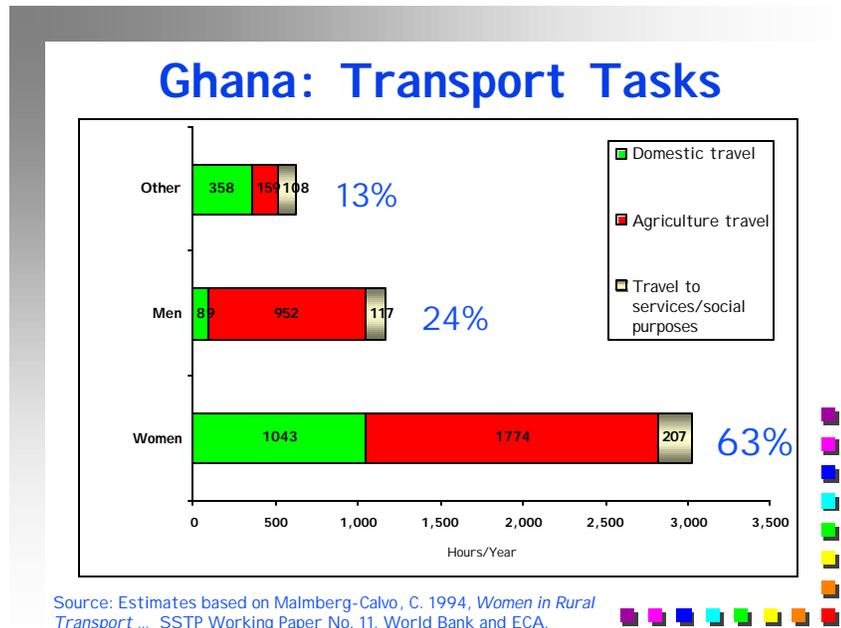
27. In urban areas, both men and women spend more time away from the home than their rural counterparts (Tableau de Bord, 1999, Tableau E 3-4). For urban and rural inhabitants, the cost of transport is a major factor in determining its use. Because men and women keep their money separate, cost may be one of the factors most limiting women's use. In Cotonou, there are almost no facilities for mass transit. Men run the ever present and increasingly polluting moped mass transport that does exist. While women in urban centers do ride mopeds, and their rural counterparts can occasionally be seen on bicycles, their numbers are not great in

comparison to men's access. During the AGEFIB gender study, participants noted the difficulty in transporting sick children and family members to hospitals because of a lack of taxis and buses.

Figure 1: Gender and Transport Tasks in Ghana

28. Data from other countries confirm the significance of women's transport tasks. Village transport surveys in Ghana, for example, show that women spend nearly three times as much time in transport activities as men, and they transport about four times as much in volume (Figure 1).<sup>12</sup>

Women's transport needs are typically more complex than those of men; adequately responding to these needs could increase women's contribution to economic productivity and qualitatively improve household welfare. Women's access to transport also determines their utilization of existing health and other services, and particularly affects the ability of girl children to attend school.



29. **Access to Water and Sanitation.** While there have been attempts by the Government of Benin to improve access to safe water throughout the country, rural-urban disaggregation in the World Resources Report indicates that 66% of urban and 46% of rural households have access to potable water. Forty-two percent of urban and 31% of the rural population have access to sanitation or solid waste disposal facilities. The majority of rural households rely on natural sources (unprotected wells, lakes or rivers) for their supply. Because of the historical scarcity of water in the north, those rural areas have benefited most from development efforts to create wells and pumps. Conversely, communities in the south living adjacent to lagoons or waterways typically use these existing surface sources for their water needs. These sources can

<sup>12</sup> See, in particular, Christina Malmberg-Calvo, 1994. *Case Study on the Role of Women in Rural Transport: Access of Women to Domestic Facilities*, Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Program, Working Paper No. 11, World Bank and Economic Commission for Africa; and Barwell, Ian. 1996. *Transport and the Village: Findings from African Village-Level Travel and Transport Surveys and Related Studies*, World Bank Discussion Paper No. 344, Africa Region Series, Washington, D.C.

be contaminated and those close to the rapidly expanding urban areas are increasingly so. Water associated diseases such as malaria, diarrhea and schistosomiasis are endemic and account for high levels of illness and mortality. In terms of poverty quintiles, the proportion of households with access to potable water increases as poverty decreases, the gap being greater in urban localities. Households in rural areas are most likely to spend more time fetching water.

30. The burden of time related to domestic chores lies squarely on women's shoulders and especially rural women's. The time allocation study notes that rural women spend 3:15 hours on domestic activities while their urban counterparts spend 2:50 hours. Carrying water takes rural women 1:15 hours/day while urban women spend a mere 15 minutes<sup>13</sup>. This discrepancy is no doubt due to time spent on food processing and transformation tasks. The recent participatory evaluation of the PADEAR water project noted that although the installed pumps facilitated water access, the accompanying jump in use also increased the amounts of time it took women to gather water for their households. It also significantly noted that it was generally women's household budgets that were tapped to pay for the new costs of access to this resource (5-15 FCFA/25-30 liters).

#### Implications for Benin's Poverty Reduction and Development Strategies

- Because the household and market economies co-exist and are interdependent, **trade-offs** and **linkages** among household and market tasks may be very significant for poor asset- and labor-constrained individuals and households. Compared with men, women operate under **severe time constraints**, which limit their options and flexibility to respond to changing economic opportunities. Even if there were no other gender biases in household consumption, "women work longer hours than men to attain the same level of material well being" (Lipton/Ravallion).
- Labor constraints are significant, gender-specific, highly seasonal, and are particularly problematic for, but not limited to, female-headed households (FHH).
- Build on positive externalities: a key challenge for public policy aimed at poverty reduction is to undertake concurrent investment across a range of sectors specifically aimed at minimizing these trade-offs and raising labor productivity (including "labor-saving" programs) across both the market and household economies, e.g., give much higher **priority** to investments in the household economy: water supply and sanitation, labor-saving technology, especially for food processing tasks, intermediate means of transport, domestic energy, etc.
- Assess the nature, extent and relevance of these trade-offs/externalities in Benin through analytical work aimed at filling knowledge gaps in this area (transport, energy, agriculture & rural development, human capital development).

### **Persistent Gender-Based Asset Inequality: Linking Gender and Poverty Reduction**

<sup>13</sup> Charmes, J. 1998 : 15. L'Emploi du Temps des Femmes au Benin. Chapitre 5 du Rapport National sur le Développement Humain, UNDP .

31. **Poverty diagnostic.** The 1994 Poverty Assessment identified Female Headed Households (including some women in polygamous households as discussed earlier in this paper) abandoned old people, “placed” children and street children, fishermen’s families, farmer households with inadequate means, refugees and their host families, retrenched civil servants and unemployed graduates as the particularly vulnerable groups within the country. Within each of these groups, poverty may be experienced differently and gender is an important indicator. Women are often providing the final safety-net by engaging in extra economic activities for their families and in the case of placed children, young girls may be most at risk for being sent away and potentially abused. Shifts in labor relations within the household, as in the case of cash cropping, or refugee/migrant conditions are important changes that need to be followed and analyzed.

32. Evidence in Benin points to persistent gender disparities in access to and control of a wide range of assets: human capital assets (education and health); directly productive assets (labor, land, and financial services); and social capital assets (e.g., gender differences in participation in decision making roles at various levels in the political process, and in legal rights and protections).

## **Education**

33. Gender disaggregated data illustrate that despite initiatives to eliminate school fees for girls in rural areas, important gender disparities still exist (GER: boys 94.65, girls 66.29%, Tableau du Bord, 1998, Politique Nationale de Promotion de la Femme, 2001:11). As the numbers of girls going to primary school has increased more in rural areas, there are also important regional differences depending on the department: Atacora showing the lowest overall for numbers of children (48.28%) with 32.62% of girls and Mono having the lowest percentage of girls overall (32%) (Tableau du Bord, 1998:21). Access to secondary school and beyond remains feeble (33.18%) with girls being less than one third of the total. At the University of Benin, Abomey-Calavi, girls are 20% of the registered students. Literacy of men is greater than women with totals respectively of 38.7% and 19.1% (ibid.).

34. Parents are reluctant to send their children, and especially daughters, to school for a number of reasons: they are an important part of the economic base of the household, providing childcare when their mothers are at market, working in fields and performing many of the household tasks. Even for girls who do go to school, they are also more likely to have to participate in economic activities at the market and be responsible for their domestic tasks on top of their obligations for school. Boys, have fewer obligations and more time for leisure, social events or studying (Tableau du Bord, 1999). Lack of access to secondary schools means that girls must travel away from home or live with relatives in a town with such facilities. Both of these are often locally viewed as putting them at risk for unwanted pregnancies and potential abuse from teachers and others in the community. This perception of risk is an important issue for HIV/AIDS projects wanting to include a gender perspective in their programming. One end

result of this lack of parity in access and use of education facilities is that very few women end up in the teaching profession and they are therefore unable to provide role models and leadership for young girls

35. Failure to achieve basic literacy and education inhibits many other kinds of projects designed to alleviate poverty. For example: Lacking the ability to read and write, many women's credit groups remain dependent upon help from men in the villages to maintain their books. Lack of education means lack of opportunity and the chance to change one's life. At this point, with few girls continuing through secondary school and college, it will be difficult for a future generation of women to be assured of attaining leadership roles. Unequal education access, by region and by gender, may also contribute to an increasingly stratified society in the future.

## **Health**

36. Since the early 1980's the number of births per woman has fallen from 7.1 in 1981-86 to 6.3 in 1991-1996 (UNICEF, 1998:70). In 1997 total maternal mortality remained very high – 498 deaths/100,000, as did infant mortality at 94 deaths/1,000 (Politique Nationale de Promotion de la Femme:12). The average age for a first pregnancy is 20. Access to and use of contraception remains low. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) does take place and between 5-50% of women undergo this procedure (AFROL). There is no explanation provided for the wide range in this figure but it may be due to ethnic differences and points to a lack of reliable data. In some areas, the procedure is done by specialized men and is carried out at specific times of the year. There have been numerous programs put in place to facilitate family planning and rehabilitate hospitals. However, the decision is often not up to women on how and when they will have access to healthcare and consultations. There is great variation in use of healthcare providers and facilities among the different departments.

37. The decision to obtain healthcare at a clinic or hospital is most often made by a man. He is the one who has the income to pay for medicine and services. Women are responsible for being the caregivers for the ill. When this entails transferring a family member to a hospital, it is primarily women who will go there, stay, and take care of the patient. This requires them to leave normal roles behind and stresses the family finances.

38. Women's income can provide an important safety net for healthcare access within the family. In interviews for the gender impact study of AGEFIB credit programs, it was found that one of the most important perceived benefits of the income was the ability to pay for emergency healthcare for their children without having to wait for their husbands to give them money. Women were able to confront emergencies and contemplate some preventive healthcare as well. In addition, many of the credit cooperatives have begun raising further funds among themselves to provide emergency healthcare for group members and their children. Significantly missing from their programs is coverage for their husbands.

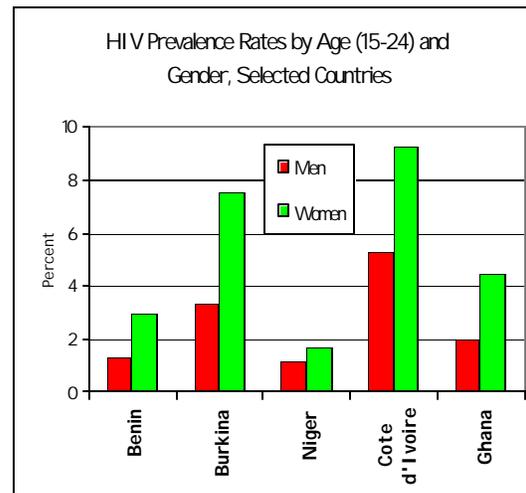
## HIV/AIDS

39. The estimated number of adults and children living with HIV infection is 70,000 with women (15-49) being 37,000 and children (0-15) 3,000 (UNAIDS, 2001). While the adult rate is listed at 2.45%, if this grows, it is clear that women will be the primary caregivers within the home and clinic settings. In 1996, the male:female ratio of infections was 2:1, but it has now become 1:1.

40. Of particular concern are the different HIV prevalence rates for young men and women aged 15-24 in Benin. These are, respectively, an estimated 1.29 and 2.91 percent (*Figure 2*).<sup>14</sup>

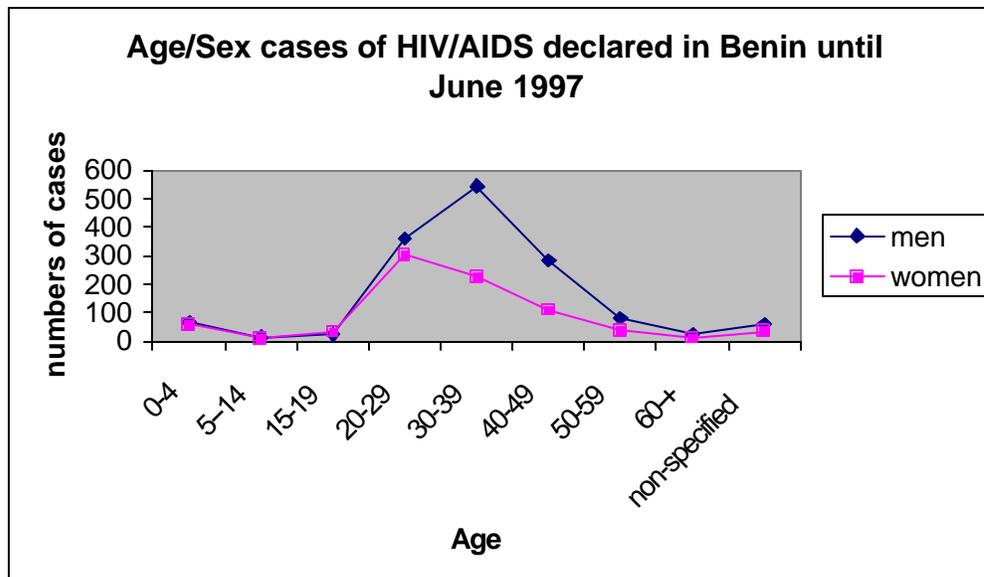
These suggest that it is essential for Benin to address the core gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS, namely that (i) **risk factors and vulnerability** are substantially different for men and for women, as is most evident in the significant age- and sex-differentiated **HIV prevalence rates** and in reported AIDS cases (*Table 2*)—which has implications for strategies to contain overall prevalence in Benin and for how and to whom AIDS prevention activities are directed; (ii) the **impact** of HIV/AIDS differs along gender lines—which has implications for care, treatment, and coping mechanisms, including addressing the needs of AIDS orphans; and (iii) tackling the AIDS pandemic is fundamentally about **behavior change**—which essentially means effecting a “**transformation**” of gender roles and relations.<sup>15</sup>

Figure 2



<sup>14</sup> UNAIDS data on HIV/AIDS as of June 2000. Available at [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org) (statistical tables).

<sup>15</sup> See Muntimba and Blackden, *The Gender Dimensions of HIV/AIDS in Africa: Putting Gender on the MAP*, Technical Note. December 2001.



(Tableau du Bord, 1998:annexe)

Table 2 : Benin – Key HIV/AIDS Variables

Variable	Female	Male
People Living with HIV/AIDS end 1999 (Adults and Children)	70,000	
Adults Living with HIV/AIDS (Age 15-49)	37,000	30,000
Adult Prevalence Rate (%)	2.45	
Orphans (Cumulative)	22,000	
Estimated AIDS Deaths, end 1999 (Cumulative)	5,600	
HIV Prevalence Rate in Young People (15-24), High Estimate (%)	2.91	1.29
Prevalence Rate of Women in Urban Ante-Natal Clinics (1998) (%)	3.7	
Female Sex Workers/Male STD Patients (Major Urban Areas) (%)	53.5	2.8

Source: UNAIDS Table of Country-Specific HIV/AIDS estimates and data, June 2000, accessible at [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org).

41. Perhaps two gender issues will be most apparent in the issue of HIV infection. First, as stated above, women are the primary care givers, both within the home and in the hospital or clinic. Increased infections, and the resulting impacts in addressing treatment, coping mechanisms and the needs of AIDS orphans, will mean increased time added to their already overwhelming obligations. Second, with reference to AIDS education, HIV is often viewed locally as a shameful disease. It is perceived to be “caught” through “illicit sex”, and for that reason, many women feel that they are not at risk. Despite being in polygamous relationships, they see much of the AIDS advertising for individuals based on the slogan “d’etre fidele” as something that they already do. Therefore, they do not assume that they are at risk for infection (from interviews with AGEFIB animateurs responsible for AIDS training). Women who have had no schooling are least likely to have information about contraception (Tableau du Bord, 1999) and even though knowledge is high among the population, use of these methods is still low.

<b>Laws, Institutions, and Norms: Toward Social Inclusion</b>
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**Legal Issues** (mainly from Morris-Hughes and Tornieri 1998)

42. Benin, as many countries, has two parallel and overlapping judicial codes: one based on western, mainly French, systems and one based on traditional systems. These codes often disagree, particularly in areas related to gender. Under the western system, women's rights are reasonably protected and Benin is a signatory to most of the major international conventions on women's rights.<sup>16</sup> Benin became a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1992, and signed the Convention on the Consent of Women into Marriage, the Minimum Age of Marriage and Registration of Marriage in 1965. In practice, women's legal rights and protections are more precarious, especially with respect to access to and control of land, though there are important regional differences in Benin, where diverse lineage systems operate.<sup>17</sup> Under the traditional code, while there is variation among ethnic groups, women are often treated as minors with most of their rights coming through their relationships with men – fathers, husbands, and brothers.

43. In the official text of the Benin's *Constitution* (1991), the provisions that directly/indirectly affect the societal status of women are comprised within Title III, Rights and Duties of the Individual (art. 7-40). These articles guarantee the basic and fundamental rights of individuals, including the right to education, health, access to property rights and access to the law. They generically cover the protection of individual rights, without specifically referring to the protection of the societal status of women. In Benin, *customary practices* have been 'collected' in the *Coutumier de Dahomey* (1931), which defines the personal, family and societal status of woman. In 1996, the Association of Women Lawyers of Benin (AFJ/B) asked the Constitutional Court to express itself on the constitutionality of the *Coutumier*. In response to this request, the Constitutional Court (decision of the Constitutional Court n. DCC 96-063 dated September 26, 1996) declared that the *Coutumier*, as defined in its preamble, is a mere collection of customs of different Beninese ethnic groups, and it cannot be considered as a binding legal instrument. Even though the provisions of this document are not legally binding, they continue to be followed in Benin. Those provisions stand in appalling contrast to some of the principles and fundamental rights set forth in the Constitution and with the *draft Family Code*. This Code, modeled on codes in other African Muslim countries, was intended to eliminate gender bias in domains such as inheritance rights and child custody, as well as to end

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<sup>16</sup> According to art. 40 of the Constitution, the rights and duties proclaimed and guaranteed by the UN Charter (1945) and its Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted in 1981 by the Organization of African Unity and ratified by Benin on January 20, 1986 shall be an integral part of the Constitution and of Benin's law.

<sup>17</sup> Benin, Toward a Poverty Alleviation Strategy, 1994: The World Bank.

the practice of repudiation, which permits a husband to obtain an immediate divorce with no further responsibility for his wife or children. As a result, most of the provisions of the French Civil Code (1803) related to family and personal law are still applicable in Benin.<sup>18</sup>

44. The extent to which laws (including customary laws) assist or hinder women in escaping the cycles of poverty is hard to prove. However, the law could be an effective and accessible tool in alleviating their depressed economic condition and avoiding institutionalized violence and poverty.<sup>19</sup>

<b>The ‘potential’ impact of gender-responsive legal reform on indicators</b>	
<b>Sectoral issues</b>	
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratification of the draft Family Code, which should include: the definition of legal age of majority, and minimum age for marriage, both provisions being conducive to increase access to education and decrease drop-out rates especially for girls;</li> <li>• Amendment of the Labor Code to provide stronger disincentives to employing children, in violation of the provisions set forth in international binding agreements and in the Constitution, and to adopt more vigilant prosecutions and enforcement mechanisms;</li> <li>• Amendment of the Criminal Code: the provisions criminalizing gender-related violence against girls (especially those of school-going age) are made effective through more aggressive prosecution and enforcement mechanisms.</li> </ul>
Health and reproductive health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratification of the draft Family Code, which should include: the definition of legal age of majority, and minimum age for marriage, both provisions being conducive to increased access to education, decreased drop-out rates especially for girls, and in the longer run, a reduction in maternal mortality rates;</li> <li>• Amendment of the Labor Code to provide stronger disincentives to employing children, in violation of the provisions set forth in international binding agreements and in the Constitution, and to adopt more vigilant prosecutions and enforcement mechanisms;</li> <li>• Amendment of the Criminal Code, i.e. acknowledging the criminal nature of FGM as well as of all gender-related violence against women, through the adoption of more aggressive prosecution and enforcement mechanisms.</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-sectoral issues</b>	
<b>Family Planning and Abortion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeal the existing legislation relating to family planning (Law of 1920, 1939 and art. 317 of the Penal Code) and abortion</li> </ul>
<b>Property Rights and Land Tenure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Constitution of Benin recognizes equal access to property rights for men and women. It is critical that the National Assembly gives effect to the constitutional provisions enacting specific legislation providing in unequivocal terms that: (i) women shall have equal access to property jointly acquired during marriage; and (ii) assets which are jointly acquired during marriage shall be distributed equitably between spouses on the death of a spouse and on the dissolution of the marriage, thus clarifying the situation for the judiciary when it comes to making determinations on property rights. Legal campaigns should be designed to educate women on the complexities of customary laws, especially as they relate to land and family property.</li> </ul>

18 The (French) Civil Code was adopted by *arrêté du Gouverneur (du Sénégal)* dated 8 Vendémiaire XIV and *arrêté (du Sénégal)* dated Nov 5, 1830 extended to Dahomay by a Décret of 26 Jul 1894.

19 Benin, Toward a Poverty Alleviation Strategy, 1994: The World Bank.

Institutional barriers to women's access to legal and judicial services<sup>20</sup> 1965.

45. While laws may exist to ensure, at the formal level, equitable rights to access and control over resources, there is ample evidence to the effect that the law has little practical relevance in the daily lives of many women unless judicial authorities enforce it. Access to the formal legal system is difficult for women who are illiterate and poor and who, in any case, do not know their rights. Legal issues cut across all sectors, hampering women's ability to participate in commerce, agriculture, education and health. It is therefore crucial that judges guarantee the enforcement of gender-sensitive legislation. Their reluctance to make significant encroachments into the relative traditional male and female roles further perpetuate the lack of access to economic and financial resources for women.

46. Two separate factors in Benin have contributed to the continued marginalization of women in the legal system: (i) the *high level of illiteracy* among women, and (ii) their *lack of legal standing in traditional customary law*. Both these factors dissuade women from approaching the legislative or statutory sources of law for protection even where such protection may exist. In instances where women have approached the civil legal system for protection, procedural barriers have also created insurmountable hurdles to having their claims adjudicated. These barriers need to be investigated and addressed.

47. At an **administrative level**, these procedural barriers can include the high cost of filing, a burdensome bureaucracy involved in filing papers with appropriate agencies and offices and bringing a case before the appropriate official. Particularly critical is the difficulty in obtaining counsel for indigent or illiterate women petitioners. Personal prejudices and bias from judges, court clerks or other judicial personnel can also act as an effective barrier to a woman seeking to bring a case to trial. These factors can lengthen the time frames that women face in exercising their legal rights and sometimes act to frustrate the endeavor altogether. Linguistic and legal illiteracy are also important barriers

48. At a **substantive level**, the dual legal system currently in effect in Benin also poses a significant problem for women seeking to invoke their claim under civil law protection. As discussed above, issues involving the family personal rights and real property conflicts are handled through the traditional court. Civil procedure dictates that in instances where a family matter is involved or a property has not been registered or a property title cannot be produced, the magistrate will consult customary law authority as the basis for their legally binding judgment. By doing so, the civil law system promotes the legitimacy of customary law and therefore the continued disenfranchisement of women in the civil law sphere. Moreover, evidentiary procedures available or required for women petitioners, who may not be able to meet such burdens of proof, can work against women attempting to claim a right that does not exist under customary law. The choices that judicial personnel make with respect to which laws apply,

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<sup>20</sup> Morris-Hughes, E.; Tornieri, F., "Review on Gender and Law in Benin", 1998

particularly in instances of conflict between civil and customary law, or the customary laws of one ethnic group with another need to be examined.

49. Available data also indicate that the participation of men and women in public life and institutions, and in decision-making processes, is highly uneven. Women are poorly represented at different levels of Government (*Annex I*). In 1999 there were 5 women deputies out of 83 in the National Assembly. Within the government, 2 ministers out of 19 are women. There are 2 women present on the Constitutional Court. Six women are heads of public enterprises but very few are heads of private enterprises. There are currently 2 women mayors in the country. The 1998 Tableau du Bord notes that there are few women legal representatives. The push for the Family Law legislation has come primarily from a consortium of women lawyers and professionals. Other NGOS's such as the Benin representative of WILDAF (Women in Law and Development) are headed by women lawyers and they are seeking to address issues of violence against women through both legislation and behavior change.

50. Other dimensions of poverty may also merit particular attention: As mentioned throughout this paper there are cultural taboos and limitations on women's mobility and access to resources. Changes in the local economy have had changes in the composition and structure of households and family ties in recent years. Some of these changes, such as increased acreage devoted to cotton have also had repercussions on family – and especially on women and children's – rates of malnutrition (UNICEF, 1998). Gender based violence, such as forced marriage (still occurring in Mono and Atlantique regions), child trafficking, FGM (which varies by region but is especially prevalent in the north), and rape also have important health, as well as economic and political, implications.

#### Implications for Benin's Poverty Reduction and Development Strategies

- Gender-based asset inequality **directly limits growth** and poverty reduction. This point has been made in the 1998 SPA Status Report on Poverty in SSA, in the recent study: *Can Africa Claim the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*, and in the Policy Research Report on *Engendering Development*.
- The treatment of poverty in the PRSP should make explicit that men and women experience poverty differently, and that different aspects of poverty (inequality, vulnerability, isolation, powerlessness) have gender dimensions. Country poverty updates and analysis need to pay greater attention to these gender dimensions of poverty and to filling knowledge and data gaps in this area.
  - Data issues, including the invisibility of much of women's (and less so men's) work limit the understanding and analysis of gender/poverty interactions.
  - The complexity of household composition, structure, and relations limit the usefulness of household-level aggregate poverty analysis. This is further complicated by Benin's diverse lineage systems and cultural differences.
  - One of the key tasks of the PRSP work program would be to strengthen the availability and reliability of relevant sex-disaggregated and gender-relevant data, to provide a more solid foundation for understanding and acting on the gender dimensions of growth and poverty reduction in Benin.
- The strategy should specify how the work on HIV/AIDS will address its complex gender dimensions.
- Gender-based targeting of agricultural support operations (research, extension, technology) to reach the country's predominantly female farmers.
- Pro-active gender inclusion in PRSP (and other) participatory processes to bring out, as and where relevant, gender differentiated constraints, options, incentives, and needs. Support processes through which this inclusive voice is heard and informs the choice of retained priorities.

### III. Country Policy and Strategy

51. In 2001 the Government of Benin adopted a National Policy for the Advancement of Women (Politique Nationale de Promotion de la Femme). This document was the end-product of a series of national and regional consultations, started in 1996 and continued through the validation workshop in November 2000. The Bank provided support to many of the activities through an IDF grant and through sustained technical assistance. The Ministry of Family, Social Protection and Solidarity is in the process of developing and costing a work program based on the strategy for the activities that fall within its purview, but clearly gender must be an important factor for all the ministries and not relegated to just one. The Government strategy also recommends actions to be taken by other Ministries and here the Bank team can play a useful role by encouraging all the Ministries we work with to support the government's gender strategy and by systematically including gender issues in our own work.

#### National Policy for the Advancement of Women: Key Sectoral Recommendations

##### Agriculture:

- ◆ Expanding training on the village-level participatory approach while ensuring that women are better represented on the committees
- ◆ Testing innovative technologies with both women and men

- ◆ Promoting technical innovations that are adapted to women's needs

#### Private Sector:

- ◆ Promoting credit and savings institutions adapted to women's needs
- ◆ Reinforcing training on income-generating activities
- ◆ Supporting research on facilitating marketing of products
- ◆ Identifying constraints in land tenure regulations
- ◆ Defining, adopting and putting in place financial policies adapted to the needs of women

#### Education:

- ◆ Pursuing efforts to ensure free primary education particularly for girls
- ◆ Facilitating access of girls to secondary and tertiary education
- ◆ Promoting girls' access to scholarships
- ◆ Encouraging parents to send girls to school
- ◆ Informing people, particularly teachers, about gender and development
- ◆ Carrying-out studies and evaluations of actions related to education and training
- ◆ Preparing, adopting, informing the public, and making effective laws protecting children, particularly girls, in schools and training centers.
- ◆ Prohibiting economic exploitation of girls and protecting young women by fixing a minimum age for working based on existing laws.
- ◆ Designing and implementing literacy training programs for girls and women.

#### Health:

- ◆ Supporting the construction and proper staffing of health centers
- ◆ Making health services economically accessible
- ◆ Putting in place mutual health insurance programs
- ◆ Promoting and making available generic medicines
- ◆ Increasing women's participation in the management committees for health centers and water points.
- ◆ Promoting the availability of reproductive health information and including men in family planning programs
- ◆ Promoting the reform of legislation on reproductive health
- ◆ Reinforcing nutritional surveillance

#### HIV/AIDS:

- ◆ Reinforcing IEC actions on HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ Supporting the construction and proper staffing of health centers
- ◆ Making health services economically accessible
- ◆ Promoting the availability of reproductive health information and including men in family planning programs

#### Legal:

- ◆ Making known to communities the existing international, national, and regional judicial and social statutes.
- ◆ Ensuring women’s groups receive training in rights and responsibilities
- ◆ Supporting the teaching of legal rights in literacy and post-literacy training
- ◆ Supporting studies and research on women’s legal issues with the goal of preparing or amending relevant laws.
- ◆ Revising and putting in place laws relative to the promotion of women.
- ◆ Translating legal texts into local languages
- ◆ Putting in place institutional mechanisms to improve women’s status
- ◆ Creating a legal context that supports community led initiatives
- ◆ Lobbying for speedy approval of laws on gender currently before parliament

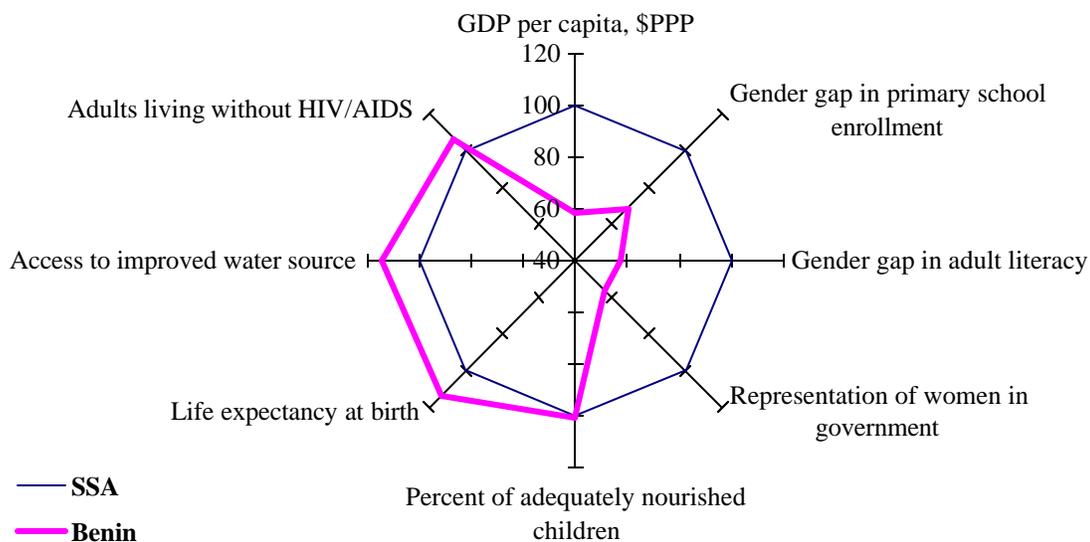
#### IV. A Gender-Inclusive Poverty Reduction and Development Agenda

52. The issues raised in this SCGA suggest the following core priorities for the Benin country assistance and work program. A summary of key suggested actions is in Annex 4. This would be completed following discussions with the country team, as suggested. Indicative examples: *Annex 2* provides an indicative summary of the relevance of gender issues for the country’s poverty reduction and wider development agenda, based on the key elements of the CAS to structure how and where gender can be integrated into the dialogue and agenda. *Annex 3* summarizes core gender issues for the PRSP.

##### Implications for Benin’s Poverty Reduction and Development Strategies

- Assess the quality and relevance of the National Gender Policy as input into the PRSP & CAS.
- On the basis of this assessment, define the ways in which the Bank’s business plan, and that of other partner agencies as appropriate, supports the Government of Benin in implementing this policy.
- Support country institutions as they address the implications of gender inequality for growth and poverty reduction. Support in-country mainstreaming strategies.
- Facilitate in-country dialogue between ministries concerned with “women’s/gender” issues and

## Benin: Summary Gender Profile



Note: This figure indicates that compared to the SSA average, Benin has a much lower economic development. The gender disaggregated indicators (primary school enrollment, adult literacy and government representation) clearly show a larger gender gap than the SSA averages. The number of AIDS/HIV free adults, life expectancy and access to water are higher than the SSA average. The number of adequately nourished children is consistent with the SSA average.

Technical notes: this spider web is constructed to show where the country is in relation to the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) average in the aspects of economic development, health and education. The SSA average was normalized to 100. The indicators were constructed in a way that a higher magnitude of an indicator indicates a higher level of development. To achieve this consistency, we inverted the percent of malnourished children and the HIV/AIDS prevalence to percent of children being adequately nourished and adult living without HIV/AIDS, respectively. If a country line is inside the SSA line, the country's development level is below the SSA average, and vice versa.

Definition of indicators:

- GDP per capita, \$PPP = GDP per capita converted to international dollars using purchasing power parity rates;
- Primary school enrollment gap = the ratio of female to male gross primary school enrollment rate;
- Literacy gap = the ratio of female to male literacy rate for people aged 15+;
- Life expectancy = life expectancy at birth in years;
- Representation of women in parliament = percent of women in parliament;
- Adult living without HIV/AIDS = percent of adults living without HIV/AIDS;
- Access to improved water source = percentage of the total population with reasonable access to an adequate amount of water from an improved source;
- Percent of adequately nourished children = 100 minus the percent of under-five children suffering from moderate & severe underweight, below minus two standard deviations from median weight for age of reference population.

Sources: Africa Country Gender Database (ACGD)

## Benin: Summary Gender Profile

Indicator	Data (early period)				Data (most recent period)				Source <sup>1</sup>
	Female	Year	Male	Year	Female	Year	Male	Year	
<b>HUMAN ASSETS: CAPABILITY</b>									
<b>Health</b>									
Life Expectancy at Birth	45	1970	43	1970	55	1999	51	1999	1
Crude Birth Rate (per 1,000 people)	50 (1970)				40 (1999)				1
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births)	146 (1970)				87 (1999)				1
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births) richest quintile	63 (1996)								2
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births) poorest quintile	119 (1996)								2
Under 5 mortality rate (%)	260 (1972)				145 (1999)				1
Total Fertility Rate (births per woman)	7	1970			6	1999			1
Total Fertility Rate (births per woman) richest quintile	NA								2
Total Fertility Rate (births per woman) poorest quintile	NA								2
Adolescent Fertility Rate (births per 1,000 women aged 15-19)	115	1997			109	1999			1
Maternal Mortality Ratio (per 100,000 live births)	880	1995			500	1999			2
Risk of unintended pregnancy (% of married women aged 15-19)					21	1999			2
Contraceptive Prevalence (% women aged 15-49)	6	1981			16	1996			1
Births Attended by Skilled Health Staff (% of Total)					34	1985			1
<b>Education</b>									
Adult Illiteracy Rate (15+)	94	1970	84	1970	75	2000	43	2000	1
Young adult illiteracy rate (15-25 years old)	90	1970	71	1970	62	2000	22	2000	1
Net Primary Enrollment Rate Rural (% of age group)	NA								-
Net Primary Enrollment Rate Urban (% of age group)	NA								-
Net Primary Enrollment Rate (% of age group)	NA								
Gross primary enrollment rate (% of age group)	20	1970	45	1970	57	1996	98	1996	1
Gross secondary enrollment rate (% of age group)	3	1970	6	1970	11	1997	26	1997	1
Share of Secondary Enrollments net (%)					8	1986	19	1986	1
Share of Tertiary Enrollments gross (%)	0	1970	0	1970	1	1996	5	1996	1
Progression to Grade 5 (% of cohort)	65	1970	67	1970	57	1994	64	1994	1
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>									
Adult HIV Prevalence (% of age group 15-49)					2.54 (1999)				4
Females % of infected adults population					55	1999			4
HIV Prevalence Rate in Young People (15-24)					2.2	1999	0.9	1999	4
Adults (15-49) Living with HIV/AIDS					67,000 (1999)				4
Percent infected in age group 15-19					3.2	1998	1.1	1999	4
Percent infected in age group 20-29					35.6	1998	27.3	1998	4

Indicator	Data (early period)				Data (most recent period)				Source <sup>1</sup>
	Female	Year	Male	Year	Female	Year	Male	Year	
<b>HUMAN ASSETS: CAPABILITY</b>									
Percent infected in age group 30-39					35.1	1998	40.6	1998	4
Total Number of People Currently Infected					70,000 (1998)				4
AIDS Orphans (Cumulative)					22,000 (1998)				4
Women Attending Antenatal Clinics in major urban areas (% infected)					3.7	1998			4
Women Attending Antenatal Clinics outside major urban areas (% infected)					1.5	1998			4
Female Sex Workers / Male STD patients in major urban areas (% infected)	NA				53.5	1996	2.8	1998	4
<b>ECONOMIC ASSETS: OPPORTUNITY</b>									
<b>Labor Force Participation</b>									
Adult economic activity rate	58	1992	90	1992	74	1998	NA		5
Agricultural Labor Force % of total female/male labor force	69	1980	66	1980	65	1990	62	1990	9
Industry Sector Labor Force % of total female/male labor force	4	1980	10	1980	4	1990	12	1990	9
Services Labor Force % of total female/male labor force	27	1980	24	1980	30	1990	27	1990	9
<b>Gender Intensity of Production</b>									
Agriculture labor force (% female-male)	NA		NA						6
Industry labor force (% female-male)	NA		NA						6
Services labor force (% female-male)	NA		NA						6
Informal Sector employment (% female-male)	NA		NA						6
Contribution to GDP (%)									
<b>PHYSICAL ASSETS: SECURITY</b>									
Access to improved drinking water source (%)		14 (1985)			63 (2000)				1
Access to improved drinking water source (%) Rural		9 (1985)			55 (2000)				1
Access to improved drinking water source (%) Urban		45 (1985)			74 (2000)				1
Access to improved sanitation (%)		10 (1985)			23 (2000)				1
Access to improved sanitation (%) Rural		4 (1985)			6 (1995)				1
Access to improved sanitation (%) Urban		45 (1985)			46 (1995)				1
Traditional energy use (%)		86 (1971)			89 (1997)				1
Total Time Allocation (hours/week)	NA								-
Time Allocated to Water/Energy Provision (hrs/day)	NA								-
Transport Tasks (hours/week)	NA								-
Share of earned income (% of total)	NA								-
Land Ownership (%)	NA								-
Access to Financial Services (%)	NA								-
<b>SOCIAL ASSETS: EMPOWERMENT</b>									
Representation in Parliament, 1999 (%)					6	1999			7
Representation in Cabinet, 1999 (%)					NA				7
Representation at Ministerial Level					NA				2

Indicator	Data (early period)				Data (most recent period)				Source <sup>1</sup>
	Female	Year	Male	Year	Female	Year	Male	Year	
<b>HUMAN ASSETS: CAPABILITY</b>									
Country Policy on Gender Equality <sup>2</sup>					1	2000			8
Household Headship (%)					NA				3
Household Headship, Rural (%)					NA				3
Household Headship, Urban (%)					NA				3

<sup>1</sup> Sources: 1 GDF/WDI, 2 WDI 2001, 3 Human Welfare Indicators, 4 UNAIDS, 5 ILO/UNSD, 6 Standardized Data Files, 7 IPU, 8 UNDP-HDR, 9 genderstats

<sup>2</sup> Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (1979): 1=ratified, 2=signed

## Annex 2.

### *Integrating Gender into the Benin CAS*

Policy (CAS) Area	Gender Dimension/Action	Key Performance Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Economic, Social, and Political Development</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Accurately reflect the structural roles of men and women in the market and the household economies.</li> <li>◆ Address gender-based disparities in access to and control of human, economic, and social capital assets, as core elements of the gender dimension of poverty/inequality.</li> <li>◆ Address the policy and operational implications of these different roles and disparities for the PRSP and the work program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Integration of gender roles into the diagnostic of country situation</li> <li>◆ Gender disparities highlighted in the analysis</li> <li>◆ Operational implications articulated.</li> <li>◆ Sex disaggregation of data to the extent possible.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>The Government's Strategy</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Assess government policy and programs with respect to gender equality, including how integrated with poverty reduction strategy.</li> <li>◆ Review institutional arrangements and needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Appraisal of Government policy for adequacy and relevance</li> <li>◆ Coordination with other partners, and discussion of respective contributions to policy implementation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>The Bank Group's Country Strategy</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Reprioritize and redesign policy and investment interventions to address the policy and operational implications identified.</li> <li>◆ Target gender-inclusion in agriculture, HIV/AIDS, and prioritize concurrent investment in the household economy to minimize trade-offs and to improve labor productivity.</li> <li>◆ Address data and knowledge gaps.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Focus on gender-responsive investments and work program.</li> <li>◆ Integration of gender equality objective and support to Government policy</li> <li>◆ Fill gender knowledge gaps</li> <li>◆ Undertake "gender (women's) budget initiative", along the lines of South Africa and Tanzania models.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Prospects for Continued Poverty Reduction</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Poverty reduction strategy informed by gender differences in constraints, options, incentives, and needs.</li> <li>◆ Gender inclusive participatory processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Gendered poverty diagnostic</li> <li>◆ Greater gender inclusion on in participatory processes and in priority setting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Questions for Board Consideration</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Adequacy of government commitment to gender equality and of the Bank's response to integrating gender into CAS and work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Responsiveness of strategy to gender-differentiated priorities</li> </ul>

	program.	◆ Gender inclusive M&E
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### Annex 3

#### *Engendering The Benin PRSP Empowerment Through Reducing the Asset Vulnerability of Poor Men and Women*

Poverty Reduction Objective	Components	Key Gender Issues	Key Priority Actions
<b>Improving the Productive Assets of the Poor “Opportunity”</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Empowerment:</b> Ensure “inclusive” participatory processes in enhancing opportunities.</li> <li>◆ Land</li> <li>◆ Financial Services</li> <li>◆ Labor (paid and unpaid employment; wage discrimination)</li> <li>◆ Infrastructure (water &amp; sanitation, transport (IMT), domestic energy, communication s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ lack of collateral</li> <li>◆ property ownership</li> <li>◆ access to paid labor</li> <li>◆ control over product (income)</li> <li>◆ transport as women’s task</li> <li>◆ access to means of transport</li> <li>◆ domestic tasks and time constraints (trade-offs and externalities)</li> <li>◆ lack of women’s participation in resource allocation decision making</li> <li>◆ low priority given to water and sanitation investments, and to time-saving investments more generally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ proactively enhance access of poor women and men to productive assets such as <b>land, financial services</b>, inputs, information, and other economic services</li> <li>◆ prioritize the food (“non-traded”) sector with focus on food security at the household level in agricultural research and extension, and in agricultural sector programs (greater balance with export promotion/diversification efforts)</li> <li>◆ facilitate the access of poor women and men to production technology</li> <li>◆ gender-inclusive legal and regulatory reform with focus on enhancing women’s land security and property rights</li> <li>◆ <b>prioritize and sustain concurrent investment in the household economy</b> through targeted investments to reduce the <b>time burden of domestic work, to minimize trade-offs, and to build on externalities with the market economy:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ water supply and sanitation</li> <li>◆ labor-saving technology</li> <li>◆ domestic energy</li> <li>◆ intermediate means of transport .</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Strengthening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Empowerment:</b> Ensure “inclusive” participatory processes in improving capabilities.</li> </ul>		

<b>Human Capital Assets of the Poor “Capability”</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Education</li> <li>◆ Health.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ bias in access to social services</li> <li>◆ different health needs and priorities</li> <li>◆ gender stereotyping in curriculum and in socialization</li> <li>◆ opportunity costs, including domestic tasks and time constraints (trade-offs and externalities)</li> <li>◆ socio-cultural constraints (attitudes and beliefs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ prioritize and sustain investment in basic education services focused on increasing enrollment and retention of girls</li> <li>◆ prioritize and sustain investment in basic health services, with focus on accessible and appropriate reproductive health care</li> <li>◆ integrate gender-responsive HIV/AIDS prevention and community-level coping measures in the MAP operation</li> <li>◆ <b>prioritize and sustain concurrent investment in the household economy</b> through targeted investments to reduce the <b>time burden of domestic work, to minimize trade-offs, and to build on externalities with the market economy:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ water supply and sanitation</li> <li>◆ labor-saving technology</li> <li>◆ domestic energy</li> <li>◆ intermediate means of transport .</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Poverty Reduction Objective</b>	<b>Components</b>	<b>Key Gender Issues</b>	<b>Key Priority Actions</b>
<b>Social Capital Assets “Security”</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Empowerment:</b> Ensure “inclusive” participatory processes in strengthening security</li> <li>◆ Household relations (decision-making; changes in structure and composition of households; domestic violence)</li> <li>◆ Conflict</li> <li>◆ Voice</li> <li>◆ Law</li> <li>◆ Isolation</li> <li>◆ Autonomy</li> <li>◆ Insecurity resulting from environmental factors (rainfall, water, soil fertility)</li> <li>◆ Property rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ intra-household inequality</li> <li>◆ domestic tasks and time constraints</li> <li>◆ headship</li> <li>◆ “pooling” and “separate spheres”</li> <li>◆ gender effects of conflict</li> <li>◆ barriers to participation</li> <li>◆ ambiguity in legal status and rights</li> <li>◆ physical and cultural isolation and marginalization</li> <li>◆ impact of environmental degradation and precarious access to water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ political leadership and commitment to gender equality</li> <li>◆ implement “gender budget initiatives” along the lines of the South Africa, Tanzania models</li> <li>◆ capacity-building -- focus on literacy, skills development for community-based organizations</li> <li>◆ gender awareness raising and capacity building of policy makers and implementers</li> <li>◆ gender-inclusive reform of laws and regulatory frameworks, especially as concerns access to and control of financial services and property</li> <li>◆ gender inclusion in land allocation, ownership, use</li> <li>◆ <b>prioritize and sustain concurrent investment in the household economy</b> as indicated above.</li> </ul>
<b>Analytical Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Empowerment:</b> Ensure “inclusive” participatory processes in poverty diagnostics.</li> </ul>		

<p><b>“Completing the Picture”</b>  <b>A gender-inclusive diagnostic of poverty in Benin</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Availability of sex-disaggregated data, and gender analysis of these data</li> <li>◆ “invisibility” of much of women’s work in SNA</li> <li>◆ time budgets as basis for analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ limited analysis and understanding of gender/poverty interactions</li> <li>◆ complexity of household structures and relations</li> <li>◆ limits of household-level analysis in poverty monitoring and trend analysis</li> <li>◆ insufficient understanding of the structural roles of men and women in the market and the household economies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ inclusion of the household economy in the documentation of total productive activity and in analysis of constraints to raising labor productivity and increasing economic participation</li> <li>◆ country-specific time budgets</li> <li>◆ launch “gender budget initiative” to support PER/PIR work</li> <li>◆ gender modules in household surveys and more extensive gender analysis of available household survey/poverty data</li> <li>◆ pro-active gender inclusion in participatory poverty analyses and consultative processes</li> <li>◆ consider undertaking as part of the CAS work program a more expanded SCGA to include a participatory component and a portfolio review, in order to support the effective mainstreaming of gender issues into macro and sectoral operations.</li> </ul>
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## Annex 4

Benin – Strategic Country Gender Assessment  
Priority Policy and Operational Interventions  
(indicative only, matrix should be filled-in by country team)

Priority Sectors/Tasks	Key Gender Issues	Principal Actions	Principal Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>I. POLICY DIALOGUE AND COUNTRY RELATIONS</b>				
◆ CAS	◆	◆ Inclusion of gender across all sectors	◆	◆
◆ PRSP	◆	◆ Inclusion of gender across all sectors	◆	◆
◆ HIPC	◆	◆ Gender indicators in monitoring	◆	◆
◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
<b>II. ECONOMIC AND SECTOR ANALYSIS</b>				
◆ Stocktaking on Decentralization	◆ Women's participation in local decision-making	◆	◆	◆
◆ Civil Service/Institutional Reform	◆	◆	◆	◆
◆ Poverty Note	◆	◆	◆	◆
<b>III. LENDING OPERATIONS</b>				
◆ PRSC : Rural Development	◆ Access to land ◆ Access to credit ◆ Labor/time constraints	◆	◆	◆

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Targeting extension</li> <li>◆ Focus on food crops</li> </ul>			
◆ <b>PRSC : Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Physical/social access constraints</li> <li>◆ HH decision making</li> <li>◆ Cost</li> </ul>	◆	◆	◆
◆ <b>PRSC : Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Physical access constraints</li> <li>◆ Cultural constraints</li> <li>◆ Security issues</li> <li>◆ Pedagogical bias</li> <li>◆ Time constraints</li> </ul>	◆	◆	◆
◆ <b>PRSC : Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Access constraints</li> <li>◆ Time constraints</li> <li>◆ Participation in management</li> </ul>	◆	◆	◆
◆ <b>PRSC : Transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Limited access to transport</li> <li>◆ Few intermediate transport options</li> </ul>	◆	◆	◆
◆ <b>HIV/AIDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Lack of knowledge</li> <li>◆ Inappropriate IEC</li> <li>◆ Access to contraceptives</li> <li>◆ Coercive relationships</li> </ul>	◆	◆	◆
◆ <b>Cotton Sector Reform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Access to inputs/markets</li> </ul>	◆	◆	◆
◆ <b>Social Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Women's participation in communal decision-making</li> <li>◆ Women's roles in providing community contribution</li> <li>◆ Access to credit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Improve gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>◆ Improve participation by women in community decision-making</li> <li>◆ 80% of credit beneficiaries are women</li> </ul>	◆	◆
<b>1st Decentralized City Mgmt</b>	◆	◆	◆	◆
<b>Private Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Lack of credit</li> <li>◆ Lack of collateral</li> <li>◆ Property ownership</li> </ul>	◆	◆	◆
	◆	◆	◆	◆

Priority Sectors/Tasks	Key Gender Issues	Principal Actions	Principal Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>IV. PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT</b>				
♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
♦	♦	♦	♦	♦

**Annex 5: Daily Time Allocation for active Men and Women ages 15-49**

	Women		Men	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
<b>WORK</b>				
Economic Activity				
For the market	11h30m	11h	9h45m	8h35m
Economic activity				
Other than market	0h20m	1h40m	0	0h40m
Carrying water	0h15m	1h15m	0	0h40m
Domestic activities	2h50m	3h15m	0h45m	0h50m
Food preparation	1h25m	1h40m	0	0
<b>Social Activities/</b>				
Free time	1h	1h	2h	1h35m
Visits/ceremonies	0h35m	0h50m	1h	1h50m
Traveling	0h30m	0h45m	0h50m	1h10m
Sleep, rest, meals	11h	11h	11h20m	11h25m
Other	0	15m	5m	15m

