
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Extensive debates in the development area continue on the intent, nature, and substance of the terms “gender and development/gender mainstreaming,” “poverty reduction,” and “governance.” Their interrelation, particularly as they apply to women, provides the theoretical justification for the approach of the project, and this literature review formed the basis for the design of its components.

There is no simple definition of development nor is there a clear-cut set of expected outcomes of its processes. The term “development” is variously defined as guided social change, as relating knowledge and power, or as social and economic change over time. This report incorporates elements of each of these definitions. As the project illustrates, the creation and implementation of any project is never a linear process but varies by context and circumstance in each participating country and is influenced as well by the individual reactions and responses of the various participants.

Gender and Development/Gender Mainstreaming

Gender and Development (GAD) and gender mainstreaming are evolutions of the women in development (WID) programs of the 1970s. WID approaches responded to the realization that early development efforts were gender blind and hence male oriented.² Third world women were often portrayed as generally poor, illiterate, and ignorant. Their unequal economic and social status, low literacy levels, poor health, high maternal mortality and disadvantages under the law stemmed from their lack of participation in development. Boserup³ first clarified this position and advocated incorporating women into development projects, particularly into those that would provide them with economic independence and enhanced standing in their families and communities. This was vigorously supported by many other academics and feminists, and major bilateral and multilateral donors added women’s programs to their portfolios and promoted development policies that called for the inclusion of women. While women made gains in health (especially family planning), in literacy, and in income earning, much was left undone. It rapidly became clear that simply adding women to development was a flawed approach.

Female academics and activists from the South and North joined with the female staff of major donor institutions to assess both the problems and the outcomes of WID approaches and to call for new directions in addressing women’s issues. Among the problems identified with WID approaches were the following.

- Relegating third world women to a homogenous category of passive, backward victims denied their extensive diversity⁴ and robbed them of agency and voice.⁵

² Parpart, Jane L., Shirin M. Rai, Kathleen Staudt. 2002. *Rethinking Empowerment. Gender and Development in a Global/local World*. London and New York: Routledge.

³ Boserup, Ester. 1970. *Women’s Roles in Economic Development*. London: George Allen and Unwin.

⁴ Rai, Shirin M. 2002. *Gender and the Political Economy of Development: From Nationalism to Globalization*. Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press.

⁵ Pearson, Ruth, Anne Whitehead, and Kate Young. 1984. “Introduction: The Continuing Subordination of Women in the Development Process,” in K. Young, C. Wolkowitz and R. McCullagh (eds) *Of Marriage and the Market: Women’s Subordination Internationally and Its Lessons*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

- The belief that simply extending education and employment opportunities to women would solve their problems was an unexamined, problematic assumption.⁶
- Treating women as “add-ons” in development activities meant they were of secondary importance and hence often received token funding.
- Evidence indicated third world women were often marginalized and disadvantaged by development policies and practices. Largely missing in WID approaches was any clear understanding of women’s subordination. The results of women’s government units to promote their incorporation in national development schemes also appeared largely unsuccessful.⁷

Gender and development programs emphasize the limitations of focusing on women only and stress the necessity of realizing that women’s lives are grounded in social relations with men that set parameters for their actions, beliefs, and outlooks.⁸ Moreover, development policies and practices have definite masculine and feminine attributes that are inherent in public/private distinctions,⁹ in definitions and analyses of households,¹⁰ and in interventions such as credit, technological inputs, and the new managerial approach that drives many development projects.¹¹ Solutions range from those calling for women’s empowerment to challenge patriarchal and political-economic inequalities¹² to calling for gender to be used as a “lens through which to understand the dynamics of social and economic change in societies in transition.”¹³

A number of factors encouraged the shift to GAD-based development, among them (i) criticism of WID approaches, (ii) the introduction and impact of structural adjustment policies (SAPs) on developing countries, and (iii) the move by major multinational and bilateral donors to circumvent state governments in favor of NGOs to implement development projects. One result of the combined effects of these factors was recognition of the importance of women as agents and participants in development.

GAD encourages the incorporation of broader conceptual and practical approaches to donor, NGO, and state development efforts. They moved from primarily woman-centered development projects and welfare definitions of women’s needs to a broader focus on gender relations that generate and perpetuates gender inequalities. GAD also recognizes that men must commit and acquiesce to meeting the strategic as well as practical needs of women.¹⁴ Moreover, GAD approaches accept that gender relations are social, historical, cultural, and religious, and as such they can be altered.¹⁵ The GAD perspective is not without its critics, however. Academics such as Maria Mies write that the use of gender has had the effect of, “...virtually excluding women again from the public discourse.”¹⁶

⁶ Rai. Op. Cit.

⁷ Pearson, Ruth and Cecile Jackson. 1998. “Introduction: Interrogating Development” in Cecile Jackson and Ruth Pearson (eds). 1998. *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender, Analysis, and Policy*. London: Routledge.

⁸ Baden, Sally and Anne Marie Goetz 1998. “Who Needs (Sex) When You Can Have (Gender)? Conflicting Discourses on Gender at Beijing,” in Cecile Jackson and Ruth Pearson (eds). *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender, Analysis and Policy*. London: Routledge.

⁹ Baden and Goetz. Op.cit.

¹⁰ Scott, Catherine V. *Gender and Development: Rethinking Modernization and Dependency Theory*. 1995. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

¹¹ Kandiyoti, Deniz. 1998. “Gender, Power and Contestation” in Cecile Jackson and Ruth Pearson (eds). Op. cit.

¹² Scott. Op. Cit.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Moser, Caroline O.N. 1993. *Gender Planning and Development Theory: Practice and Training*. London: Routledge.

¹⁵ Pearson. Op. Cit.

¹⁶ Mies, Maria. 1994. “Gender’ and Global Capitalism.” In Leslie Sklair ed. *Capitalism and Development*. London and New York: Routledge.

Many feminists argue that gender inequalities must be viewed from a global perspective¹⁷ and that gender relations have to be, "... understood in terms of specific societies and cultures, but also in relation to dynamic interactions between global and local sites."¹⁸ For many, gender remains a significant indicator of the inequalities built into economic processes and institutions and present in the attitudes that men and women bring to economic activity.

By the Beijing Conference in 1995, it was apparent that GAD had become a primary focus in the development initiatives of major multilateral and bilateral development agencies and institutions and that gender mainstreaming had become a central concern in development agendas. As Baden and Goetz indicate:

*Mainstreaming signifies a push towards systematic procedures and mechanisms within organizations, particularly government and public institutions, for explicitly taking account of gender issues at all stages of policy-making and programme design and implementation. It also represents a call for ... the responsibility for gender issues . . . to (extend to) the range of sectoral and technical departments within institutions.*¹⁹

Currently, GAD approaches find strong support in donor institutions like the World Bank and the ADB. Other donors and academics recognize that as women represent the majority of the world's poor, they must be included in strategies to, "...bring the benefits of growth to the poor."²⁰ This realization supports combining policies for economic redistribution and growth as the most effective poverty reduction strategies,²¹ and reinforces the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) emphasis on human development.²² While there is disagreement whether economic efficiency or empowerment approaches are the most beneficial for women, there is strong agreement that offering opportunity without providing capacity building or skill training deprives women of the knowledge and inputs they need to productively contribute to development activities and to challenge the status quo.²³

Poverty Reduction

In the 1970's, development organizations realized that their policies and practices were not reducing the number of the world's poor but that in fact, the numbers were growing. Furthermore, the economic gaps between developed and developing countries and between income groups in developing countries were expanding. In short, the benefits of development were not trickling down. The "dependency theory"²⁴ and efforts like those of Hollis Chenery were attempting to reorient policy to focus on

¹⁷ Peterson, V. Spike and Anne Sisson Runyan. 1999. *Global Gender Issues*. Second Edition. Colorado: Westview Press.

¹⁸ Stearns, Jill. 2003. "Gender Inequalities and Feminist Politics in a Global Perspective" in Eleonore Kofman and Gillian Young. *Globalization: Theory and Practice*. London and New York: Continuum.

¹⁹ Baden. Op. cit.

²⁰ Dagdeviren, Hulya, Rolph ven der Hoeven and John Weeks. 2002. "Poverty Reduction with Growth and Redistribution." *Development and Change*. V 33(3) June. Pg 383-413.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Degnbol-Martinussen, John. 2002. "Development Goals, Governance and Capacity Building: Aid as a Catalyst." *Development and Change*. V. 33(2). April. Pg. 269-279.

²³ Parpart. Op. cit.

²⁴ See for example Samir Amin. 1974. *Accumulation on a World Scale*. 2 vols. New York: Monthly Review Press or Andre Gundar Frank. 1972. "The Development of Underdevelopment," in James D. Cockcroft, Andre Gundar Frank, and Dale L. Johnson, eds. *Dependence and Underdevelopment: Latin America's Political Economy*. New York: Monthly Review Press among others.

poverty.²⁵ Chenery and his associates are credited with introducing the ideas associated with redistribution with growth.²⁶

As a result, donors continued with large infrastructure projects but added and expanded efforts to improve subsistence agriculture by introducing high yielding varieties of rice, corn, potatoes, and wheat and other crops.²⁷ They also stimulated industrial production by promoting exports, and they targeted groups disadvantaged by development for special programs like integrated rural development that linked increased agricultural production to credit, technical inputs, and chemical and fertilizer availability. Special efforts were made to target the “poorest of the poor” by the World Bank including poor women, the unemployed and landless, and the destitute.²⁸ Under the leadership of McNamara, the World Bank expanded its poverty alleviation programs and moved into the realm of a development agency in its operations advocating a redistribution with growth policy that linked poverty alleviation with growth oriented production strategies²⁹ and focused on an income-productivity-output approach aimed at improving the incomes of the absolute poor and the distribution of income increments, not on the redistribution of existing assets or income.³⁰

With the advent of structural adjustment programs in the 1980s, indebted developing countries were under pressure to stay creditworthy, and many adopted policies that integrated market dynamics into their economies. These strictures became known as “conditionalities” that made further loans dependent on policy reforms.³¹ Over time, conditionalities expanded to include curtailing basic social investments, devaluing currencies, removing tariff barriers and opening developing countries to foreign investment and trade, freezing wages, and limiting the reach of labor unions. After these policies were introduced, many people in developing countries were poorer, faced greater unemployment,³² had less money to spend, worked longer hours, had fewer benefits or social support systems, and generally faced bleak and uncertain futures. In Latin America, for example, the 1980s were known as the “lost decade”³³ as the gains of the earlier period were eaten away. Development was not providing better living conditions for people; in fact, poverty eventually came to be seen as inimical to development itself.

In many developing countries hard hit by SAPs, much of the burden of coping with their effects fell on women.³⁴ Often forced to seek work to support themselves and their children, women increased their labor both in the home and as unpaid family help on family farms. Those who lacked education or skills found only agricultural labor or work in the informal sector of urban areas. Others found employment in the formal sector in export industries like flower growing,³⁵ readymade

²⁵ Bardhan, Pranab. 1995. “Research on Poverty and Development Twenty Years after Redistribution with Growth.” *The World Bank Research Observer. Annual Conference Supplement*.

²⁶ Chenery, Hollis B., Montek S. Ahluwalia, Clive Bell, John H. Dulong, and Richard Jolly. 1974. *Redistribution with Growth*. New York: Oxford University Press.

²⁷ Pearse, Andrew. 1980. *Seeds of Plenty, Seeds of Want: Social and Economic Implications of the Green Revolution*. London: Oxford University Press.

²⁸ Ayers Robert L. 1984. *Banking on the Poor: The World Bank and World Poverty*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: MIT Press.

²⁹ Bardhan, Op. Cit.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ayers. Op. cit.

³² McMichael, Philip. 1996. *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective*. California, London, New Delhi: Pine Forge Press.

³³ Branford, Sue and Bernardo Kucinski. 1988. *The Debt Squads: The US, the Banks and Latin America*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books.

³⁴ UNICEF. 1987. “Adjustment with a Human Face,” as quoted in Roomy Borooah. “Engendering Wealth and Well Being: Empowerment for Global Change.” *NWSA Journal*. V 8 Summer 1997.

³⁵ Talcott, Molly. 2004. “Gendered Webs of Development and Resistance: Women, Children and Flowers in Bogata.” *Signs*. V. 29. Winter. Pg. 465-489

garments,³⁶ or assembly plants.³⁷ Such work tended to be casual and poorly paid and offered no benefits or protection under the law. Additionally, many rural women lacked land or other assets for collateral for loans so were denied access to bank or government credit programs.³⁸ For these rural women and for millions of urban women, the responsibility for caring for the family, meeting domestic needs, and doing household tasks meant the double burden of their labor was intensified.³⁹

During the 1990s, donors, government agencies, and NGOs expanded the scope and reach of their programs to involve women in education and microcredit while continuing projects in family planning, maternal and child health, and income generation. The carryover of the effects of SAPs, the end of the Cold War, and the rise of globalization all contributed to a shift in the orientation of the development community. The persistence of hard-core poverty and the only slowly improving lives of the majority of the world's population encouraged major donors, including the World Bank and ADB shortly thereafter to adopt pro-poor economic policies and poverty reduction as major thrusts. As Mark Brown, the UNDP Administrator, wrote in the Human Development Report of 2000, "Poverty eradication is not only a development goal—it is a central challenge for human rights in the 21st century. . . Human rights in an integrated world require global justice. . ."⁴⁰

Poverty reduction became part of a general pattern in the development community as NGOs both in the South and North became deeply involved and often worked in conjunction with national governments and multilateral and bilateral donors to implement programs and to deliver services to the poor and disadvantaged. For many donors, investing in education, particularly for girls and women; in health; and in employment opportunities would empower women and improve their social, economic, and health status.⁴¹

Donors have also moved to reconstruct the state and its role in planning, mediating, and implementing development objectives. The notion of the minimalist state has been expanded, and efforts have been made to focus on institutional enhancement and capacity building as a means of maximizing the contribution and support of state governments for reform.⁴² Donors such as the Nordic countries and UNDP have shifted from moving resources to developing countries to enhancing capacities and capabilities.⁴³ Transfer payments have been introduced to provide security nets for the absolute poor, the destitute, the infirm, the aged, or those otherwise unfit for work.⁴⁴ Replacing or supplementing conditionalities with country selectivity as the main determinant of assistance⁴⁵ and needs-based versus performance-based criteria as the means of determining the types and recipients of aid continue to influence poverty reduction strategies.⁴⁶

³⁶ Hossain, Hameda, et. al. 1990. *No Better Option? Industrial Women Workers in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: University Press Limited.

³⁷ Jill Stearns. 2000. "The Gender Dimension," in David Held and Anthony McGrew eds. *The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate*. London: Polity Press.

³⁸ Agarwal, Bina. 1994. *A Field of One's Own: Gender and Land Rights in South Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

³⁹ Marchand, Marianne H., and Anne Sisson Runyan. Eds. 2000. *Gender and Global Restructuring: Sighting, Sites and Resistances*. New York: Routledge.

⁴⁰ Brown, Mark. 2000. *Human Development Report 2000*. Autumn. Lexington: WIN News.

⁴¹ Sadik, Nafis. 1997. "Women, Population and Sustainable Development in South Asia." *Journal of International Affairs*. V. 51(1). Summer. Pg. 147-168

⁴² Degnbol-Martinussen, Op. cit.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Bardhan, Op.cit.

⁴⁵ Boyce, James K. 2002. "Unpacking Aid." *Development and Change*. vol. 33(2). pg. 239-246.

⁴⁶ Emmerij, Louis. 2002. "Aid as a Flight Forward." *Development and Change*. vol. 33(2) pg. 247-260.

Governance

At the end of the 1980s and in the 1990s, major events such as the end of the Cold War, declining aid budgets, and the increased prominence of neo-liberalism combined to alter the nature of development assistance in part because of competition from humanitarian needs for scarce development resources. Moreover, the limitations of SAPs became clear, and consequently conditionalities were expanded to include political policies as part of the reforms required of debtor countries. In some quarters, the failure of SAPs was attributed to government corruption and ineffectiveness. This perception contributed to a growing concern among donors with good governance and its relationship to development, democracy, and economic growth. While there is no direct, proven link between democracy and economic growth, in many donors' minds this connection was made and firmly advocated as a condition of aid.⁴⁷ Democracy was democracy in a Western sense and included competition among political parties, elections, and political and civil rights. Assistance was increasingly tied to recipient countries' commitment to "political pluralism and accountability."⁴⁸ Not surprisingly, this emphasis on democratization was seen by many developing governments as interference in the internal politics of their countries and was heavily resisted.

For other donors, however, the focus on governance was more narrowly directed at improving the administration and management of development. Good governance was the means by which better practices could be instituted. Many donors believed corruption occurred as the result of, "...weak institutions, accountability, rule of law, low levels of participation and so on,"⁴⁹ thus eventually, good governance came to be construed to mean accountability, transparency, and participation in development.

The range of definitions of just what governance means is quite broad. UNDP, for example, states that governance is:

*The exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country's affairs at all levels: comprising the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their legal rights and obligations.*⁵⁰

UNDP and Nordic donors promote a different approach to achieving both good governance and social development.⁵¹ Driving this focus is the assumption that a conscious link needs to be made between economic growth and human welfare and that such connections cannot be left to market mechanisms. These ideas are heavily influenced by the work of Amartya Sen, Paul Streeten and Mahbub ul Huq which questions the sole focus on economic growth and instead proposes a broader concept of development that includes expanding choices in social, political, and economic realms.⁵²

For ADB and the World Bank, in particular, sections of their founding Charters prohibit involvement with politics and with advocating democracy or any political form. In their approaches to development, governance remains an important priority, and is mainly focused on sound development

⁴⁷ Marquette, Heather. 2001. "Corruption, Democracy and the World Bank," in *Crime, Law and Social Change*. Vol. 36. pg. 395-407.

⁴⁸ Robinson, Mark. 2001. "Governance, Democracy and Conditionality: NGOs and the New Policy Agenda." *No Silver Bullet: NGOs and Global Development Issues*. London: Open University.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ UNDP. 1997. *Governance for Sustainable Development*. New York. UNDP Policy Document.

⁵¹ Degnbol-Martinussen. Op. cit.

⁵² As discussed in Degnbol-Martinussen. Op. cit.

management which means. "...the efficiency and effectiveness of the institutional environment within which citizens and corporations interact with their government agencies and individual officials."⁵³ The definition of governance used by the World Bank is, "...the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development and emphasizes economic policy and management."⁵⁴

In development practice, governance is both a determining factor in selecting countries to receive aid and a condition for assistance to continue. This is part of the issue surrounding selectivity versus conditionality as the best way of securing compliance with donor objectives.⁵⁵ Using selectivity as a measure of suitability means that a country must confirm its commitment to donor objectives before any aid is given. This approach leaves countries that don't adhere to donor wishes without assistance when their needs may be greatest and weakens the ability of donors to influence policies. Moreover, while ownership of policies by national governments is theoretically ideal, in reality the variety of views among political forces within countries means it is often difficult for donors to determine just who will own or implement those policies.⁵⁶

Conditionality is also not without its problems. In some cases government officials agree to conditions but lack the actual authority to secure approval of them. In other instances, conditions are agreed to but never implemented due to changing circumstances in national governments and local conditions. Selectivity is, therefore, the currently preferred basis for determining which countries qualify for aid.

At the same time, the donor community has broadened the scope of development objectives from macroeconomic growth and stability to include human rights, gender equality, environmental protection, and other issues. However, the extensive involvement of major financial institutions in these latter endeavors has led to "mission creep" and to a call from some quarters to return to basics.⁵⁷

The overriding concern of the project was to promote good governance at the grassroots level to reduce poverty and to enhance inclusive social development. The project brings together pieces of the literature review in its various components. Capacity building was included to increase the likelihood of success of elected women representatives in their roles in local government bodies. Forums were established to encourage women members to build and sustain networks with government line agencies; local government bodies; NGOs; community leaders; and their constituents to provide services, training programs, and employment opportunities for the poor. Other aspects of the gender and development literature are found in the portion of the project that provided the sensitivity training for male counterparts and other government officials that improved the effectiveness of elected women representatives and contributed to gender equity and to a changing environment for women to become more active in local affairs. A concern with good governance is part of the overall project approach to increase the effectiveness of women members as a means of increasing the effectiveness of local government officials in providing services, training programs, and employment opportunities to the poor. This is also a primary means of reducing poverty. Participation in local conflict resolution panels promoted social justice especially for poor women whose voices have traditionally been excluded from such meetings.

⁵³Jokinen, Janne 2004. "Balancing between East and West: The Asian Development Bank's Policy on Good Governance," in Morten Boas and Desmond McNeill. *Global Institutions and Development, Framing the World?* London and New York: Routledge.

⁵⁴Robinson, Mark. Op.cit.

⁵⁵See the lead article and discussion generated in various issues of *Development and Change* v. 32 and 33. The lead article is by John Pronk. 2001. "Aid as Catalyst. *Development and Change*" v. 32(4) pg. 611-629.

⁵⁶Boyce. Op. cit.

⁵⁷Ibid.

