

MASDAR

CAPABILITY STATEMENT IN GENDER ISSUES



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1. INTRODUCTION

Gender is a concept which is used to refer to women and men. This term is used to convey the fact that in most cases, the social distinctions between men and women, for example the positions they occupy, the roles they play and the social status they have are socially constructed and allocated. Gender is distinguished from sex, which is biologically determined. Because gender is socially constructed, it is affected by many factors and therefore, it varies in time, place and context.

Amongst the poor, women are more likely to be in poverty than men. It is estimated that approximately 1.3 billion people in the world fall below the international poverty line of US \$1 per day. Of these 900 million or 70 per cent, are women. These figures illustrate how women are disproportionately represented amongst the worlds poor.



Women play an essential role in both family and economic life but are generally disadvantaged

Poverty is much more complex than lack of incomes and low levels of consumption. It also involves lack of assets, technology skills, and low productivity, along with greater vulnerability and insecurity. In most societies, women are more disadvantaged than men in most of these areas as a result of gender inequality. They thus have fewer opportunities to move out of poverty through gaining access to economic resources. Gender inequality thus helps to perpetuate and reinforce poverty.

Yet women play an important part in economic life as entrepreneurs, business owners and workers – both in the formal and informal economies. Research suggests that when the incomes and resources of women are increased with poor households, they are more likely than men to use that income to the benefit of the whole household. If women are given education and training, they are more likely to pass that information on to their children.

Therefore, addressing the gender dimension of poverty is essential for the survival of current and future generations, and for effective poverty elimination.

Over the last thirty years there has been an increasing understanding of the essential role that women have in development and the need to mainstream gender issues in all development policies and strategies.

2. EVOLUTION OF APPROACHES

i) **WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT (WID)**

The term Women in Development was coined in the early 1970's, it focused on women only. This is a targeted approach which focuses on income generating activities and home management. There are 5 different approaches to WID.

1. **Welfare Approach**

This was popular between 1950 – 1970 but is still widely used. It is aimed at women's reproductive roles relating to food aid, malnutrition and family planning. Women are seen as passive beneficiaries.

2. **Equity Approach**

1975 – 1985. The original WID approach. Women were seen as active participants in development and top down political and economic state interventions to reduce inequality with men were introduced. This approach was seen as threatening and was not popular with governments.

3. **Anti Poverty Approach**

1970's onwards. The second WID approach, and still quite popular. The problem is that poor women become isolated as a category, limited aid is given to women by government, projects remain small in scale (mainly at NGO level).

4. **Efficiency Approach**

Post 1980's this is still the most popular of WID approaches today: To ensure development is effective women's economic participation is seen as associated with equity. Women are seen in terms of capacity and the ability to extend the working day. The approach relies heavily on the elasticity of women's time and unpaid labour.

5. **Empowerment Approach**

1975 onwards and most recent approach; women's subordination seen not only as a problem of men but as colonial and neo-colonial. Aim is to empower women with greater self-reliance. Bottom up growth through grass roots organisations is slow.

ii) **GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT (GAD)**

More recently the limitations of focusing on women in isolation has drawn attention of the need to look at "Gender in Development", that is the social relationship between men and women.

GAD takes a historic approach and looks at the needs of women and men and incorporates these into policies and programmes. Men and women play different roles in society, with gender differences shaped by historical and cultural determinants, among others, WID and GAD differ in terms of policy, focus and planning procedures.

The WID approach focuses on women; how they use their time productively, with access to credit and empowerment. However, women continued to lag behind men. GAD insists that women cannot be viewed in isolation from men, thus a focus on gender relations is needed when planning the development process. Its purpose is that of empowerment of women to achieve equity with men in society. Equity between men and women refers to:

- ❖ Greater control over resources
- ❖ Changes in their outlook
- ❖ Increase in freedom beyond the family unit

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT
AND GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT**

WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT		GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT
➤ An approach which views women as the centre of a problem.	1. The Approach	➤ An approach to develop all gender groups (men and women, boys, girls, aged and disabled).
➤ Women.	2. The Focus	➤ Relationship between men, women, boys and girls.
➤ The exclusion of women (half of the productive resources) from the development process.	3. The problem	➤ Unequal relations of power (rich, poor, women, men) that prevent equitable development and women's full participation.
➤ More efficient, effective and just development.	4. The goal	➤ Equitable, sustainable development with women, boys, girls and men as decision makers.
➤ Integrate women into existing development process.	The Solution	➤ Empower the disadvantaged and women and transform unequal relations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Women project ➤ Women's components ➤ Integrated projects ➤ Increase women's productivity ➤ Increase women's income ➤ Increase women's ability to look after the household 	The Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify and address practical gender needs determined by men, women, boys and girls to improve their lives. ➤ Address women's, men's, boys and girls strategic needs. ➤ Address strategic interests of the poor through people centred development

3. MASDAR CAPABILITY

RELEVANT PROJECTS	COUNTRY
Green Zones Women's Development Programme	Mozambique
Agricultural Research and Extension Project	Nepal
Gulmi Arghakhanchi Rural Development Project	Nepal
Southern Province Household Food Security	Zambia
Smallholder Macadamia Nut Project	Malawi
Management Support Group	South Africa
Safety Nets Monitoring	Malawi
North West Smallholder Agricultural Development Project	Uganda
PROSCARP	Malawi
District Development Support Programme	Zambia
RESAL (European Food Security Network)	Mozambique / Malawi
Socio Economic Survey of Cocoa Farming Community	Ghana
Isiolo District Support Programme	Kenya
Kano State ADP	Nigeria
Rural Sociology Study	Nigeria
Participatory Rural Development Project	Nigeria
Agricultural Planning Unit	Sudan
Zambia Agricultural Research and Extension Project	Zambia
Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme	Southern Africa
Micro Projects Programme in 6 States of the Niger Delta	Nigeria

The MASDAR group has over 27 years experience working with the major donor agencies on development projects in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. Increasingly these projects have emphasised the importance of gender issues and all donors are now promoting gender equality objectives in their aid programmes.



Female participant takes a leading role in Village Planning

In **Nepal**, on the Agricultural Research and Extension Project, our gender consultant played a major role in mainstreaming gender within the Department of Agriculture and other agricultural service organisation. This involved a major sensitisation programme within the Department, the implementation of a Gender Working Group to broaden the understanding of gender issues and the development of an appropriate curriculum for on-going training.

Also in **Nepal**, on the Gulmi Arghakhanchi Rural Development Project, gender issues were brought to the fore in village planning. Previously, women had had very little 'voice' in such exercises and so the project actively promoted their involvement. Once given the opportunity to have their say they proved very active and dedicated agents for change.

On the Management Support Group Project in **South Africa**, the MASDAR Social Development Adviser undertook a series of Awareness Training workshops with senior managers from the Northern Province Department of Agriculture. These included understanding the determinants of rural poverty and the important factor played by gender. Social Development training was also included in the curricula of the two agricultural colleges in the Province. This stemmed from the fact that the orientation of training hitherto, had largely been oriented towards commercial farming where concessions had been made to subsistence farming, the farming systems addressed tended to be stereotyped (and idealised) models of self-sufficient production by, predominantly, male farmers. Reality, however, suggested a vastly different target audience of risk adverse households, many of which are female headed, who rely on agricultural production to only a limited extent. An important component of this exercise was that the 'gender agenda' should not only be promoted by women. Gender goals will only be reached if men as well as women are fully involved in taking responsibility for gender issues.

On the Green Zone Women's Development Project in **Mozambique**, MASDAR provided a team of 8 consultants to assist in the development of the largest cooperative in the country. This Cooperative has the primary aim of improving the economic and social conditions of its women members. It has proved highly successful and its President, Celina Cosa, was named the 1998 laureate of the African prize for leadership for the Sustainable End of Hunger.



UCG Farmers with a new broiler house



Female farmer harvesting macadamia nuts

In **Malawi**, on the Smallholder Macadamia Nut Project, a MASDAR gender specialist has undertaken a training needs assessment on gender issues. This has highlighted not only the need for awareness training for Ministry staff, but also the need for extension staff to include women as a major target group for crop production. Previously, training had been based on stereotypes, with that targeted at women restricted to homemaking, childcare and cooking rather than credit, production and marketing. Female farmers have become very receptive to the new crop and are now an important target of the extension service.

4. INDICATIVE STAFF

MASDAR maintains a database of over 3000 consultants including those with specialist expertise in gender issues. Some key examples are:

Dr Penelope Perkin : Penelope started her career working with women's groups in Malawi. She subsequently took up an academic career and for the past 9 years has been short course coordinator at the world famous Agricultural Extension and Rural Development Department (AERDD) of Reading University. Amongst her teaching duties she conducts several important courses on gender issues and has supervised numerous theses on gender and women in development. Her practical background combined with her academic skills have enabled her to put theory into practice and for the last year she has been MASDAR's gender specialist on the Smallholder Macadamia Nut Project in Malawi.

Professor Christopher Tapscott : Chris is Dean at the University of the Western Cape and an expert in rural livelihoods. He has over 24 years applied socio-economic research and his current research interests include the determinants of rural poverty, changing land tenure systems, gender, and emerging patterns of social differentiation. He was Social Development Adviser for MASDAR on the MSG project in South Africa where he conducted awareness training on gender issues for senior departmental staff. He also helped redesign the curricula at two agricultural colleges to include social development issues.

Carolyn Knight : Carolyn is a Community Development Adviser with exceptional practical experience of participatory techniques. She has specialised skills in the gender analysis of economic activities and in training on gender awareness. She has worked for MASDAR in both Ghana and Nigeria.

Dr Elizabeth Jibrin : Dr Jibrin has a PhD in Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology and further postgraduate qualifications in gender issues, M & E and Training. She has a deep understanding of gender and women in development and was the coordinator in charge of monitoring women's development on ADP's throughout Nigeria.

5. SUMMARY

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach to development is presenting a clearer picture of the strategies rural people use to survive. Old stereotypes of the roles of men and women must be replaced and gender issues need to be mainstreamed into all development programmes.

MASDAR has an excellent track record in this important component of development and can supply first-class consultants to help address these issues.



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