

GENDER EQUITY, EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT: PRINCIPLES, DEFINITIONS AND FRAMEWORKS

BASIC GENDER PRINCIPLES

Gender is a social construct and can be changed:

- ◆ Biological sex differences are very few and are unimportant in terms of determining gender inequality.
- ◆ Because gender inequalities are socially determined they can be changed

Gender means both women and men:

- ◆ Discrimination based on gender affects both women and men adversely.
- ◆ Addressing gender inequality to redress discrimination against both women and men requires actions by both women and men to challenge their existing attitudes, privilege and practice.

Gender means changing inequality:

- ◆ Nevertheless in the current situation gender inequality affects women more adversely than men. This justifies prioritizing attention to those inequalities which disadvantage women.



WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS AND CEDAW

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 clarifies the fact that the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights also includes women. These rights include:

- ◆ rights to life, liberty, security of person and freedom from violence and degrading treatment and freedom of movement
- ◆ legal equality and protection by the law including equal rights in marriage including (in CEDAW) women's equal rights to make decisions in their family regarding property, marriage and children, property and resources.
- ◆ right to own property and freedom from deprivation of property
- ◆ freedom of thought, opinion and association
- ◆ right to work, freedom from exploitation and right to rest and leisure
- ◆ right to a standard of living adequate for health and right to education including special care for mothers



BASIC GENDER CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

GENDER DIFFERENCE: *Those differences between women and men which are freely chosen and value-neutral.* Most 'differences' between men and women however, even where they may involve an element of choice (e.g. what to wear) are nevertheless embedded in structures of gender inequality which generally ascribe lower value to women's choices and perpetuate unequal access to power and resources.

GENDER EQUALITY: *Elimination of those differences which ascribe lower value to women's choices and perpetuate unequal power and resources.* Also refers to those more limited areas where men's choices and access to power and resources are limited. A distinction is often made between *equality of opportunity* and *equality of outcome* to allow for the possibility that women and men may freely make different life choices.

GENDER EQUITY: The condition of *fairness and equality of opportunity* whereby gender is no longer a basis for discrimination and inequality between people. In a gender equitable society both women and men enjoy equal status, rights, levels of responsibility, and access to power and resources. This enables them to make their own informed, realisable and free life choices.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT: The *process through which women, who are currently most discriminated against, achieve gender equity.* This will include support for men to change those aspects of their behaviour, roles and privileges which currently discriminate against women. The extent of current disadvantage and inequality means that women's empowerment may require support by development agencies at household, community and macro levels.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

GENDER MAINSTREAMING: *Making women's concerns and experiences integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes* in all political, economic and social spheres. Its goals are gender equity through empowerment of women as well as men.

This will entail:

- ◆ prioritization of women's empowerment because of the much greater discrimination against women.
- ◆ not only increasing household incomes but also increasing women's economic, social and political empowerment
- ◆ challenging the root causes of gender inequality not just basic needs
- ◆ linking a grassroots participatory process with macro-level advocacy and lobbying



PRACTICAL NEEDS AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS

Women's interests: the diverse, complex and often conflicting interests which women hold as individuals and which are therefore shaped by class, ethnicity and age as well as by gender.

Practical gender interests: which arise because of differing gender roles and are formulated by women (or men) themselves, usually as a response to an immediate perceived need.

Strategic gender interests: which arise from analysis of women's subordination (and men's dominance) through feminist analysis and/or by women and men themselves. The aim is not to fulfil an immediate perceived need but to transform gender relations to secure a more lasting situation of gender equality.

Recently the need to critically examine men's interests and needs as part of the structures of unequal gender relations has been increasingly emphasised.

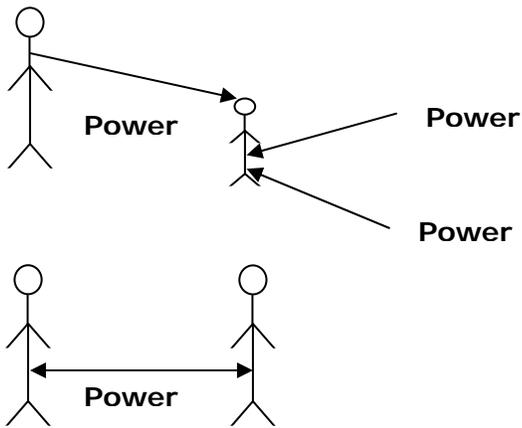


'TRICKY ISSUES'

- ◆ **Trade-offs for individuals:** the balance of gender roles, rights and responsibilities within any society often means that changing existing gender relations may mean accepting difficult trade-offs between for example increased independence and giving up some security, increased workload to increase income and so on.
- ◆ **Differences between people:** Any change in gender relations must also respect differences in aspirations between women and between men as well as between women and men. The aim is gender equity and equality of opportunity. This may not necessarily lead to equality of outcome.
- ◆ **Conflict of interest between women and men:** Both men and women will benefit from change. But men will need to give up existing unfair privileges.
- ◆ **Conflict of interest between women:** Some women are more privileged than others by the existing pattern of gender relations. Some women will also have to give up unfair privileges.
- ◆ **Other cross-cutting dimensions of inequality:** Not all differences between individual women and men are due to gender differences but also to other dimensions of economic and social inequality like income-level, social group and age. Any gender equity policy must also challenge other dimensions of inequality.



EMPOWERMENT FRAMEWORKS



LONGWE EMPOWERMENT PROCESS FRAMEWORK

(Longwe 1989, 1991)

Women's empowerment as a progression through:

- ◆ **welfare:** The level of material welfare of women, relative to men in such matters as food supply, income and medical care.
- ◆ **access:** Women's access to the factors of production: land, labour, credit, training, marketing facilities and all publicly available services and benefits on an equal basis with men;
- ◆ **conscientisation:** The understanding of the difference between sex roles and gender roles, and that the latter are cultural and can be changed;
- ◆ **participation:** Women's equal participation in the decision-making process, policy-making, planning and administration.
- ◆ **equality of control:** over the factors of production, and the distribution of benefits so that neither men nor women are in a position of dominance.

ROWLANDS POWER RELATIONS FRAMEWORK

(Rowlands 1997 building on Kabeer 1994 and Nelson and Wright 1996)

- ◆ **power from within:** individual changes in confidence and consciousness
- ◆ **power to:** increase in skills, abilities including earning an income, access to markets and networks
- ◆ **power over:** changes in power relations within households, communities and at macro-level
- ◆ **power with:** organisation of the powerless to enhance individual abilities and/or ability to challenge and change power relations

KABEER DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS

(Kabeer 2003)

Dimensions

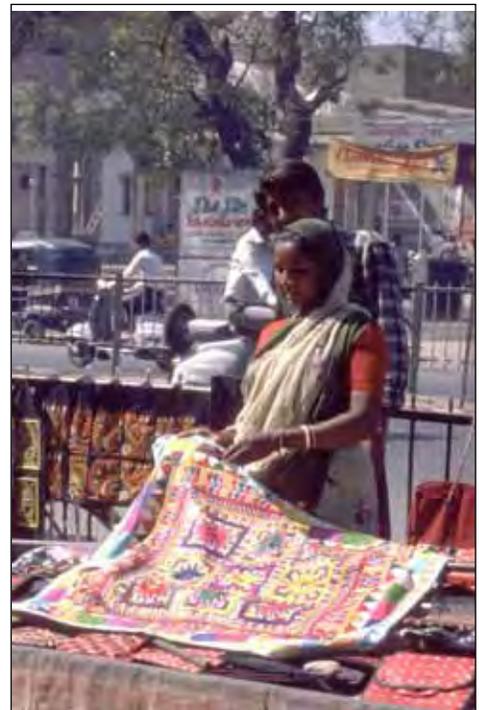
- ◆ Resources (conditions)
- ◆ Agency (process)
- ◆ Achievements (outcomes)

Outcomes can only be assessed in relation to initial conditions and agency.

Levels

- ◆ 'Deeper levels' Structural relations of class/caste/gender
- ◆ Intermediate levels Institutional rules and resources
- ◆ Immediate levels Individual resources, agency and achievements

Change is needed on all these levels.



EMPOWERMENT FRAMEWORKS USED IN MICRO-FINANCE

SCHULER, HASHEMI AND RILEY'S EMPOWERMENT INDEX

Uses eight indicators, each including a variety of specific actions or items:

- ◆ **freedom of mobility:** based on a list of places the respondent had gone (the market, a medical facility, the movies, outside the village) with additional point if she had gone alone
- ◆ **ability to make small purchases:** giving progressive points for purchasing small items used daily in food preparation for the family (kerosine oil, cooking oil, spices), small items for herself (hair oil, soap, glass bangles), purchasing ice cream or sweets for children. Extra points were given if decisions were normally made without asking the husband's permission, and if the purchases were made at least in part with money earned by the respondent herself.
- ◆ **ability to make larger purchases:** one point was given for purchasing pots and pans, two points for children's clothing, three points for saris for herself and four for buying the family's daily food. An additional point was given for each category if the purchase was made at least in part with money earned by the respondent herself.
- ◆ **involvement in major household decisions:** One point was given for making a decision (individually or jointly with the husband) within the past few years about house repair or renovation, one point for a decision to take in a goat to raise for profit, three points for deciding to lease land and four points for deciding to buy land, a boat or a bicycle rickshaw.
- ◆ **relative freedom from domination by the family:** The respondent was asked if, within the past year someone in the family had taken money from her against her will, taken land, jewelry or livestock from her against her will, prevented her from visiting her natal home or prevented her from working outside the home

- ◆ **political and legal awareness:** One point each was given for knowing the name of a local government official, a Member of Parliament, and the Prime Minister, and one point each for knowing the significance of registering a marriage and knowing the law governing inheritance.
- ◆ **involvement in political campaigning and protests:** The respondent was classified as "empowered" if she had campaigned for a political candidate or had gotten together with others to protest: a man beating his wife, a man divorcing or abandoning his wife, unfair wages, unfair prices, misappropriation of relief goods, or high-handedness of police or government officials.
- ◆ **economic security and contribution to family support:** a point was assigned if the woman owned her house or homestead land, a point for owning any productive asset, a point for having her own cash savings and an additional point if the savings were ever used for business or money-lending.

This statistical study was then followed up by a number of other more qualitative studies on issues such as domestic violence (1997b).

GOETZ AND SEN-GUPTA: LOAN CONTROL INDEX

Distinguishes between:

- ◆ **full control:** over entire productive process including marketing); significant control (over all aspects except marketing)
- ◆ **partial control:** provision of substantial labour inputs but little or no managerial control
- ◆ **very limited control:** minimal input to production process
- ◆ **no involvement:** where there was no labour input or managerial control

CHEN'S EMPOWERMENT FRAMEWORK (CHEN 1997)

Framework commissioned by UNIFEM for AIMS micro-finance impact study. Distinguishes between:

MATERIAL CHANGE:

- ◆ **income:** increased income and income security
- ◆ **resources:** increased access to, control over, and ownership of assets and income
- ◆ **basic needs:** increased or improved health care, child care, nutrition, education, housing, water supply, sanitation and energy source
- ◆ **earning capacity:** increased employment opportunities plus ability to take advantage of these opportunities

PERCEPTUAL CHANGE:

- ◆ **self-esteem:** enhanced perception of own individuality, interest and value
- ◆ **self-confidence:** enhanced perception of own ability and capacities
- ◆ **vision of future:** increased ability to think ahead and plan for the future
- ◆ **visibility and respect:** increased recognition and respect for individual's value and contribution

RELATIONAL CHANGE:

- ◆ **decision-making:** increased role in decision-making within the household and community
- ◆ **bargaining power:** increased bargaining power
- ◆ **participation:** increased participation in non-family groups, in local institutions, in local government, in political process
- ◆ **self-reliance:** reduced dependence on intermediation by others for access to resources, markets, public institutions plus increased ability and ability to act independently
- ◆ **organisational strength:** increased strength of local organisations and local leadership

OSMANI CO-OPERATIVE CONFLICT MODEL

Uses Sen's co-operative conflict model and distinguishes between:

- ◆ **breakdown position:** how well each person can do without any co-operation
- ◆ **perceived interest:** and the degree to which these take account of a person's own well-being
- ◆ **perceived contribution:** the degree to which actual contribution is valued

EMPOWERMENT MATRIX FROM CASHE, INDIA

Matrix from gender training for CASHE Programme, Care-India focuses on dimensions and levels, incorporating different types of power relation into the cells. The indicators themselves are only intended as a possible guide to thinking and there are many possible indicators which could be put in each cell.

	WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT	WOMEN'S WELL-BEING	WOMEN'S SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND LEGAL EMPOWERMENT
INDIVIDUAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - access to micro-finance services - control over own income - control over own productive assets and property - access to markets - reduction in burden of unpaid domestic work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - skills including literacy - high health and nutrition status - awareness of and access to reproductive health services - access to public welfare services - personal security and freedom from violence - control over own fertility - adequate leisure time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assertiveness and sense of autonomy - recognition of possibility of challenging gender subordination including cultural 'tradition, legal discrimination and political exclusion - freedom of movement and access to the world outside the home - knowledge of cultural, legal and political processes - individual action to challenge and change cultural perceptions of women's capacities and rights at household and community levels - individual engagement with and taking positions of authority within cultural, legal and political processes
HOUSEHOLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - equal influence between women and men in household economic decision-making - equal control over all household economic resources - equal rights to self-determination in economic role outside the household - equal participation in unpaid household work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - equal control over valued areas of household decision-making including fertility decisions - equal share of household consumption expenditure - equal valuation of and increased expenditure on girl children and other female family members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - equal rights to freedom outside the home - equal rights to political participation - equal value given to women and men's roles and capacities
COMMUNITY/ MARKET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support for women's participation in lucrative and non-traditional occupations - provision of wage employment for other women at good wages - joint action to challenge discrimination in women's access to resources (including land rights) - elimination of gender discrimination and women's exclusion from markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - joint action for increased public welfare provision for women - joint action to defend other women against abuse in the household and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase in women's networks for support in times of crisis - local movements to challenge cultural, political and legal gender subordination at the community and macro-level
MACRO-LEVEL NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - legal economic equality - affirmative action to promote women's incomes and property ownership - integration of reproductive services in national economic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - affirmative action to promote women's equal education, health and nutrition - women's equal and independent right to public welfare provision - enforcement of women's legal rights to freedom from fear of sexual violence within and outside the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - structures to ensure women's equal political participation - action to promote positive images of women in the media