Development cooperation, women participation: integration of gender issues

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OBJECTIVE: to provide financial aid and technical expertise to support the integration of gender issues in all Community policies and measures in developing countries. SUBSTANCE: the actions to be taken under the Regulation will be carried out so as to complement other development cooperation instruments. -Definition: 'gender' means the different and interrelated roles, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men relative to development, which are specific to each culture and society. -Objectives of activities: 1) to support the complete and effective integration (mainstreaming) of gender problems in development cooperation strategies, programmes and projects, 2) to facilitate well targeted, strategic and large-scale initiatives to reduce inequalities between men and women in developing countries, 3) to promote sensitization to gender issues and build up relevant capacities in developing countries; -Activities eligible under the general objectives: .provision of technical advice and support on the integration of gender issues in Community development measures, .research and studies aimed at including gender implications in analyses, policies and country and sector strategies, .schemes to build up the institutional and operational capacities of developing countries on gender issues at national, regional and local level, .supporting the collection and dissemination of key data broken down by sex, .development of methodologies, guidelines, manuals, etc. to improve the integration of gender issues in development activities, .thematic monitoring and evaluations, .training and sensitization of key decision-makers, .support to the formulation, follow-up and monitoring of national plans in developing countries designed to implement the Platform for Action of the Beijing Conference, . technical assistance to developing countries in measuring and valuing unpaid work for inclusion in GNP or for reflection in United Nations parallel satellite accounts (SNA,1993), . actions within the framework of coordination with Member States on integrating gender issues in development cooperation. Particular attention will be devoted to emerging areas, especially in connection with emergency operations and crisis prevention. -Aid recipients and cooperation partners: public authorities and government agencies, decentralized departments, regional bodies, universities and research centres, traditional and local communities, trade unions, cooperatives, and NGOs representing local people, particularly women; -Eligible expenditure: Community financing may cover investment (except purchase of real estate) and recurring expenditure (administrative, maintenance and operating expenditure). The instruments to be employed in the course of the activities are studies, technical assistance, education, training or other services, supplies and works, as well as audits and evaluation and monitoring missions. Operating costs may be covered only during the start-up phase of projects. Cofinancing with Member States and organizations is keenly sought, according to the nature of the operation concerned and the means of the partners concerned. -Form of aid: grants. -Profile of Community-aided projects: measures will be taken to ensure the Community character of projects. -Coherence and complementarity: coordination measures with the Commission are planned, in order to ensure that the measures carried out between all the partners, including Member States, are effective (an information exchange and coordination system is to be established at the place where measures are to be carried out). Coordination will also be ensured with the work of other international organizations active in this field (particularly the United Nations). -Decision-making procedure: the Commission is to manage and implement operations covered by the Regulation. It will be assisted by the geographically-determined committee depending on the country concerned (ALA, MED, EDF), on an advisory basis. The Commission is required to seek the opinion of the regional committee responsible, before taking any decision concerning a project costing more than ECU 2 m. Decisions on projects costing less, and additional commitments, will be taken without consulting the committee. Participation in invitations to tender and the award of contracts will be open to the recipient countries and the Member States, as well other developing countries (or possibly, in exceptional cases, other countries, but only in the case of supply contracts). In every case, efforts must be made to ensure that projects are viable and sustainable. Clear information must be provided concerning the objectives of projects and their potential for success. -

Information: the Commission is to submit an annual report to the European Parliament and the Council summarising and evaluating the operations financed during the year (list of projects, stating names of partners, any contracts concluded, external evaluations, etc.). Once each year an exchange of views will take place between the Commission and the various committees concerned on the subject of the general outlines of the operations to be carried out in the year ahead. A guide to funding is also published by the Commission indicating the main guidelines and criteria for project selection. -Evaluation: the Commission will regularly evaluate the operations implemented to check whether the objectives of the Regulation have been attained. These evaluations are to be forwarded to the various committees and to those Member States which wish to receive them.