CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES: SUMMARY

1. Was progress made as planned?

The PRSP1 document identified eight issues as cross-cutting: technology, gender, environment, *imidugudu*, HIV/AIDS, employment, capacity-building and inequality. Each sector was supposed to incorporate these in their sector strategy [page 69 PRSP June 2002].

In the 2006 self-evaluation, the Sector Working Groups were asked to consider achievement against the cross-cutting issues. Progress for each cross-cutting issue was derived from sectoral self-evaluations. There was no separate process for evaluating the cross-cutting issues.

Emphasis on which issues should be considered to be cross-cutting has shifted in each Annual Progress Review. The authors of the Independent Evaluation of the PRSP1 identified the “evolution” of the Cross-Cutting Issues [Page 30 Evans et al 2005]:

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<th>PRSP</th>
<th>APR1</th>
<th>APR2</th>
<th>APR3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Environment &amp; Land</td>
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<td>Gender</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>Environment</td>
<td>Imidugudu</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>ICT [Technology]</td>
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<td><em>imidugudu</em></td>
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<td>Inequality</td>
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And, by the time of the 2006 Self-Evaluation, fourteen cross-cutting issues were included: children, youth, women, the elderly, people with disabilities, refugees & returnees, historically marginalised communities, decentralisation, environment, HIV/AIDS, unity and reconciliation, population dynamics and culture.

Evidence of progress against cross-cutting issues has been difficult to obtain from the sectors’ reports. With some notable exceptions, many of the self-evaluations addressed cross-cutting issues by:

a) being very selective about which cross-cutting issue they claimed were relevant to their sector
b) providing anecdotes of what, in theory, the impact might have been – if it had been measured
c) Saying that the cross-cutting issues are important and must be addressed next time round.

The exceptions are noteworthy. There are good examples of planning for gender throughout the Education self-evaluation. The Health sector’s self-evaluation is very aware of the inequalities of service provision and suggests ways to address this. The Justice sector makes an excellent point about social inclusion being part of a justice-for-all policy. The Environment and Land Use evaluation makes valuable comments on strengthening women’s land rights and on strengthening unity and reconciliation through management of land disputes.

But, overall, there is a disappointing lack of data and analysis of progress against cross-cutting issues in the PRSP from the sector self-evaluations. There are few firm conclusions as a result.

2. Analysis of Performance

Why were the cross-cutting issues so poorly represented in the PRSP self-evaluations?

There is a lack of evidence of progress against the cross-cutting issues. The particular concerns are the absence of objectives, the weaknesses of data and monitoring and the lack of empirical budget...
evidence. Some of the cross-cutting issues have been additionally handicapped by the lack of “champions”. Some cross-cutting issues have lacked a strong institutional basis in government and there has been an absence of advocates within the sectors. At the end of the PRSP1 process, it is difficult to identify where the ultimate responsibility for ensuring progress against the PRSP1’s cross-cutting issues lies within Government.

Six reasons for the lack of evidence of progress were identified:

1. Sector strategies did not incorporate the cross-cutting objectives. [This can be seen in the Justice, Infrastructure and Private Sector Strategies, for example]

2. Many sectors suffered from conflicts in setting priorities. For example, the Health sector talks about four competing sources of priorities— the MDGs; those given by international treaties / donors; the latest thinking of the Cabinet and the views of the health service users (which, they claim, are rarely taken into account at the national level).

3. The monitoring systems are very underdeveloped. Where monitoring does exist, data capture systems do not always include cross-cutting issues. Many self-evaluations have responded by saying that they can report nothing of the impact of cross-cutting issues.

4. Several sectors were very late in setting their sector strategies. This has resulted in poor delivery and lack of alignment. [The sectors that had no, or late, strategic plans included – Decentralisation & Governance / delivery, Social Protection, Agriculture, Lands and Environment].

5. Cross-government co-ordination has been a recurring problem. Cross-government co-ordination is essential to deliver against the cross-cutting issues and this is particularly the concern for HIV/AIDS and Environmental issues. The constraints to successful strategy implementation caused by “sector silos” are demonstrated in the Land and Environment, Agriculture and the Macro-Economic self-evaluations.

6. The Public Financial Management system has not been sufficiently effective. There are inadequate links between the MTEF and the sector strategic objectives. For the cross-cutting issues there is an absence of budget data at all levels and the evidence does not exist to show how the national budget has been allocated against cross-cutting issues.

3. Recommendations - What can be done through the EDPRS?

The specific recommendations for the cross-cutting issues in the EDPRS are:

1. Prioritise on the cross-cutting issues by:
   a) Identifying a small number of issues critical to the delivery of Vision 2020 and the MDGs [Gender, Social Inclusion, HIV/AIDS and Environment].
   b) Removing all issues concerned with delivery – to be dealt with in a different manner [decentralisation, capacity-building, budgeting, monitoring & evaluation, public financial management, accountability].

2. Provide a “compliance framework” for the four priority cross-cutting issues which includes establishing a baseline of minimum action and a way of checking and monitoring the targets. This should be applied by every sector and incorporated into the Annual Progress Reviews.

3. Ensure that there is expert advice available to assist the sectors understand what is required of them in the cross-cutting issues and advise how the sectors will manage the process over the next five
years.

4. Ensuring that the sectors plan their activities with reference to the high level national poverty and growth objectives. The Sectors will require an understanding of how to target regional differences so that marginalised social groups are included in policy and service delivery targets.

5. Ensure that there are Government-appointed “champions” for each of the four cross-cutting issues. These Government “champions” need to understand their role in monitoring processes and effective follow-up. MINECOFIN should ultimately be held responsible for ensuring that the institutional framework is delivering annual progress reporting against the cross-cutting issues and that it is possible to track budget allocations to the four cross-cutting issues.