Women's Development and Development Discourse

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Abstract

The process of development in the developing countries had, by and large, marginalised women and deprived them of the control over resources and authority within the household, without lightening the heavy burden of their 'traditional duties'. The last century was however marked by a remarkable though gradual shift in the way women were perceived within the development policy, namely from the stature of victims and passive objects to that of independent agents. This gradual shift in policy approaches was informed by changing perceptions about women and their relationship with development. A significant impetus to raising such an informed platform came with the adoption of development issues within the UN system, in the background of increasing activism of development practitioners. The present paper critically traces the contours and its possible shades of this awakening that rises from the less 'threatening' planning for Women in Development (WID) to the more 'confrontational' gender planning with its aspiring goal of empowerment and emancipation. These movements have occasioned an increasing space for policy initiatives and interventions in favour of poor women in the Third World. There has been a gradual shift in orientation of these policy approaches towards women from 'welfare', to equity' to anti-poverty' to 'efficiency' and finally to 'empowerment'. The policy reorientation reflects the changes in the basic economic approaches of the time, from modernization policies of accelerated growth, to basic needs strategies of growth with redistribution, to the recent so-called 'compensatory measures' for the neo-liberal illfare. The paper argues, *inter alia*, that the compensatory measures imply a substitution of the agency of civil society for that of the state in development process, the original agenda of the neo-liberalism.

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1. Introduction

The concept of women's development has become a burning issue in the development discourse since the middle of the last century. However, the history of the location of women in the development process in the developing countries has not justified the ideas of development as a process of enhancing people's well-being in line with the human development approach. The process of "development in the developing countries has, by and large, marginalised women and deprived them of the control over resources and authority within the household, without lightening the heavy burden of their 'traditional duties'" (Haleh Afshar 1991:15). This view becomes very obvious when we recall Ester Boserup's well-known 1970 study (*Women's Role in Economic Development*) in the context of Africa, which states that "by their discriminatory policy in education and training the Europeans created a productivity gap between male and female farmers, and subsequently this gap seemed to justify their prejudice against female farmers." (Boserup 1970 [2008: 45]); men were taught to apply modern methods in the cultivation of cash crops, while women continued to use the traditional methods in the cultivation of food crops for family use (ibid: 43-44). Even in recent times, as Christa Wichterich points out, women do not feature much in cash crops production, and very few have so far been moved up into the sacred precinct of capital" (Wichterich 2000: vii- viii). Boserup through her analysis of land rights also foresaw that "the possession of land is likely to pass gradually from women to men, even in tribes where women have the right to inherit land" (Boserup 1970 [2008: 47]); a recent study in southern Niger (Doka and Monimart 2004) has documented such widespread trends of women losing access to land (also see Lorenzo Cotula 2006). As

Naila Kabeer (1999b:33) points out, attention to women's needs has not always been a priority or even a consideration. She maintains that early efforts tended to be formulated for broad generic categories of people: the community, the poor and the landless. Thus, the possibility that women – and children – within these categories might not benefit equally with men from these efforts was rarely considered. Moreover, "male hegemony corrupts development initiatives, which are designed to make a positive difference in women's lives and, by extension, the lives of their families and their men." (Rowan-Campbell 1999:12). The welfare approach in developing countries itself has often been a process of 'tokenism' or 'handout', taking utmost care not to meddle with societal norms and customs that have seldom been flexible towards women.

What follows is divided into six sections. The next section briefly traces the question of women/gender in development discourse and programmes; section 3 examines the three schools of thought on women/gender and development, namely, Women in Development, Women and Development, and Gender Analysis in Development. This then facilitates our discussion in section four on the various Third World policy approaches to women/gender in development, such as 'welfare', equity', anti-poverty', 'efficiency' and 'empowerment'. The next section discusses different frameworks of gender analysis and the final section concludes the paper.

2. Women and Gender in Development Discourse and Programmes

The last century was marked by a remarkable though gradual shift in the way women were perceived within the development policy, namely from the stature of victims and passive objects to that of independent agents. This gradual shift in policy approaches was informed by changing perceptions about women and their relationship with development. A significant impetus to raising such an informed platform came with the adoption of development issues within the UN system. However, the first UN Development Decade (1961-1970) declaration did not consider the status of women as a major topic of concern (Tinker 1990). Although the General Assembly instructed the Commission on the Status of Women in 1962 to prepare a

report on women's role in development, the focus of the Commission was mainly on the humanitarian aspects of development and on women's legal rights. In 1970, the General Assembly included the concern for 'full integration of women in the total development effort' as an objective in its International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (1971-1980).

In this period of increasing awareness among women facilitated by a flurry of research and studies by several world-renowned feminists, sociologists, anthropologists and others, a significant turning point appeared with the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975 (9 June – 2 July), coinciding with the International Women's Year, observed to remind and caution the international community that discrimination against women continued to be a persistent problem in much of the world. The Conference, along with the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) proclaimed by the General Assembly five months later at the urging of the Conference, launched a new era in global efforts to promote the advancement of women by opening a worldwide dialogue on gender equality. The General Assembly identified three key objectives that would become the basis for the work of the United Nations for the advancement of women: (i) Full gender equality and the elimination of gender discrimination; (ii) The integration and full participation of women in development; and (iii) An increased contribution by women in the strengthening of world peace. It goes without saying that this approach marked a change in the way women were perceived. Against the erstwhile scenario where women had been seen as passive recipients of support and aid, they were now viewed as full and equal partners with men, with equal rights to resources and opportunities. This coincided with a change in the approach to development too, with a shift from an earlier assumption that development sought to advance women, to a new consensus that development was not possible without the full participation of women.

The 1975 Conference urged national governments to formulate their own strategies, and identify targets and priorities in their effort to promote the equal participation of women. By the end of the United Nations Decade for Women, 127 Member States responded by establishing some form of national institutions dealing with the

promotion of policy, research and programmes aimed at women's advancement and participation in development. Within the United Nations system, in addition to the already existing Branch (now Division) for the Advancement of Women under Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Conference also led to the establishment of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), which serve as an institutional framework for research, training and operational activities in the area of women and development. It is significant that the Conference witnessed a highly visible role played by women themselves: of the 133 delegations from Member States, 113 were headed by women. Women also organized a parallel forum of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the International Women's Year Tribune, which attracted some 4,000 participants, and signalled the opening up of the United Nations to NGOs, which enable women's voices to be heard in the organization's policy-making process.

Since the United Nations International Women's Year[1] and the First UN Conference on Women held in Mexico City in 1975, the gender issue has been shaped by women's evolving consciousness and agenda through three more World Conferences and beyond: Copenhagen, 1980; Nairobi, 1985; and Beijing, 1995. These years witnessed an increasing mobilization of women worldwide and their growing political presence and power, not only at women's conferences, but also throughout the UN system and in national political arenas. This evolution of foci and agenda charts developments in women's analysis of their social and economic experiences and their efforts to address the inequities embedded in that experience both in the South and in the North.

3. The Three Schools of Thought on Gender and Development – WID, WAD and GAD

The field has thus been fertile for a fundamental shift in the perspectives of and

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[1] Since 1975, March 8 has been celebrated as International Women's Day and the decade 1976-1985 was established as the United Nations Decade for Women.

approaches to women in development discourse and policy. Eva Rathgeber (1990) identifies three distinct schools of thought on gender and development, namely, Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD) and Gender and Development (GAD). As the oldest and most dominant approach, the WID arose out of the search for practical solutions to the failures of development concept and the growth of feminism based on a more systematic assessment of the roots of women's disadvantage. It was "born as a trans-national movement; hence its emergence was built upon a strong sense of cohesion among women across national boundaries" (Grant and Newland 1991:122). Below we outline a brief account of these three schools (see Table 1).

(i)   Women in Development (WID)

The term 'WID' came into vogue in the early 1970s, as used by the Women's Committee of the Washington, DC, Chapter of the Society for International Development, a network of female development professionals, in their attempt to bring to the attention of American policymakers the works of Ester Boserup and others on Third World development (Maguire 1984). The term was subsequently adopted by the United States agency for International Development (USAID) in their WID approach, with the underlying rationale that women can provide an economic contribution to development though they remain as an untapped resource. Though the original primary focus of WID was economic development, the periodic UN Conferences for Women have given a high profile to the policies to improve women's educational and employment opportunities, political representation and participation, and physical and social welfare. These Conferences also fostered the internationalization of the women's movement. The Fourth UN World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, advanced a political agenda by demanding that women's rights be recognized as human rights.

Within no time the WID movement gained prominence and recognition from various governments and international bodies. Thus, in 1973, the US government amended the US Agency of International Development (USAID) law; the new amendment required that a proportion of the agency funds be specifically channelled to women's activities,

and a WID office was created in USAID departments. In 1975, as part of WID's outreach, the United Nations took steps to establish an Institute for Training and Research for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), and it equally increased funds for women and development, presently known as UNIFEM. Virtually every section of the United Nations set up one or another form of programme for women and for development. Other institutions like the World Bank, Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation also responded with different projects of development assistance, and many other governments came out to create ministries of women's affairs.

The WID approach was closely linked with the modernization paradigm which was developed in the US as an alternative to the Marxist account of development theory after the World War II, and decreed that 'modernization,' usually equated with industrialization, would improve the standard of living in developing countries. Economic growth being the prime objective, investment was targeted to areas with high growth potential, with the assumption of "trickle down" effect in favour of the poor. However, the reality failed this expectation;[2] the consequences of modernization and commercialization of agriculture only worsened the inequality, and marginalized various social groups, especially women, and by the 1970s, this view of modernization became increasingly questioned by many researchers.

As the WID approach was grounded on an acceptance of existing social structures, it, rather than examine why women had not benefited from the erstwhile development strategies, focused only on how women could better be integrated into those development initiatives. In other words, it avoided questioning the sources and nature of women's subordination and oppression in line with the more radical structuralist perspectives such as dependency theory or Marxist and neo-Marxist approaches, and advocated instead for their equal participation in education, employment, and other spheres of

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[2] For instance, the 1989 World Survey on the role of women in development argued that, ironically, poverty among women has increased, even within the richest countries, resulting in what has become known as the 'Feminization of Poverty'.

society on the premise that the people involved are the problem and that the solution lies in overcoming the internalized impediments of poor women by changing attitudes and providing education. The WID approach also tended to be ahistorical and overlooked the important classes and relations of exploitation among women (Marjorie Mbilinyi 1984; also see Geertje Lycklama à Nijeholt 1987); nor did it recognize this exploitation as being in itself a component of a global system of capital accumulation (Lourdes Beneria and Gits Sen 1981). According to the structuralists, on the other hand, since the system is inherently exploitative of women, further incorporation into the system cannot be the solution; women are already fully integrated into the global economy, but on unequal terms, through domestic and subsistence labour. (Lycklama à Nijeholt 1987, Plewes and Stuart 1991) They depict WID as a 'blame the victim strategy', which ignores the structural context which frames women's underdevelopment. The factors determining people's lives are both internalized culture and external material factors (Naiman 1995); both have to be reckoned with.

(ii)   Women and Development (WAD)

Out of the disillusionment with the explanatory limitations of modernization theory that stood as the basis of WID arose a new movement, Women and Development (WAD), based on neo-Marxist feminism, in the second half of the 1970s. It draws some of its theoretical base from dependency theory, which, in opposition to the optimistic claims of modernization theory, maintained that the failure of Third world states to achieve adequate and sustainable levels of development resulted from their dependence on the advanced capitalist world. In essence, the WAD approach begins from the position that women always have been an integral part of development processes in a global system of exploitation and inequality, and it is from this perspective that we need to examine why women had not benefited from the development strategies of the past decades, that is, by questioning the sources and nature of women's subordination and oppression. In this respect, both the Marxist and liberal feminists share the view that structures of production determine the inferior status of women; while the liberals solely focus on technological change as the causal mechanism, the Marxists consider its impact on

class differentiation also (Jaquette 1982). The studies of the Marxist feminists "show that the changing roles of women in economic production are determined by the confluence of a number of historical factors: the sexual division of labour in reproduction, local class structure, the articulation of specific regions and sectors of production within national economies and the international economy. The result is a great diversity and complexity in the integration of women into the processes of capitalist development." (Bandarage 1984: 502).

The WAD approach recognizes that Third World men also have been adversely affected by the structure of the inequalities and exploitation within the international system, and discourages a strict analytical focus on the problems of women independent of those of men, since both the sexes are disadvantaged within the oppressive global structures based on class and capital. Thus there is little analytical attention to the social relations of gender within classes. It fails to undertake a full-scale analysis of the relationship between patriarchy, differing modes of production, and women's subordination and oppression. That is, it gives scant attention to the sphere of reproduction and household level relations between men and women (Kabeer 1994).

The WAD perspective appears to implicitly assume that women's position will improve with more equitable international structures, and it sides with WID in solving the problem of underrepresentation of women in economic, political, and social structures by carefully designed intervention strategies rather than by more fundamental shifts in the social relations of gender. Such common WID-WAD focus on intervention strategies in terms of the development of income-generating activities, without caring for the time burdens that such strategies place on women, shows the singular preoccupation of these approaches with the productive sector at the expense of the reproductive side of women's work and lives. "The labor invested in family maintenance, including childbearing and -rearing, housework, care of the ill and elderly, and the like, has been considered to belong to the "private" domain and outside the purview of development projects aimed at enhancing income-generating activities. In essence, this has been a reflection of the tendency of both modernization and dependency theorists to utilize exclusively economic or political-economy

analyses and to discount the insights of the so-called 'softer' social sciences." (Eva Rathgeber 1990: 493).

Table 1: Changing Perspectives on Women, Gender and Development

	Women in Development (WID)	Women and Development (WAD)	Gender and Development (GAD)
Origins	Early 1970s after the publication of Ester Boserup's book Women's Role in economic Development. Term WID articulated by American liberal feminists.	Emerged from a critique of the modernization theory and the WID approach in the second half of the 1970s.	As an alternative to the WID focus this approach developed in the 1980s.
Theoretical base	Linked with the modernization theory of the 1950s to 1970s. By the 1970s, it was realized that benefits of modernization had somehow not reached women, and in some sectors undermined their existing position.	Draws from the dependency theory.	Influenced by socialist feminist thinking.
Focus	Need to integrate women in economic systems, through necessary legal and administrative changes. Women's productive role emphasized. Strategies to be developed to minimize disadvantages of women in the productive sector.	Women have always been part of development processes – therefore integrating women in development is a myth. Focuses on relationship between women and development processes.	Offers a holistic perspective, looking at all aspects of women's lives. It questions the basis of assigning specific gender roles to different sexes.
Contribution	Women's questions became visible in the arena of development theory and practice.	Accepts women as important economic actors in their societies. Women's work in the public and private domain is central to the maintenance of their societal structures. Looks at the nature of integration of women in development which sustains existing international structures of	Does not exclusively emphasize female solidarity – welcomes contributions of sensitive men. Recognizes women's contribution inside and outside the household, including non-commodity production.

		inequality.	
Features	WID was solidly grounded in traditional modernization theory which assumed wrongly that women were not integrated in the process of development. It accepted existing social structures – it did not question the sources of women's subordination and oppression. Non-confrontational approach. It did not question why women had not benefitted from development strategies. It treated women as an undifferentiated category overlooking the influence of class, race and culture. Focused exclusively on productive aspects of women's work, ignoring or minimizing the reproductive side of women's lives.	Fails to analyze the relationship between patriarchy, differing modes of production and women's subordination and oppression. Discourages a strict analytical focus on the problems of women independent of those of men since both sexes are seen to be disadvantaged with oppressive global structure based on class and capital. Singular preoccupation with women's productive role at the expense of the reproductive side of women's work and lives. Assumes that once international structures become more equitable, women's position would improve. WAD does not question the relations between gender roles.	GAD rejects the public/private dichotomy. It gives special attention to oppression of women in the family by entering the so-called 'private sphere'. It emphasizes the state's duty to provide social services in promoting women's emancipation. Women seen as agents of change rather than passive recipients of development assistance. Stresses the need for women to organize themselves for a more effective political voice. Recognizes that patriarchy operates within and across classes to oppress women. Focuses on strengthening women's legal rights, including the reform of inheritance

Source: Adapted by Suneeta Dhar and Aanchal Kapur, *Kriti Newsletter*, 1, 1992-93, from Eva M. Rathgeber (1990); cited in Nalini Visvanathan (1997)

(i)   Gender and Development (GAD)

As already mentioned, feminists in general, when assessing the past decades of WID policy implementation, have pointed out that although WID policies have been to some extent successful in improving women's economic condition, they have been much less effective in improving women's social and economic power relative to men in development contexts. The concern over this problem led to a consensus to reform the

WID, with arguments for approaches informed by a gender analysis of social relations (Kabeer 1994) and aspiration for the ultimate empowerment of women (Moser 1989, 1993); hence the shift to Gender Analysis in Development or simply Gender and Development (GAD) in the 1980s. The focus on 'gender' rather than 'women' was influenced by the feminist writers such as Oakley (1972) and Rubin (1975), who were worried about the general way of perceiving the problems of women in terms of their sex, their biological difference from men, rather than in terms of their gender, the social relationship between men and women, where women have been systematically subordinated.[3] "The focus on gender rather than women makes it critical to look not only at the category 'women' – since that is only half the story – but at women in relation to men, and the way in which relations between these categories are socially constructed." (Moser 1993; 3).

GAD draws its theoretical roots from the strands of socialist feminism that challenged the orthodox Marxist assertion that only class analysis could explain women's oppression, and has complemented the modernization theory by linking the relations of production to the relations of reproduction and by taking into account all aspects of women's lives (Jaquette 1982). More than just a change of name, it involves a change of approach and a challenge to the development process as a whole. WID approach was based on a politics of access, getting women into development programmes. The GAD approach on the other hand recognizes the significance of redistributing power in social relations.[4] "Beyond improving women's access to the same development resources as are directed to men, the GAD approach stresses direct challenges to male cultural, social and

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[3] "Gender is seen as the process by which individuals who are born into biological categories of male or female become the social categories of men and women through the acquisition of locally-defined attributes of masculinity and femininity." (Naila Kabeer 1991: 11).

[4] For a more elaborate discussion of the conceptual shifts in the women-and-development discourse, and the alternative categorization of the two approaches, see Moser (1993) and Razavi and Miller (1995).

economic privileges, so that women are enabled to make equal social and economic profit out of the same resources. It involves leveling the playing field, in other words, y changing institutional rules." (Anne Marie Goetz 1997: 3)

With this emphasis on gender, the GAD approach signals three departures from WID. First, it shifts the focus from women to gender and identifies the unequal power relations between women and men. Second, it re-examines all social, political and economic structures and development policies from the perspective of gender differentials. And third, it recognizes that achieving gender equality and equity demands 'transformative change' in gender relations from household to global level.

With this conceptual reorientation, the development programmes have started to focus on the politics of gender relations and restructuring of institutions, rather than of just equality in access to resources, and 'gender mainstreaming' has emerged as the common strategy for action behind these initiatives. Gender mainstreaming was first formulated as a 'transformative strategy' to achieve gender equality at the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing in 1995. In 1997, the Economic and Social Council adopted the following definition, meant as a guide for all agencies in the United Nations system: "Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for men and women of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality." (Economic and Social Council, agreed conclusions 1997/2; I A).[5]

At the household level the gendered division of labour traditionally defines women's role primarily in terms of provision of care, which is unpaid, taken for granted and invisible in economic terms. As the Human Development Report for 1999 points out, unpaid work in the household (and community) is an important provider of human

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[5] http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/GMS.PDF. Accessed on January 7, 2009.

development along with private incomes, public provisioning, and the bounty of the natural environment (UNDP 1999: 44). The Report goes on to emphasize the inter-personal provision of care as a key dimension of human development, both because this

care is a vital ingredient for developing human capabilities, and also because the ability to give and receive care is in itself an important aspect of human functioning – one of the qualities that makes us truly human. Women's unpaid work at home has however significant impact on the quality of their lives and well-being. For example, when women assume paid work, they also assume the 'double work day', paid and unpaid. The invisibility of women's unpaid work remains a critical issue in national and international macro policy. For example, the application of IMF and World Bank stabilization and structural adjustment policies (SAPs) has caused many countries to cut back on government sponsored or subsidized social services, which in turn has adversely affected the wellbeing of women, who bear the increased burden of unpaid work on their already stretched energy and resources when public sector services switch to the household. In this light, women and pro-equality development practitioners have advocated mainstreaming gender analysis into all policy and programming both in design and impact assessment.

Achieving gender equality requires reorganizing gender roles and the basic institutions of society, that is, the market, state and the family. Thus, mainstreaming gender aims at transformative change in order to bring about an equal partnership between women and men. This in turn requires women to take an active part in politics and decision-making at all levels of society. And it is here that the most aspiring goal of 'women empowerment' becomes significant in development discourse and policy.

However, it should also be noted that women today are demanding, beyond GAD and gender mainstreaming, the full exercise of their human rights and are on to develop a rights-based approach to economic policy, which aims directly at strengthening the realization of human rights, including social, economic and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights. The world has already adopted a number of basic human rights instruments and declarations and international covenants and conventions, which

address women's rights as human rights, as well as commitments to integrating a perspective of gender mainstreaming with developmental goals, such as: Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Article 3 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Preamble of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; ILO Fundamental Non-Discrimination Conventions 100 and 111; International Conventions on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families; the Declaration and Platform for Action of the World Conferences on Women, notably the Fourth Conference in Beijing and Beijing Plus5 in New York; and the other World Conferences of the 1990s; the Earth Summit in Rio, the World Conference on Population in Cairo and plus 5; the Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen and Copenhagen Plus 5 in Geneva; the Habitat Conference in Istanbul and Plus 5 in Nairobi; the World Food Summit in Rome.

A rights-based approach goes beyond viewing gender concerns as primarily instrumental to growth, as is sometimes the case, because it recognizes women's agency and their rights and obligations as citizens. This approach clearly illustrates a profound political shift that became evident at the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing, where women no longer focused on a narrow range of so-called women's economic and social issues but were demanding for voice in all arenas of economic and social policy making. In this light, compared with the less 'threatening' approach of WID, "gender planning, with its fundamental goal of emancipation, is by definition a more 'confrontational' approach. Based on the premise that the major issue is one of subordination and inequality, its purpose is that women through empowerment achieve equality with men in society." (Moser 1993: 4).[6]

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[6] There is now a Gender and Development Section (GAD) at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) as a dynamic and multi-faceted partner to those working towards gender equality and women's empowerment in the region. GAD operates as a facilitator and builds linkages between governments, civil society and other partners in order to encourage and strengthen

4. Policy Approaches to Women in Development

As already explained, the WID movement has occasioned an increasing space for policy initiatives and interventions in favour of poor women in the Third world. The initial policy approaches were categorized by Buvinic (1983, 1986) under the three heads of 'welfare', equity' and anti-poverty' in an increasing order of shift in focus. Later on Moser (1993) added two more categories of 'efficiency' and 'empowerment'. This list mirrors the "general trends in Third World development policies, from modernization policies of accelerated growth, through basic needs strategies associated with redistribution, to the more recent compensatory measures associated with structural adjustment policies." (Moser 1993: 55). Below we discuss this policy shift (see Table 2).

    (i)   Welfare Approach

The welfare approach, one of the earliest (that is, pre-WID) women's development policies and popular during the 1950s and 1960s, perceived motherhood as women's primary role in society. It was built upon the First World's social welfare model, initiated in Europe after the World War II, and specifically intended for the 'vulnerable groups' (Moser 1993: 59). Its initial concerns were on "what could be done to ensure that women had the conditions which enable them to meet the needs of their children and family" (Young 1993: 43), since they were largely seen as mothers and carers rather than as economic actors. An exemplar of this approach could be seen in the educational structure established for women/girls by missionaries during/after the colonial era, which was aimed at the domestication of women with an emphasis on home economics and parenthood curricula. This approach created a gendered educational system and

channels for dialogue, interaction and involvement in national, subregional, regional and global policy development and implementation. The aim of GAD is to support inclusive and effective mechanisms for greater women's empowerment as means to achieve gender equality and ultimately, reduce poverty. (http://www.unescap.org/esid/GAD/aboutus.asp.   Accessed on 15 January 2009)

classification of jobs as being the 'male or female profession'.

Three assumptions underlie the welfare approach: (i) women are passive recipients of development, rather than active participants in the development process, (ii) motherhood is the most important social role for women, and (iii) child-rearing is the most effective role for women in all aspects of economic development (Moser 1993: 59-60; Snyder and Tadesse 1995:87). Thus with its 'family-centred' orientation, this approach restricts the role of women to reproductive ones – motherhood and childrearing – whereas men's work is identified as productive, and it identifies the mother-child dyad as the unit of concern. The development programme is implemented through 'top-down' handouts of free goods and services and hence it does not include women or gender-aware local organizations in participatory planning processes (Moser 1993: 60). The programme generally consists in direct provision of food aid, additional food for children and nutrition education for mothers, and population control through family planning programmes. The welfare approach has promoted (and does promote) the availability of much-needed maternal and child health care (MCH), with the consequent reduction in infant and to some extent maternal mortality. However, it is argued that the top-down nature of so many welfare programmes has only succeeded in creating dependency rather than in assisting women to become more independent (Wallace and March 1991: 162; Moser 1993: 61). Indeed, welfare programmes were not concerned or designed to meet women's strategic interests such as their right to have control over their own reproduction or even practical gender needs for that matter.[7] However, it should be noted that the welfare

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[7] Strategic interests refer to the status of women relative to men within society. They are context-specific and are related to gender divisions of labour, resources and power, and may include legal rights, protection from domestic violence, increased decision-making, and women's control over their bodies. Practical needs are those immediate necessities within a specific context, and generally include responses to inadequate living conditions in respect of potable water, shelter, income, health care and social security. Note that these concepts are not to be used in an either/or fashion. Benefits that only target practical needs will not be sustainable unless strategic interests are also taken into account (UNEP 2001; also see Moser 1993; and Maxine Molyneux 1985, who first

approach is still very popular, as it is politically safe, without questioning the traditionally ascribed role of women.

Indeed, Molyneux (cited in Moser 1993[19]) stressed the importance of recognising that women and girls have both strategic and practical gender needs which are associated with their generally subordinated role in society. These include gender division of labour, power and control which adversely affects them, and the lack of legal rights; domestic violence, equal wages and their control over their own bodies. She believed that the practical gender needs within those subordinated roles are generally concerned with inadequacies in living conditions, and she further argued that meeting strategic gender needs helps women to achieve greater equality. In addition to the above, strategic gender needs changes existing roles and therefore challenge women's subordination. That is to say, it aims to restore a sense of fulfilment and self-confidence to women. Molyneux noted that practical gender needs, in contrast, are those that are formulated from the concrete conditions women experience. Practical needs, consequently, are usually a response to an immediate perceived necessity, which is identified by women within a specific context: these include water provision, health care and employment.

Disillusionment with the welfare approach started to surface by the 1970s, out of the failure of modernization theory as well as the increasing evidence on the negative effects of Third World development projects on women. The development planners remained "unable to deal with the fact that women must perform two roles in society whereas men perform only one." (Tinker 1976: 22). The concerns voiced were heard by the UN and led to the First International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City in 1975 that formally *put women on the agenda* and to the subsequent developments, especially of a number of alternative approaches to women, namely, equity, anti-poverty, efficiency and empowerment. It should be noted that despite their common origin and the consequent confusion of including them all in the WID approach, there are significant differences among them.

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made the three-fold conceptualization of women's interests, strategic gender interests and practical gender interests).

(ii)   The Equity Approach

Equity approach is the original WID approach, introduced during the 1976-85 United Nations Women's Decade. It seeks to gain equity for women and recognises that women who are active participants in the development process through both their productive and reproductive roles provide a critical (but often-unacknowledged) contribution to economic growth (Moser 1993:63). Fundamentally, within this framework it is assumed that economic strategies have frequently had a negative impact on women, and advocates for a place for women in development processes through access to employment and to the market place; thus it accepts women's practical gender need to earn a livelihood.

Buvinic (1983, 1986) described the equity approach as primarily concerned with inequality between men and women, in both public and private spheres of life and across socio-economic groups. It identifies the origins of women's subordination not only in the context of family but also in relations between men and women in the market place. Hence, it places considerable emphasis on economic independence and equality as synonymous with equity; and equity programmes are recognized as uniting notions of development and equality. The underlying logic is that women beneficiaries have lost ground to men in the development processes, and therefore, in a process of redistribution, men have to share in a manner that entails women from all socio-economic classes 'gaining' and men from all socio-economic classes 'losing' or 'gaining less', through positive discrimination policies if necessary (see also Buvinic, Lycette and McGreevey 1983).

It is also argued that the main thrust of the equity approach, an offshoot of the concern for equality between the sexes, relies on legal methods and is rooted in the vision of justice, "where women, men, girls and boys are valued equally and are crucial partners for sustainable development" (Snyder and Tadesse 1995:11). Families and communities are strengthened when men recognize and support women and girls in all aspects of their lives, especially their education, health, access to resources and

decision-making opportunities.

All this rhetoric notwithstanding, the equity approach encountered a host of problems, including dysfunctional schemes and ambiguous initiatives, unacceptable and practically inapplicable in many developing nations. One of the major assumptions of the equity approach was that legislated equal opportunity would ensure equal benefits for all; however, it goes without saying that despite the decrease in discriminatory laws in many parts of the world, women found that legislation or policy changes alone did not guarantee equal treatment; equal rights to education do not mean that girls and boys are schooled in equal numbers or to an equal degree (CCIC, MATCH & AQOCI 1991:15). Moreover, the recognition of equity as a policy principle did not guarantee its implementation in practice – a typical situation in many developing countries. Methodologically also the equity programmes are faulty: the lack of a single indicator of social status or progress of women and of baseline information about women's economic, social and political status means that there is no standard against which 'success' could be measured (USAID 1978).

It should be noted that the equity approach was designed to meet strategic gender needs through top-down legislative measures.   But the bitter fact is that even the incorporation of practical gender needs into the development plans does not guarantee their implementation; for example, though the inclusion of women's concerns into the framework of Indian Five Year Plans indicates her constitutional commitment to equality of opportunity, it ensures little practical changes (see Mazumdar 1979). Additionally, the biggest problem associated with the equity approach, dubbed as Western-exported feminism to Third World women, was its unpopularity among the latter. In fact, the 1975 Conference went to the extent of labeling feminism as ethnocentric and divisive to WID. Thus the bottom line was the outright rejection of this approach by the developing nations, who claimed that to take "feminism to a woman who has no water, no food and no home is to talk nonsense" (Bunch 1980: 27). No wonder it was felt that the primary problem to be addressed was poverty.

    (iii)   The Anti-Poverty Approach

This is the second WID approach, introduced from the 1970s onwards (that is, by the end of the unsuccessful First Development Decade), as a toned down version of the equity approach, thanks to the reluctance of the development agencies to interfere with the given gender division of labour (Buvinic 1983). It advocates the redistribution of goods, and is embedded in the concept of growth, provision of basic needs, and ensuring an increase in the productivity of poor women. The fundamental principle of this approach was the assumption that women's poverty is the result of underdevelopment and not of subordination; hence, it recognized the productive role of women and sought to increase the income earnings of women through small-scale enterprises, on the basis that poverty alleviation and the promotion of balanced economic growth requires the increased productivity of women in low-income households. Moser (1993: 67-8) recalls that this approach was formulated on the assumption that the origin of women's poverty and inequality with men is attributable to their lack of access to private ownership of land and capital, and to sexual discrimination in the labour market. Hence its aim to increase the employment and income-generating opportunities of poor women through better access to productive resources. Note that this shifts the emphasis from reducing inequality between men and women to reducing income inequality.

As already mentioned, it was the failure of the modernization theory and its 'trickle down' assumption that led to this shift in approach in favour of employment opportunities as a major policy objective, an early initiative being the International Labour Organization's World Employment Programme. The working poor became the target group and the informal sector with its assumed autonomous capacity for employment generation, the solution (Moser 1978, 1984). World Bank followed in 1972, cancelling its preoccupation with economic growth and embracing a new concern with the eradication of poverty and the promotion of 'growth with redistribution'. This marked the prominence of the basic needs strategy, with its primary purpose to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and fuel, along with the social needs such as education and community participation through employment and political involvement (Ghai 1978; Streeton et al. 1981). The target group here included poor women also,

following the recognition (i) that the 'trickle down' failed partly because women had been ignored in previous development plans and (ii) of the traditional importance of women in meeting many of the basic needs of family (Buvinic 1982). The programme's central focus or strategy was to overcome hunger and malnutrition that accompany poverty. It should also be noted that the anti-poverty approach encouraged the spread of community revolving loan funds (traditional micro-credit schemes), thus opening the question of women's access to formal financial institutions (Snyder and Tadesse 1995).

The anti-poverty approach, as Moser (1993: 68) has noted has three major problems. (1) Though it has the potential to modify the gender division of labour within the household, which inevitably implies changes in the balance of power between men and women within the family, in practice this potential gets reduced because the focus is specifically on low-income women and on sex-specific occupations. (2) Since the programmes for low-income women in the developing countries may reduce the already insufficient amount of aid allocated to low-income groups by the state, the governments may remain reluctant to allocate resources from national budgets to women. "While income-generating projects for low income women have proliferated since the 1970s, they have tended to remain small in scale, to be developed by NGOs (most frequently all-women in composition), and to be assisted by grants, rather than loans, from international and bilateral agencies." (*ibid*.). (3) Income-generating projects for women meet practical gender needs by augmenting their income, but unless and until employment leads to greater autonomy, it fails to meet strategic gender needs. This explains the essential difference between the equity and anti-poverty approaches (*ibid*: 69). Moreover, the anti-poverty programmes assume that women have 'free-time', often only succeed by extending their working day and thus increase their triple burden. Therefore, unless the anti-poverty projects have an inbuilt mechanism to lighten the burden of domestic and child care duties, it may fail even to meet practical gender need to earn an income.

(iv)   The Efficiency Approach

This is the third WID approach, adopted during the 1980s debt crisis, that is, in the context of the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP) imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank on the developing countries. With increased efficiency and productivity as two of the main objectives of SAP, there is no wonder that efficiency became the policy approach towards women. It is recognized as the most prevalent approach used today by the WID movement (Janet Momsen 1991: 102; Moser 1993: 70). Although Kate Young (1993:39) attributes the emergence of the efficiency approach to the retrenchment of the anti-poverty policies of the 1980s, its origin is no doubt more associated with the introduction of SAP in most developing countries. The efficiency approach rests on the neo-liberal notions of restructuring to reap the benefits of market forces, of economic growth, and of international trade. As Pettman (1996:173) noted, efficiency is popular with many donor agencies, governments, and international agencies, discovering women as 'workers'. This involves a shift of attention from women to development, seeing WID as a resource-management focus. It is argued that the shift from equity to efficiency reflects a general recognition of a specific economic fact that 50 percent of the human resources available for development were being wasted or underutilized. Efficiency in development was interpreted as consisting in fully utilizing these resources, as efficient allocation of resources optimizes growth rates with concomitant social benefits (Willis 2005:47). This shift towards development also had an underlying assumption that increased economic participation of Third World women is automatically linked with increased equity; on this basis, organizations such as USAID, the World Bank and OECD have argued that an increase in women's economic participation in development links efficiency and equity together (Moser 1993: 70).

Contrary to the assertions of the modernization theory, the informal economy has persisted and grown over the past two decades both in developing and developed countries; and women tend to be over-represented in informal employment, leading to the phenomenon of 'feminization of labour force', more so, in the lower-paid, lower-status and more precarious forms of informal employment. Trade liberalization has opened an easy gate for women into labour-intensive export-oriented light manufacturing (UNRISD 2005), where low wages have been shown to be important in

gaining market share (Cho et al. 2004; Hsiung 1996; Seguino 2000a, 2000b). This in turn is used for an interpretation that women's low wages in export industries have effectively generated the foreign exchange for the purchase of technologies and capital goods – what Seguino (2005) calls the 'feminization of foreign exchange'. However, there has been little positive impact in terms of narrowing gender gaps, especially in wages;[8] informal employment has drawn more women than men in all developing regions, except North Africa (ILO 2002), with women's hourly earnings typically falling below those of men in identical employment categories, especially in the case of own-account workers (Heintz 2005). The neo-liberal policies have resulted in a growing gap between rich and poor households in many countries, both developed and developing (Cornia et al. 2004; Milanovic 2003), with the unpleasant implication of growing inequalities not only between women and men but also among women, with those in the better paid jobs seeking to employ those at the bottom of the pay scales for domestic support. It is now generally agreed that markets are "powerful drivers of inequality, social exclusion and discrimination against women, whose unpaid care work held the social fabric together without recognition or reward" (Maxine Molyneux and Shahra Razavi 2006: 11), and "rather than liberating women into the workplace, globalization or modernization has bred a new underclass of low paid or unpaid women workers." (Wichterich 2000: 18). In fact what modernization has achieved is an increase in women's productive and reproductive roles, with this 'double day' resulting in general in a heavier workload on women.

Moreover, the growth of informal work across the globe, along with the casualization of formal sector employment, has helped employers not only lower labour costs, but also sidestep labour laws and social security obligations, resulting in increasing precariousness of jobs and greater insecurity of livelihoods for both female and male workers. The SAP in the neo-liberal framework has sought to rewrite the role of state as a mere facilitator of the market forces rather than as the erstwhile free or subsidized provider of public goods, which are now made available only for a user fee. This in turn has meant that poorer households have to adjust by shifting more of the care into

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[8] It is in fact argued that the success of the East Asian 'tigers' can be partly attributed to such gaps (Seguino 2000a).

the household and onto the shoulders of women as "shock absorbers" and carers of last resort for households on the edge of survival (Elson 2002); the increased user cost of health services has meant that women can less frequently afford to use such services for themselves and their children (Mackintosh and Tibandebage 2004).

The efficiency approach, relying on all the four roles (i.e. reproduction, homemaker, production and community participation)[9] of women and an elastic concept of women's time, only meets relatively practical gender needs at the cost of longer working hours and increased unpaid work (Wallace and March 1991:166). Indeed, women are seen primarily in terms of their capacity to compensate for the declining social services by extending their working days (and hours), thanks to SAP. Though Moser characterizes this approach as top-down, "without gendered participatory planning procedures", she also admits that women's increased economic participation "has implications for them not only as reproducers, but also increasingly as community managers" being included in the implementation phase of projects (Moser 1993:70-71) – a consequence of the need for greater efficiency: women were reported to be more reliable than men in repaying loans and also of greater commitment as community managers in ensuring the flow of services (Fernando 1987; Nimpuno-Parente 1987). Although the fact that 'participation' and 'participatory approaches' are encouraged by multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and NGOs suggests that these are the ideas which have been taken on board, the dimensions of participation that could challenge existing practices and power relations are however not engaged with (Willis 2005: 105) – miles to go before empowerment is reached.

(v)   The Empowerment Approach

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[9] (Western) feminists have identified a 'triple role' of the Third World women in general: (i) reproductive work, the childbearing and rearing responsibilities, (ii) productive work, as secondary income earners, and (iii) community managing work around the provision of items of collective consumption, undertaken in the local community. Homemaking, care, socialization and maintenance, is considered a part of reproductive work (see, for example, Edholm et al. 1977). But we explicitly differentiate it from the latter, which is more biological.

The empowerment approach, purported to empower women through greater self-reliance by means of supporting bottom-up/grassroots mobilization such as the micro-credit scheme, signals a strengthening of feminist work in the developing countries. As the cornerstone of GAD doctrine, the empowerment approach developed out of the dissatisfaction with the original WID as equity approach, and is concerned with counteracting its marginalization, by integrating gender as a crosscutting issue in development organization and in interventions (often referred to as 'gender mainstreaming'). It arose unlike other approaches less from the research of the First World feminists but more from that of the emergent feminists and NGOs in the developing countries. The Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) has in general been acknowledged as the best-known champion of this approach (Snyder and Tadessa 1995; Moser 1993).[10] According to DAWN, "it is the experiences lived by poor women throughout the Third world in their struggles to ensure the basic survival of their families and themselves that provide the clearest lens for an understanding of development processes. And it is their aspirations and struggles for a future free of the multiple oppressions of gender, class, race, and nation that can form the basis for the new visions and strategies that the new world now needs." (Gita Sen and Caren Grown 1987: 9-10). In this context, DAWN identifies empowerment with personal autonomy, which means for the poor and for the nations of the developing world that they are able to make their own choices in the realms of social, economic and political life. This in turn calls for participation and seeks to create self-reliance, ensuring that targeted measures reach women through autonomous women's organizations. The fundamental assumption here thus concerns the interrelationship between power and development, the importance for women to increase the power. But this power does not mean domination over others with a win (women) – lose (men)

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[10] DAWN is a network of women scholars and activists from the economic South who engage in feminist research and analysis of the global environment and are committed to search for alternative and more equitable development processes. See DAWN (1985)/ Gita Sen and Caren Grown (1987) that constitutes a core part of their initial project or manifesto and Antrobus (1991) for a brief history of DAWN and some insights from its research that affect the development paradigm.

situation. "The dominant understanding within social sciences has been of power as 'power over', whereas the feminist understanding of empowerment should be a dynamic one, which conceptualizes power as a process rather than a particular set of results." Afshar (1997: 13). In this context empowerment becomes a process that cannot be given to or for women, but has to emerge from them. "This is identified as the right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change, through the ability to gain control over crucial material and non-material resources. It places far less emphasis than the equity approach on increasing women's 'status' relative to men. It thus seeks to empower women through the redistribution of power within, as well as between, societies." (Moser 1993: 75). This conception of empowerment as a dynamic, enabling process in turn has implications for political action and for development agencies.

Empowerment no doubt requires a transformation of the social structure now marked by women's subordination. Fundamental legal changes are presupposed for justice for women in society – changes in law, civil codes, systems of property rights, labour codes, control over women's bodies and the social and legal institutions that underwrite male control and privilege. Note that the equity approach also identifies these strategic needs, but the *modus operandi* differs: while the former (for that matter, all the previous approaches) relies on top-down legislations and interventions, the empowerment approach functions in a bottom-up, participatory planning framework of women's organizations at grass-root level. Important entry points of intervention are thus popular education, organization and mobilization. Note that the welfare approach also stresses the importance of women's organizations and utilizes them, but as a top-down means of delivering services; moreover, the welfare approach acknowledges only the reproductive-homemaker roles of women. On the other hand, the empowerment approach recognizes all the four roles of women (i.e. community participation, homemaker, reproduction and production) and seeks to raise women's consciousness through bottom-up organizations and mobilize them against subordination (Moser 1993: 76). It also differs from the equity approach in respect of the means of reaching the goal of strategic gender needs. The failure or limited success of the legislative initiatives under the equity policy has stood to temper the moves of the empowerment

approach: it seeks to reach the strategic gender needs through the practical needs used to build up a secure support base, as exemplified by a number of Third World women's organizations, such as SEWA in India, Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and GABRIELA in the Philippines.

However, there has been a volley of postmodernist critiques of the DAWN alternative to conventional development; for instance, Mitu Hirshman (1995) notes that by establishing women's labour, which is an androcentric idea of capitalism and modernism, as the 'clearest lens' through which to understand and analyse their experiences, it creates an unnecessary hierarchy among different aspects of women's lived realities. "By positing "poor women's labour" as the defining category and the founding source of women's experiences in the South, and also as the grounds for their alternative approach to development, the authors commit themselves to a form of essentialism which seeks to establish a priori an indisputable natural and innate essence to Third World women's lives and experiences. This is derived not necessarily from "biological facts", but from secondary sociological and anthropological universals, which define the sexual division of labout." Mitu Hirshman (1995: 45). Moreover, the alternative empowerment approach of DAWN also "suffers from the same economistic bias as mainstream development theory, which is entrenched in the belief that material needs constitute the sole determinant of human existence. Thus it appears that for those practioners adopting Sen and Grown's approach, the provision of food-fuel-water (reproduction) form the cornerstone of women's existence, bereft of apecific histories, cultures and social setting within which such "needs" are articulated. The emphasis, unwaveringly, is on the economic realm of the women's existence. They naively assume that once the bread-and-butter (basic needs) are taken care of, other needs of a non-economic nature will fall into place." (ibid: 53). Although DAWN has been criticized particularly on the 'development question' and the 'women question', it still possesses very powerful analyzing tools on women's empowerment, given the circumstances under which the organization emerged.

The empowerment approach had initially little influence on mainstream development agencies, even after the general recognition of the GAD approach, even though a few

countries like Canada and Norway started to support the empowerment initiatives of NGOs by providing funds. The story however changed for a better turn with the publication of the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) 1995 Human Development Report (HDR) that revived the interest in the issue of gender equality with its effort to supplement the human development index (HDI) with the gender-related development index (GDI) and a gender empowerment measure (GEM). Subsequently, other international development agencies followed suit, and now almost every agency has an empowerment division attached to its anti-poverty policy forum. For instance the World Bank has brought out a number of conceptual and empirical studies on empowerment (see World Bank 2002; Ruth Alsop et al. 2006; Ruth Alsop and Nina Heinsohn 2005; Ruth Alsop 2005).

Recognizing the existence of persistent and emerging challenges that hinder women's full and equal participation in societies throughout the region, such as the impact of globalization and the evolving information society, the rise of HIV/AIDS infection among women, the feminization of ageing, trafficking and other forms of gender violence, as well as systemic institutional inequalities, GAD priority areas include:

> Economic, social and political empowerment of women
>
> Addressing violence against women
>
> Women's rights as human rights
>
> Gender equality and gender mainstreaming

GAD provides capacity-building and training, facilitates policy formulation, and awareness-raising and outreach throughout the region and globally. GAD welcomes opportunities to engage in new partnerships and strengthen long-standing networks in an effort to promote cross-cutting and multidimensional approaches to progressive change for women and girls throughout the region.

One resolution in the Beijing Platform for Action to have enjoyed marked progress is that calling for women's greater access to public office. Even if governments have been uneven in their responses and there is still far to go, nonetheless the entry of more women to representative office is an achievement that deserves celebration as a

contribution to deepening democracy around the world.

Although the average proportion of women in national assemblies has only increased from 9 per cent in 1995 to almost 16 per cent in 2004, a level far short of the Beijing call for equality, 16 countries have managed to put 30 per cent or more women into their national legislatures. In 2003, Rwanda achieved a world record with a parliament in which almost half of members were women, a higher proportion than in the highest-ranking OECD country. In the same year Finland achieved the simultaneous tenure of a woman head of state (president) and head of government (prime minister)—another "first" for elected women in political life. However, such achievements remain exceptional. In the absence of measures such as affirmative action to boost numbers of female candidates, the level of women in politics worldwide remains low, increasing at the painfully slow pace of only 0.5 per cent a year

Women's activism in civil society is the main force behind women-friendly legislative change, and underpins the efforts of feminists in public office. A strong and autonomous women's movement can greatly magnify the influence of a women's caucus, providing "an external base of support and legitimacy to counterbalance internal government resistance to the enactment and implementation of feminist policies". Politicians committed to gender equality need to take their cue from domestic women's movements. Their work would be much simpler if women's movements were united around a common agenda, or if political parties had greater incentives to respond to women's needs. Instead, gender concerns compete with many other priorities for women around the world, and may be subsumed by the requirement that they adhere to national or cultural codes whose versions of gender relations are decidedly inequitable.

Women are regarded as having low political efficacy because of their poor endowment in resources such as the time and money needed to create social and political influence, and because their interests diverge according to all manner of social cleavages. Yet women are well mobilized in civil society associations and social movements almost everywhere. The globalization of communications has created new opportunities, enabling women to experiment with new means for bringing key players—

governments, corporations and international organizations—to account. Global summits and conferences on a wide range of topics including trade, health and human rights have enabled women to network across countries and regions, and have conferred legitimacy on their own national and international movements as key participants in global policy debates.

Whether policy makers can take steps to reduce women's poverty or address gender injustice depends upon the implementation of policies on the ground. Signing up to international treaties and passing legislation—on issues such as women's rights, equal access to education, rape in marriage, and equal eligibility to credit and property ownership—is only a first step. Legislation and policy has to be translated into government directives, budgetary allocations, institutional arrangements, bureaucratic procedures and monitoring standards. The connection between political commitment and effective policy implementation is expressed in the concept of "governance". Programmes of governance reform have consumed considerable international and national attention in the recent past and present.

Definitions of "governance" range from a restricted view focusing on sound management of the economy, to an expanded view embracing such projects as the liberalization of politics and the reduction of social inequality. Governance is described by the World Bank as "the manner in which the State exercises and acquires authority". For policy purposes, governance is broken down into two broad components: the capacity of the state to exercise authority, and its accountability doing so. "Capacity" encompasses the state's "hardware": its financial resources, the extent and effectiveness of its physical and administrative infrastructure for distributing public goods, the number and skills of its personnel, and the conduct of budgeting and policy-making processes. "Accountability" describes the "software": the system whereby certain actors have the power to demand answers of others, and whether and how malfeasance is detected and punished.

Since the 1990s, an important focus of governance reform has been the strengthening of local government by the decentralization of powers, resources and responsibilities to

municipal councils and other locally administered bodies. The intention is to improve the quality and efficiency of services, strengthen fiscal management, enhance private sector development and increase local participation in decision-making processes. Decentralization is expected to produce these outcomes because, since government will be nearer to them, citizens will take a closer interest in how their taxes are spent, and will subject to closer scrutiny the actions of their local representatives than they do those who disappear to the capital, holding them accountable to local needs.

This part of the reform agenda has been more open than others to the active participation of women, both as elected local councillors and as the clients of local government services. Women generally, as well as low-income and other socially marginal groups, are expected to benefit from the accountability and service delivery improvements that government in close proximity should provide. This is particularly relevant where social programmes of importance to disadvantaged groups are to be developed and managed locally—programmes such as those for health outreach, primary schooling, employment and income generation, slum redevelopment, and low-cost water and sanitation services.

Local government is also regarded as a significant political apprenticeship arena for women. Barriers to their entry—such as the need to travel and spend time away from home, a large disposable income, a reasonable level of education, experience of political competition, and social connections—are lower at the local level. Local government is also regarded as appealing to women participants because of the focus on basic community services; women's engagement in informal community management is believed to make them attractive as local planners and managers. Institutional innovations to broaden local participation in decision making, such as new participatory budgeting arrangements in Brazil and elsewhere, can also give women more incentive and better opportunities to engage in public debate.

Table 2: Different policy approaches to Third World women

Issues	Welfare	Equity	Anti-poverty	Efficiency	Empowerment
Origins	Earliest approach: – residual model of social welfare under colonial administration – modernization/ accelerated growth economic development model	Original WID approach: – failure of modernization development policy – influence of Boserup and First World Feminists on Percy Amendment of UN Decade for Women	Second WID approach: – toned down equity because of criticism – linked to redistribution with growth and basic needs	Third and now predominant WID approach: – deterioration in the world economy – policies of economic stabilization and adjustment rely on women's economic contribution to development	Most recent approach: – arose out of failure of equity approach – Third World women's feminist writing and grassroots organization
Period most popular	1950-70; but still widely used	1975-85; attempts to adopt it during the Women's Decade	1970s onward: still limited popularity	Post-1980s: now most popular approach	1975 onward: accelerated during 1980s, still limited popularity
Purpose	To bring women into development as better mothers: this is seen as their most important	To gain equity for women in the development process: women essn as active	To ensure poor women increase their productivity: women's poverty seen as a problem of underdevelopment,	To ensure development is more efficient and more effective: women's	To empower women through greater self-reliance: women's subordination

	role in development	participants in development	not of subordination	economic participation seen as associated with equity	seen not only as problem of men but also of colonial and neo-colonial oppression
Needs of women met and roles recognized	To meet PGN in reproductive role, relating particularly to food aid, malnutrition and family planning	To meet SGN in terms of triple role – directly through state top-down intervention, giving political and economic autonomy by reducing inequality with men	To meet PGN in productive role, to earn an income, particularly in small-scale income-generating projects	To meet PGN in context of declining social services by relying on all three roles of women and elasticity of women's time	To reach SGN in terms of triple role – indirectly through bottom-up mobilization around PGN as a means to confront oppression
Comment	Women seen as passive beneficiaries of development with focus on their reproductive role; non-challenging, therefore widely popular especially with government and traditional NGOs	In identifying subordinate position of women in terms of relationship to men, challenging, criticized as Western feminism, considered threatening and not popular with government	Poor women isolated as separate category with tendency only to recognize productive role; reluctance of government to give limited aid to women means popularity still at small-scale NGO level	Women seen entirely in terms of delivery capacity and ability to extend working day; most popular approach both with governments and multilateral agencies	Potentially challenging with emphasis on Third World and women's self-reliance; largely unsupported by government and agencies; avoidance of Western feminism criticism means slow, significant growth of

					under-financed voluntary organization

Note: PGN = Practical gender need; SGN = Strategic gender need.

Source: Caroline Moser (1993: Table 4.1)

As researchers documented the social impacts of macroeconomic policies, more sober accounts of global developments emerged, especially after the Russian and Asian financial crises of 1997, which underscored the fragility of an international order based on unregulated financial flows. By 2000, when the "Plus Five" reviews of the UN's global conferences of 1995 took place, there was much less certainty that neoliberal globalization would deliver on its promise to improve people's lives. While inflation was brought under control in many countries, price stability was achieved at the expense of growth and job creation. Financial crises and economic volatility were more frequent, with predictable economic and social consequences. Income inequalities had widened all over the world, and fiscal deficits continued as governments faced severe difficulties in raising revenues to finance infrastructure, social services and other redistributive measures to compensate for the severe exclusions and failures of market-led growth.

With the spread and hardening of the neo-liberal illfare, there has been a reported waning of faith in market solutions during the 1990s and a revival of debates over alternatives leading to the so-called 'managed market approaches' (UNRISD 2005: 26). Among those that have pursued these approaches are several Asian economies, notably China, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan Province of China and, to a lesser extent India and Malaysia. Their macroeconomic approaches are often referred to as "heterodox"; that is, governments have exhibited a willingness to intervene strategically and to regulate markets in order to promote development and growth. There is no "one size fits all" formula (UNRISD 2005:27), and there have been interventions, to varying degrees, to regulate exchange rates, financial flows, trade and foreign direct investment. Some, especially the northeast Asian economies, have achieved impressive rates of

growth as well as significant reductions in poverty and in inequalities between social classes and households. The UNRISD report notes, however, that this approach came under increasing strain in the 1990s, especially after the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

5. Gender Analysis

Gender analysis seeks to identify the types of gender differences and inequalities that might otherwise be taken for granted – such as how men and women have different access to and control over resources, carry out different social roles, and face different constraints and receive different benefits. There are five commonly used gender analysis frameworks:

The Harvard Analytical Framework or the Gender Roles Framework or the "Gender Analysis Framework

This framework was developed by researchers at the Harvard Institute of International Development (HIID) in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Office of Women in Development. It represents one of the earliest efforts to systematize attention to both women and men and their different positions in society. It is based upon the position that allocating resources to women as well as men in development efforts makes economic sense and will make development itself more efficient – a position labelled as the 'efficiency approach'.

Key to the Harvard Analytical Framework is adequate data collected on men's and women's activities which are identified as either 'reproductive' or 'productive' types, which are then considered according to how those activities reflect access to and control over income and resources. Data are collected on three components: an activity profile, an access and control profile that looks at resources and benefits, and a list of influencing factors.

Because the approach emphasizes gender-awareness and does not seek to identify the causes of gender inequalities, it offers little guidance on how to change existing gender

inequalities. There is the expectation that having good data on gender will, on its own, allow practitioners to address gender concerns in their activities; it assumes that both the problem and the solutions are technical ones. Compared to more recent and more participatory approaches, the Harvard method does not involve informants in describing their own views of the development problems they face (Overholt, *et al*. 1985; Rao *et al*. 1991).

The Moser Gender Planning Framework

This framework, developed by Caroline Moser (1993), links the examination of women's roles to the larger development planning process. As already discussed in Chapter 2, this approach introduces the idea of women's 'three roles' in production, reproduction, and community management, and the implication that these roles have for women's participation in the development process. The framework is composed of several components (or tools). In the first, the triple roles of women are identified by mapping the activities of household members (including children) over the course of twenty-four hours:

Reproductive Roles: Childbearing and rearing, domestic tasks that guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the current and future work force (e.g., cooking, cleaning, etc.)

Productive Roles: Work done for remuneration, in cash or kind. (e.g., wage labor, farming, crafts, etc.)

Community Management Roles: Work that supports collective consumption and maintenance of community resources (e.g., local government, irrigation systems management, education, etc.)

The second component identifies and assesses gender needs, distinguishing between practical needs (to address inadequate living conditions) and strategic needs (for power and control to achieve gender equality).

The third component, or tool, disaggregates information about access to and control over resources within the household by sex: who makes decisions about the use of different assets.

The fourth component identifies how women manage their various roles, and seeks to clarify how planned interventions will affect each one.

Finally, the WID/GAD policy matrix evaluates how different planning approaches (welfare, equity, anti-poverty, efficiency, and empowerment) have addressed the triple roles and women's practical and strategic needs.

Gender Analysis Matrix

The gender analysis matrix was developed by Rani Parker (1993) as a quickly employed tool to identify how a particular development intervention will affect women and men. It uses a community-based technique to elicit and analyze gender differences and to challenge a community's assumptions about gender. Unlike some of the other tools described, this one is explicitly intended for use by the community for self-identification of problems and solutions. The principles of the Gender Analysis Matrix are:

• All requisite knowledge for gender analysis exists among the people whose lives are the subject of the analysis

• Gender analysis does not require the technical expertise of those outside the community being analyzed, except as facilitators

• Gender analysis cannot be transformative unless the analysis is done by the people being analyzed.

Each project objective is analyzed at four levels of society: women, men, household and community by various groups of stakeholders. They carry out the analysis by

discussing each project objective in terms of how it impacts on men's and women's labor practices, time, resources, and other socio-cultural factors, such as changes in social roles and status.

Women's Empowerment Framework

The Women's Empowerment Framework was developed by Sara Hlupekile Longwe (1995), a gender expert from Lusaka, Zambia (also see Sahay 1998). Her model is explicitly political, arguing that women's poverty is the consequence of oppression and exploitation (rather than lack of productivity), and that to reduce poverty women must be empowered. The framework postulates five progressively greater levels of equality that can be achieved:

Welfare is the lowest level at which a development intervention may hope to close a gender gap. Welfare denotes an improvement in socio-economic status, such as improved nutritional status, shelter, or income. But if an intervention is confined to this welfare level in a top-down approach, then women are only passive recipients of these benefits, rather than producing or acquiring such benefits for themselves. This therefore represents a zero level of empowerment.

Access is the first level of empowerment, since women improve their own status, relative to men, by their own work and organisation arising from increased access to resources. For example, women farmers may improve their production and general welfare by increased access to water, to land, to the market, to skills training, or to information. If women tend to increase their own access to information, it suggests the beginning of a process of conscientisation.

Conscientisation is the process by which women realise that their lack of status and welfare, relative to men, is not due to their own lack of ability, organisation or effort. It involves the *realisation* that women's relative lack of access to resources actually arises from the discriminatory practices and rules that give priority access and control to men. Conscientisation is therefore concerned with a collective urge to action to remove one

or more of the discriminatory practices that impede women's access to resources. It is here that we see the potential for strategies of improved information and communication, as a means for enabling the process of conscientisation, but driven by women's own need to understand the underlying causes of their problems, and to identify strategies for action. Where many women accept patriarchal norms, the leadership of more liberated and activist women is essential at this essential phase of fomenting dissatisfaction with the established patriarchal order.

Mobilisation is therefore the action level which complements conscientisation. First, it involves women's coming together for the recognition and analysis of problems, the identification of strategies to overcome discriminatory practices, and collective action to remove these practices. Here communication may not be merely concerned with the mobilisation of the group, but also to connect up with the larger women's movement, to learn from the successes of women's similar strategic action elsewhere, and to link up with the wider struggle. Here communication entails joining the global sisterhood in the struggle for equal rights for women.

Control is the level that is reached when women have taken action so that there is gender equality in decisions making over access to resources, so that women achieve direct control over their access to resources. They have taken what is rightly theirs, and no longer wait indefinitely to be 'given' resources merely at the discretion of men, or by the whim of patriarchal authority. Here the role of information and communication is to spread the word on the development of successful strategies.

Therefore these five levels are not merely a linear progression, but rather circular: the achievement of women's increased control leads into better access to resources, and therefore improved socio-economic status.

Social Relations Approach

The social relations framework was created by Naila Kabeer (1994) at the Institute of Development Studies in Sussex, UK, that draws on explicitly structural feminist roots.

It is more broadly oriented than earlier approaches, locating the family and household within the network of social relations connecting them to the community, market, and state. Kabeer writes that the triple roles model formulated by Moser is insufficiently attentive to the fact that most resources can be produced in a variety of institutional locations (households, markets, states, and communities) so that the same resources may be produced through very different social relations. In contrast, the Social Relations Approach allows the resulting analysis to show how gender and other inequalities are created and reproduced within structural and institutional factors, and then to design policies that can enable women to work to change those factors that constrain them. The Approach asserts that:

- Development is a process for increasing human well-being (survival, security and autonomy), and not just about economic growth or increased productivity.

- Social relations determine people's roles, rights, responsibilities and claims over others.

- Institutions are key to producing and maintaining social inequalities, including gender inequalities. Four key institutions are the state, the market, the community and the family. These have rules (how things get done), resources (what is used and/or produced), people (who is in/out, who does what), activities (what is done), and power (who decides, and whose interests are served), all of which engender social relations.

- The operation of institutions reflect different gender policies. Gender policies are differ according to the extent they recognise and address gender issues: gender-blind policies, gender-aware policies, gender-neutral policies, gender-specific policies, and gender-redistributive policies.

- Analysis for planning needs to examine whether immediate, underlying, and/or structural factors are responsible for the problems, and what their effects on those involved.

6. In Lieu of Conclusion

The experiences of the three decades since the start of the first UN decade of development (1961-1970), as already discussed, led to a dominant argument that the development investments not only failed to transform the poverty situation, but in many cases, exacerbated the condition in poor countries. The eventual discourses and deliberations on poverty linked economic issues to social spheres and converged to give particular emphasis on 'participation' and 'empowerment' of poor. A positive effect of this approach was that it provoked greater attention on women and created a space to incorporate women issues more centrally into development discussion. In this process, an extensive documentation of inequalities has washed out many conceptions and assumptions about the world of work and power and the household: the feminist critics of intra-family inequalities posed a challenge to conventional theories about 'self-interest', 'altruism' and 'reciprocity' and rejected the underlying assumption that the household, through its patriarch, maximizes utility for all of its members (Folbre, 1986b, 1996; McCrate, 1987; Sen, 1990). Thus, the search for issues of inquiry started from the domestic arena, from where the asymmetrical gender relations sprang out.

Furthermore, the feminist critics also contradicted the assumption that exposing and correcting the constraints on women's work and providing credit would automatically solve many of the inequalities since the control of income was still too often hostage to patriarchal control (Dyzer and Bruce, 1988, cited in Tinker, 1990). They claimed that increased women's opportunities to work often resulted in longer-hour workdays with no commensurate improvement in their status. Therefore, it remained an imperative to examine the structure of family and to analyze power and work, within and outside that unit. On the other hand, by identifying economic modernization as capitalist development, some argued that such an approach might systematically link women to patriarchy. They critiqued the women in development school (as well as the orthodox Marxist school) and hinted at the possibility that the existing forms of gender subordination

could be intensified, decomposed or recomposed by the growth of capitalism (Elson and Pearson, 1981:199).

It goes without saying that the policy interventions for gender development crucially depends upon the implementation of the policies on the ground. Signing up to international treaties and passing legislation is only a first step. The enacted legislation has to be translated into the actual life lived by women. The connection between political commitment and effective policy implementation is expressed in the concept of 'governance'. Programmes of governance reform have recently been receiving pride of place in international and national attention, an important focus of which has been the strengthening of local government by the decentralization of powers, resources and responsibilities to municipal councils and other locally administered bodies. Decentralization is expected to produce the intended outcomes because, as the government is nearer to them, the citizens will take a closer interest in how their taxes are spent, and will subject to closer scrutiny the actions of their local representatives, holding them accountable to local needs.

True, decentralization has helped achieve the active participation of women, especially of low-income and other socially marginal groups, both as elected local councillors and as the beneficiaries of local government services in social programmes of importance to disadvantaged groups, such as for health outreach, primary schooling, employment and income generation, slum redevelopment, and low-cost water and sanitation services. Though top-down, this anti-poverty approach has a good example in the *Kudumbashree* programme (Poverty Eradication Mission) of Kerala. Local government has also become a significant political apprenticeship arena for women. Such opportunities for local participation in decision making are truly empowering. However, it is repeatedly made clear in gender analysis that women do not constitute a homogeneous group, which in turn raises complex questions about interest representation in the political process. How can (the new elite) women in politics act as effective representatives of the interests of less advantaged women? What mechanisms are needed for constituency building and for holding women representatives accountable to those women on whose behalf they claim to speak? There are also concerns that the means that women are

using to reach political office are likely to influence their willingness to promote proposals for gender equality once in office. For example, the system of proportional representation, which works best for getting women elected once parties have adopted quotas for women, tends to breed loyalty to a party rather than the constituency, and at its worst, it can leave women representatives beholden to party bosses (Goetz and Hassim 2002; Macaulay 2005). And to crown it all, there have been such a large number of corruption cases, including women councillors, in the local bodies, as news paper reports in India goes, that there is no wonder if one concludes that decentralization drive has in fact decentralized corruption also.

Another channel for effecting policy intervention in the context of discourses on good governance has been the poverty-focused NGOs, supported by donor countries and agencies for grass-root intervention in the Third World countries. Thus the aid flow from the North has started moving away from the Third World governments, including the local ones, perceived by the aid agencies and the donor countries as essentially ineffective and often corrupt. Many emphasized the role of NGOs in alleviating rural poverty by reconsidering their ability to empower people and to contribute to alternative discourses of development (Escobar 1992; Patkar 1995; Wignaraja 1993). It is argued that the NGOs are in a position where their ingenious built-in-mechanisms can by-pass the endemic problem of loan default that bogged down much government programs in the past (Reza 1996). The major attractive features of these programs include: close targeting of the neediest borrowers; reliance on group formation strategies to ensure financial discipline and regular repayment; and loan delivery system without collateral requirement that poor can rarely fulfill (Khandeker, Khalily and Khan, 1996). The optimists about the potentials of NGO approach have categorically pointed out the significance of 'joint liability' or 'social collateral model' of NGO credit programs (Jain, 1996).

On the other hand, those who looked for alternative to existing development rather than development alternative emphasized the role of local or community associations to reach the ultimate goal of transformation, for their ability to politicize issues through pluralistic and non-party character (Esteva 1987; Rahnema 1997; Shiva 1986, 1987). Moreover, there are some critiques, which hint at the incidents of dropouts from credit and savings groups and high

interest rates of NGOs. Rutherford (1995, in Rutherford *et al.,* 1997) observes that the poor in Bangladesh commonly practice 'self-exclusion' from income generating credit initiatives. On the other hand, it is also alleged that the NGOs cover only middle and upper income poor as "increasingly the extreme poor are seen to be dropping out of credit programs after having failed to keep up with repayment of installments" (Hulme and Mosley 1995, cited in Sharif, 1997:72).

It is also argued that women are only confined to the use of such credit to low turnover small-scale activities, which are essentially non-threatening to the male- and class-dominated local political economy. This trend could limit the effect of such credit to 'welfare function' (poverty alleviation) only rather than effecting 'irreversible structural change' (Wood and Sharif, 1997:30-31). Again, the 'small business' like petty trading and livestock rearing only adds actors to an already over- crowded trading and petty production markets. This, in turn, reduces the returns for all and "they do not generate employment outside the immediate family receiving credit ... and thus only addresses the under-employment of family members" (Wood, 1997:295-296).

Most of the critics of micro-credit argue that the micro-credit programs for women expanded, in part, due to the financial viability of the institution providing small credit to women. Donors have 'discovered' women as more reliable and credit worthy and encouraged recipient agencies to provide women with credit (Hulme and Mosley, 1997). This line of argument suggests that the repayment of credit needs control and supervision and with women it becomes easier. Perhaps this is the key point that explains the reasons as to why NGOs are mainly predisposed with women credit groups. This presupposition has been provoked by the followers of Elson and Pearson (1981), who suggest that such preference for women is due to the fact that women are generally docile, they lack mobility and there is lesser likelihood of women joining organized labor protest (Milkman, 1983). Thus it is argued that the focus on women is not essentially linked to the concern for empowering women, rather it is determined by the concern for the program's viability. With regard to empowering approach of different development organizations, some scholars are skeptic that women are only 'instrumental' in achieving program goal, where policy makers synergistically tackle gender and poverty issues without making women understand the problems of women's

subordination (Goetz 1994; Jackson 1996). But some scholars also claim that "channeling resources particularly through women in poverty alleviation programs serves a range of goals: basic needs, welfare, equity and empowerment" (Kabeer, 1997:2).

Nevertheless, the focus on empowerment at the policy level reflects a growing awareness that the early formulations of women problems concerning their exclusion from development and their labor market position could not capture the full convolution of women's situation. The position of women in relation to men in the context of family and community is not blessed with the ability to fight the inequalities and deprivations. Under the circumstances, empowerment has been seen as a goal, as it emphasizes change in power relations through individual or group challenges to oppressive practices (Visvanathan, 1997).

Many NGOs have been encouraging savings and extending credit to poor with an approach that combines credit with literacy training and consciousness building, advocacy, technical assistance and marketing skills, all bundled in a comprehensive package of services. This strategy is based on an assumption that pure economic growth alone could not alleviate poverty. It is argued that there is a greater reduction in poverty when micro-credit programs are combined with increased access to basic social services.

The debate that view poverty removal as a transformation of poor lives is critical of the minimalist 'credit-alone' approach of the Grameen model and advocates a 'credit-plus' approach packed with social development strategies. The advocates of this strategy strongly criticize the World Bank and other key donors like USAID and ODA, due to their keenness to push the multi-sectoral, social development- oriented NGOs into a narrower function of micro-credit institutions (MCIs) without the costly accompaniment of social mobilization (Wood and Sharif, 1997). Such scholars also denounce a recent move of converting MCIs into micro-finance institutions (MFIs), as they assume that such a move will spoil the essential quality of a credit-plus strategy.

Before concluding let us reiterate that we require "studies of third world women which reveal their lives as meaningful, coherent and understandable instead of being infused 'by us' with doom

and sorrow" (Lazreg, 1988: 98).

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