Hi both,

I am a bit unsure of the best way to report back to you today and how to present our answer as to what is likely to be feasible by Tuesday. Angela, I think this might be a good opportunity to do some expectation management with Masarrat, and in light of initial findings maybe ask a few more questions about where our early work should focus?

I’ve taken a quick look at the documents that Angela highlighted and a few more that were easy to find. Here are my very tentative initial conclusions:

1. The WB have done a meta-evaluation on several hundred IC programmes and found that even with all this data, impact on investment, jobs, growth and formation is “not clear”. My inference is that we are not going to find any useful evidence that gender-sensitive IC reform programmes have improved anything as impact-level as women’s income opportunities.
2. In contrast, there is some very strong and well established guidance on how to do gender-sensitive IC reform, ie the WB book Gender Dimensions of ICR. This may be the most practically useful information in this space.
3. There is also good evidence that improvements in women’s legal rights (including but not limited to IC-relevant ones) is associated with a wide range of positive outcomes, both economic and social (from quantitative WB research).
4. A seemingly minor point but it does complicate things: the WB point out that it is quite possible to do IC reform that favours women without using any gender labelling, and in some contexts this might be more politically effective. This implies that some of the most careful and effective gender-sensitive IC reform might avoid self-identifying!
5. Following on from this, it is not at all easy to determine whether an IC project is “gender-sensitive”. The WB adopt a definition but acknowledge that it doesn’t take into account whether any project deliberately placed itself in this category. This causes problems for comparing “gender-sensitive” and “non-gender-sensitive” programming — I don’t see these as meaningful categories.

If we get hold of the draft DCED report quickly then there might be a lot more to add.

From what I’ve seen today, the most useful stuff out there is the WB methodology on how to diagnose, program, monitor and evaluate gender-sensitive ICR. That information might be of most practical value to DFID and is likely to be accepted by IFC.

However, if Masarrat comes back quickly with a response to this then I can concentrate on whatever she thinks is most useful.

On reflection I think I can spare about 2 days or a little more between now and Tuesday.

Sorry for such an odd assortment of ideas, but given the timeline it seemed like the only way!

Angela, I assume you will be discussing this with Masarrat tomorrow? What else do you need from me at this stage?

Best wishes,

Dan