Gender Planning in the Third World:
Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs

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Summary. — Recognition of the important role that women play in Third World development has not necessarily been translated into planning practice. This paper describes the development of gender planning, which in identifying that women and men play different roles in Third World society and therefore often have different needs, provides both the conceptual framework and the methodological tools for incorporating gender into planning. These relate to the categorization of the triple role of women and the distinction between practical and strategic gender needs. The paper illustrates the capacity of different interventions to meet gender needs, and provides a critique of different policy approaches to "women in development" from a gender planning perspective.

1. INTRODUCTION

While the important role that women play in Third World development processes is now widely recognized, conceptual awareness of the issues of "gender and development" has not necessarily resulted in its translation into planning practice. Indeed for many practitioners involved in different aspects of socioeconomic development planning, the lack of adequate operational frameworks has been particularly problematical. The purpose of this article is to contribute toward the resolution of this problem. It describes the development of gender planning, a planning approach which, in taking account of the fact that women and men play different roles in Third World society and therefore often have different needs, provides both the conceptual framework and the methodological tools for incorporating gender into planning.1

The article mentions briefly the background to such an approach before describing the underlying conceptual rationale of gender planning, which relates to the identification of women's triple role and the distinction between practical and strategic gender needs. It illustrates the capacity of different planning interventions to meet gender needs, with examples from such sectors as employment, housing and basic services. Finally it provides a critique of a number of different policy approaches to "women and development" from the perspective of gender planning, and identifies the potential and limitations of each approach for meeting the needs of low-income Third World women.

2. BACKGROUND

The United Nations Decade for Women (1976–85) has played a crucial part in highlighting and publicizing the important, but often previously invisible, role of women in the economic and social development of their countries and communities, and the "plight" of low-income women in Third World economies. In fact during this decade there has been a considerable shift in approach on the part of both academic researchers and policy makers. Researchers have moved away from a preoccupation with the role of women within the family, toward an understanding of the complexities of women's employment. Research on both waged workers and those in the informal sector, in urban and rural areas, has assisted in identifying both the importance and the diversity of low-income women's productive activities to Third World economies.2 Policy makers have begun to shift their focus from a universal concern with welfare-oriented, family-centered programs which assumed motherhood as the most important role for women in the development process, to a diversity of approaches emphasizing the productive role of women. The so-called Women in Development (WID) approach, adopted by the United States Agency for International Development
(USAID), with its underlying rationale that women are an untapped resource that can provide an economic contribution to development, has had an important influence in popularizing income-generating projects for women.

More recently a further shift in approach, principally in academic writing, has recognized the limitations of focusing on women in isolation and has drawn attention to the need instead to look at "gender and development." The focus on gender rather than women was originally developed by feminists concerned about the manner in which the problems of women were perceived in terms of their sex, i.e., their biological differences with men, rather than in terms of their gender, i.e., in terms of the social relationship between men and women, a relationship in which women have been systematically subordinated. Gender-aware approaches are concerned with the manner in which such relationships are socially constructed; men and women play different roles in society, their gender differences being shaped by ideological, historical, religious, ethnic, economic and cultural determinants. These roles show similarities and differences between classes as well as societies, and since the way they are socially constructed is always temporarily and spatially specific, gender divisions cannot be read off on checklists.

As a result of these developments, lip service is now paid to "women and development" at international, governmental and nongovernmental levels. Despite the recognized limitations of focusing on women in isolation, Ministries of Women's Affairs and WID units with predominantly female staff have proliferated throughout the world, in countries as diverse as Japan, Zimbabwe and Belize (Gordon, 1984). This has not, however, necessarily meant that within it the woman's position is subordinate. Gender-aware approaches are concerned with the manner in which such relationships are socially constructed; men and women play different roles in society, their gender differences being shaped by ideological, historical, religious, ethnic, economic and cultural determinants. These roles show similarities and differences between classes as well as societies, and since the way they are socially constructed is always temporarily and spatially specific, gender divisions cannot be read off on checklists.

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3. THE RATIONALE FOR GENDER PLANNING

Can we plan for the needs of low-income families generally or is it necessary to plan for the needs of women in their own right? Gender planning is based on the underlying conceptual rationale that because men and women play different roles in society, they often have different needs. Therefore when identifying and implementing planning needs it is important to disaggregate households and families within communities on the basis of gender. To identify these different needs requires an examination of two planning stereotypes relating first to the structure of low-income households and, second, to the division of labor within the household.

Despite an emphasis on planning for people, in current Western planning theory and practice concerned with low-income communities there is an almost universal tendency to make two assumptions, regardless of the empirical reality of the particular planning context. First, that the household consists of a nuclear family of husband, wife and two or three children. Second, that within the household there is a clear sexual division of labor in which the man of the family, as the "breadwinner," is primarily involved in productive work outside the home, while the woman as the housewife and "homemaker" takes overall responsibility for the reproductive and domestic work involved in the organization of the household. Implicit in this is also the assumption that within the household there is an equal control over resources and power of decision making between the man and the woman in matters affecting the household's livelihood. In most Third World societies, this sexual division of labor is seen to reflect the "natural" order, and is ideologically reinforced through such means as the legal and educational system, the media, and family planning programs, without recognition that within it the woman's position is subordinate to that of the man's. However, this abstract stereotype model of society and the divisions of labor within it has severe limitations when
applied to most Third World contexts, particularly in relation to the triple role of women and women-headed households.

(a) The triple role of women

In most low-income households, “women’s work” includes not only reproductive work (the childbearing and rearing responsibilities) required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labor force but also productive work, often as secondary income earners. In rural areas this usually takes the form of agricultural work, while in urban areas women frequently work in informal sector enterprises located either in the home (in subcontracting or piece-rate work) or at the neighborhood level. In addition, women are involved in community managing work undertaken at a local community settlement level in both urban and rural contexts. With the increasingly inadequate state provision of housing and basic services such as water and health, it is women who not only suffer most, but also who are forced to take responsibility for the allocation of limited resources to ensure the survival of their households. Where there is open confrontation between community-level organizations and local authorities in attempts to put direct pressure on the state or nongovernmental organizations for infrastructural provision, again it is women who, as an extension of their domestic role, frequently take primary responsibility for the formation, organization and success of local-level protest groups. Women, within their gender-ascribed role of wives and mothers, struggle to manage their neighborhoods. In performing this third role they implicitly accept the sexual division of labor and the nature of their gender subordination.

In most Third World societies the stereotype of the male breadwinner, i.e., the male as productive worker, predominates, even when it is not borne out in reality. Invariably when men perceive themselves to have a role within the household it is as the primary income earner. This occurs even in those contexts where male “unemployment” is high and women’s productive work actually provides the primary income. In addition, generally men do not have a clearly defined reproductive role, although this does not mean empirically that they do not play with their children or assist their women partners with domestic activities.

Men are also involved in community activities but in markedly different ways from women, reflecting a further sexual division of labor. The spatial division between the public world of men, and the private world of women (where the neighborhood is an extension of the domestic arena) means that men and women undertake different community work. While women have a community managing role based on the provision of items of collective consumption, men have a community leadership role, in which they organize at the formal political level generally within the framework of national politics. In organizations in which these two activities overlap, especially in societies where men and women can work alongside each other, women most frequently make up the rank and file voluntary membership while men are only involved in positions of direct authority and work in a paid capacity.

That women and men have different roles has important implications for policy makers. Because the triple role of women is not recognized, the fact that women, unlike men, are severely constrained by the burden of simultaneously balancing these roles of reproductive, productive, and community managing work is ignored. In addition, by virtue of its exchange value, only productive work is recognized as work. Reproductive and community managing work, because they are both seen as “natural” and nonproductive, are not valued. This has serious consequences for women. It means that the majority, if not all the work that they do is made invisible and fails to be recognized as work either by men in the community or by those planners whose job it is to assess different needs within low-income communities. In contrast, the majority of men’s work is valued, either directly through paid remuneration, or indirectly through status and political power. While the tendency is to see women’s and men’s needs as similar, the reality of their lives shows a very different situation.

(b) Women-headed households

The second problem with this abstract stereotype model of Third World society is that it fails to recognize that low-income households are not homogeneous in terms of family structure. Although nuclear families may be the dominant type, a diversity of other structures also occurs. It is now widely recognized, for instance, that the extended family does not necessarily disappear with “modernization” or “urbanization,” where it remains vital for low-income survival strategies in both rural and urban areas. However, the most important non-nuclear family household structure is the woman-headed household, of which there are two main types. First, there are de jure women-headed households, in which the male
partner is permanently absent due to separation or death, and the woman is legally single, divorced or widowed; second, de facto women-headed households in which the male partner is temporarily absent, due for instance to long-term work migration, or refugee status. Here the woman is not legally the head of household, and is often perceived as a dependent despite the fact that she may, for the majority of her adult life, have primary if not total responsibility for the financial as well as the organizational aspects of the household.

It is estimated that today one-third of the world’s households are headed by women. In urban areas, especially in Latin America and parts of Africa, the figure reaches 50% or more. In rural areas where men traditionally migrate it has always been high, while in refugee camps in areas of Africa and Central America it is nearer 80–90%. When there are considerable regional variations, globally the number of de facto women-headed households is increasing rather than declining. 

The economic conditions of women-headed households vary considerably, depending on such factors as the woman’s marital status, the social context of female leadership, her access to productive resources and income, and the composition of the household. Frequently, women-headed households have a high dependency ratio and limited access to employment and basic services. Consequently, all too often these households fall below the poverty line, and are disproportionately represented amongst the poorest of the poor (White et al., 1986). Although women who head households do not constitute a separate category, nevertheless their problem of the triple burden is exacerbated, which may have specific policy implications.

4. IDENTIFYING PRACTICAL AND STRATEGIC GENDER NEEDS

When planners are blind to the triple role of women, and to the fact that women’s needs are not always the same as men’s, they fail to recognize the necessity of relating planning policy to women’s specific requirements. In particular, development planning based on a sectoral approach does not provide the integrative strategies women require. Employment planning, for instance, is concerned primarily with individuals as paid workers and assumes a household support system, while women’s participation in the labor force is constrained by their triple commitment. Social welfare planning which concentrates on the child-rearing roles of women does not adequately take account of their income-earning activities. For example, health facilities in low-income areas are frequently undersubscribed because their opening hours are inappropriate for working mothers. The failure to make the necessary accommodation does not merely jeopardize the implementation of policy, with programs frustrating rather than meeting basic needs, but may perversely worsen the position of women.

If planning is to succeed it has to be gender aware. It has to develop the capacity to differentiate not only on the basis of income, now commonly accepted, but also on the basis of gender. This requires modifications, particularly in local-level planning, to achieve a more integrative approach which takes account of women’s particular requirements. It is important to emphasize that the rationale for gender planning does not merely jeopardize the implementation of policy, with programs frustrating rather than meeting basic needs, but may perversely worsen the position of women.

Having addressed the argument for gender planning it remains to clarify and expand upon the various elements of this approach.

(a) Gender needs

Planning for low-income women in the Third World must be based on their interests, in other words their prioritized concerns. By identifying the different interests women have it is possible then to translate them into planning needs, in other words the means by which their concerns may be satisfied. From this the requirements for gender policy and planning can be formulated, and the tools and techniques for implementing them clarified. In the process of identification of interests it is useful to differentiate between “women’s interests,” strategic gender interests, and practical gender interests, following the threefold conceptualization made by Maxine Molyneux (1985). Translated into planning terms these then are identified as women’s needs,
strategic gender needs, and practical gender needs.\(^{14}\)

At the outset, an important distinction must be made between women's interests and gender interests. The concept of women's interests, assumes compatibility of interest based on biological similarities. In fact the position of women in society depends on a variety of different criteria, such as class and ethnicity as well as gender, and consequently the interests they have in common may be determined as much by their class position or their ethnic identity as by their biological similarity as women. Within the planning context, women's needs also vary widely, determined not only by the specific socio-economic context, but also by the particular class, ethnic and religious structures of individual societies. Consequently, although the category of women's needs is frequently referred to by planners in general policy terms, it is of limited utility when translated into specific planning interventions.

Women may have general interests in common but these should be called gender interests, to differentiate them from the false homogeneity imposed by the notion of women's interests. As Molyneux has argued:

Gender interests are those that women (or men for that matter) may develop by virtue of their social positioning through gender attributes. Gender interests can be either strategic or practical each being derived in a different way and each involving differing implications for women's subjectivity (1985, p. 232).

The distinction between strategic and practical gender interests is of critical importance, as is the distinction between strategic and practical gender needs. Frequently, different needs are confused, and clarification is essential if realistic parameters are to be identified as to what can be accomplished in the planning process, as well as the limitations of different policy interventions.

(b) Strategic gender needs

Strategic gender needs are those needs which are formulated from the analysis of women's subordination to men, and deriving out of this the strategic gender interest identified for an alternative, more equal and satisfactory organization of society than that which exists at present, in terms of both the structure and nature of relationships between men and women.\(^{15}\) The strategic gender needs identified to overcome women's subordination will vary depending on the particular cultural and sociopolitical context within which they are formulated. Strategic gender needs, as Molyneux has identified, may include all or some of the following: "the abolition of the sexual division of labor; the alleviation of the burden of domestic labor and childcare; the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination such as rights to own land or property, or access to credit; the establishment of political equality; freedom of choice over childbearing; and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence and control over women" (1985, p. 233).

Strategic gender needs such as these are often identified as "feminist," as is the level of consciousness required to struggle effectively for them. Historically it has been shown that the capacity to confront the nature of gender inequality and women's emancipation can only be fulfilled by the bottom-up struggle of women's organizations. Despite a few optimistic examples, state intervention alone has not removed any of the persistent causes of gender inequality within society as a whole, and thus has failed to fulfill the strategic gender needs which for feminists are women's "real" interests. (See Molyneux, 1985, pp. 232-233.)

(c) Practical gender needs

In contrast, practical gender needs are those needs which are formulated from the concrete conditions women experience, in their engendered position within the sexual division of labor, and deriving out of this their practical gender interests for human survival. Unlike strategic gender needs they are formulated directly by women in these positions, rather than through external interventions. Practical needs therefore are usually a response to an immediate perceived necessity which is identified by women within a specific context. As Molyneux has written, "they do not generally entail a strategic goal such as women's emancipation or gender equality . . . nor do they challenge the prevailing forms of subordination even though they arise directly out of them" (Molyneux, 1985, p. 233).

The sexual division of labor within the household gives women primary responsibility not only for domestic work involving childcare, family health and food provision, but also, for the community managing of housing and basic services, along with the capacity to earn an income through productive work. Therefore in planning terms, policies for meeting practical gender needs have to focus on the domestic arena, on income-earning activities, and also on community-level requirements of housing and basic services. In reality, basic needs such as food, shelter and water are required by all the family, particularly children, yet they are identi-
fied specifically as the practical gender needs of women, not only by policy makers concerned to achieve developmental objectives, but also by women themselves. Both are therefore often responsible for preserving and reinforcing (even if unconsciously) the sexual division of labor. Since there is often a unity of purpose between the socioeconomic development priorities of intervening agencies and practical gender needs identified at the local level, the two frequently and easily become conflated. This serves the purposes of planners who are then identified as meeting women's needs. At the same time, it can make it even more difficult for women themselves to recognize and formulate their strategic gender needs.

5. MEETING PRACTICAL AND STRATEGIC GENDER NEEDS IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

It has become very popular for policy makers and the media alike to label any policy or program associated with women as “feminist” or “women’s lib,” terms used by many in such a derisory manner that they provoke a hostile and negative reaction from both female and male planners. Identification of the triple role of women and the differences between practical and strategic gender needs can assist practitioners to understand that planning for the needs of low-income women is not necessarily “feminist” in content. Indeed the vast majority of policies, programs and projects directed at women worldwide are concerned with women within their engendered position in the sexual division of labor, as wives and mothers, and are intended to meet their practical gender needs. Without denying the importance of such interventions, it is critical to recognize that practical gender needs only become “feminist” in content if and when they are transformed into strategic gender needs.

While the room for maneuver for addressing gender needs varies within each specific sociopolitical context, the distinction between practical and strategic gender needs and the identification of the triple role of women may provide useful methodological tools for planning. They may assist in diffusing the criticisms of those who find “feminism” unacceptable by showing them that working with women is most often not “feminist.” Alternatively, they may be helpful for policy makers responsible for meeting the practical gender needs of women, in assisting their adoption of more challenging solutions. The following examples of a number of interventions, in such sectors as employment, housing, and basic urban services, illustrate the potential and limitations of different planning practices to reach practical or strategic gender needs within specific planning contexts. These examples are graphically illustrated in Table 1.

(a) Gender needs in employment

With the lives of the majority of low-income women dominated by the necessity to generate an income, one of the most fundamental problems faced is a lack of adequate skills. The provision of skill training, therefore, often meets an important practical gender need by allowing access to employment. How far it also reaches more strategic gender needs depends not only on whether it increases women’s economic independence, but also on the type of training. In many ex-British colonies, for instance, community development centres have, for decades, provided women’s training courses in home economics, introducing a diversity of skills intended to assist women to become better provisioners within the household. Such training recognizes the reproductive role of women, and can meet practical gender needs relating to basic health and nutrition, but does not recognize women’s productive role and the important practical gender need to earn an income.

In contrast to this, skill training in such areas as primary school teaching, nursing and dressmaking often meets income-generating needs. Probably the most common type of training is dressmaking, taught throughout the world, at a diversity of levels ranging from government programs, located in purpose-built premises, through medium-sized nongovernmental projects, to small self-help groups. In diverse cultures and contexts the underlying rationale for the provision of dressmaking skills is similar: this is a skill women already know, or should know, and one they can use not only in the home but also to earn an income. Such training can meet a practical gender need, but because dressmaking is an area in which women traditionally work, this does not challenge the gender division of labor.

The training of women in areas traditionally identified as “men’s work” may not only widen employment opportunities for women, but may also break down existing occupational segregation, thereby fulfilling the strategic gender need to abolish the sexual division of labor. Women’s training in house-building skills such as masonry and carpentry provides one such example. Although in most societies women traditionally are involved in rural house building, the urban-
### Table 1. Examples of sectoral interventions in terms of women’s triple role and practical and strategic gender needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Intervention</th>
<th>Women’s Role Recognized</th>
<th>Gender Need Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(1) Skill Training for Employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking angel cakes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressmaking</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masonry/carpentry</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(2) Housing and Human Settlement Policy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Zoning legislation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separates residence &amp; work</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not separate residence and work</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) House ownership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In man’s name</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In woman’s name</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(3) Basic Services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Location of nursery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Located in community</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In mother’s workplace</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In father’s workplace</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Transport services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only peak hours bus service</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate off-peak service</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(4) Project with community participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With women’s time unpaid</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With women’s time paid</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R = Reproductive; P = Productive; CM = Community Managing; PGN = Practical Gender Need; SGN = Strategic Gender Need.

*Overcoming the sexual division of labor.

†Overcoming discrimination against women owning land, whether by law or cultural tradition.

‡Alleviation of the burden of domestic labor.

Based development of a formal skilled house construction sector has been accompanied by an occupational sex-segregation, with construction now designated as “men’s work,” other than in those contexts, such as India, where women still provide unskilled labor (NIUA, 1982). Skill training for women in the construction sector often meets with hostility and resistance, precisely because it challenges the existing sexual division of labor. However, as case studies from Sri Lanka (Fernando, 1987), Jamaica (Schmink, 1984), and Nicaragua (Vance, 1987) show, once trained and having gained the tacit acceptance of male colleagues, women construction workers tend to find work either in existing projects or in the construction sector more generally.16

(b) Gender needs in human settlements and housing

In the planning of human settlements and housing the necessity to introduce a gender perspective is still not widely recognized, despite the fact that women, as wives and mothers, are primary users of space both in their houses and in the local community.19 Although consultation with women about housing design would ensure that their spatial needs are recognized, this rarely occurs. Examples of the detrimental effects of insensitive house design are widespread, particularly where “modernization” or “developmentalism” have resulted in radical design changes. This often affects Muslim women who, because their social life is almost entirely confined to the home, have special needs for internal space.20 Zoning legislation that separates residential and business activities assumes the separation of productive and reproductive roles, and is particularly problematic for women with children. Because of the necessity to “balance” roles, women are often involved in informal sector activities in or around their homes. Where zoning legislation prevents the making and selling of goods from their homes, the only solution is to do so illegally.21
Gender-aware changes in zoning legislation to allow household enterprises can therefore meet the practical gender need of women to earn an income.

The fact that women are the principal users of housing, does not necessarily mean that they become the owners of either the house or land. Tenure is generally given to men as household heads, even where women de facto have primary household responsibilities. For women, tenure rights are a strategic gender need which ensures protection for themselves and their children in unstable or violent domestic situations. Without land rights, women often cannot provide collateral to gain access to credit; since ownership of land represents a form of savings, women may end up without capital in the event of marital separation. Housing projects that provide for ownership regardless of the sex of the household head may be difficult to design in countries where women do not legally possess rights of ownership. However, in other contexts where women’s lack of land tenure is a consequence of “tradition” there may be relatively simple means of making land ownership rights available to women.5

(c) Gender needs in basic services

The planning of childcare facilities, such as a creche or nursery, provides a good example of the way in which differences in location can result in different gender needs being met. If located at the woman’s workplace it will certainly meet her practical gender need for adequate childcare facilities, essential for her to undertake waged employment. If located in the community this may encourage a sharing of responsibilities within the family, although if anyone other than the mother delivers the child it is likely to be another female member of the family. If, however, the nursery is located at the father’s place of work, this provides the opportunity for meeting both practical and strategic gender needs since it involves the father in taking some of the responsibility for childcare, and thereby alleviates the burden of domestic labor on the woman.

In the transport sector one of the most critical problems faced by women is that transport services are organized to meet the needs of male workforce schedules, with buses running from the periphery to the center during morning and evening peak periods.23 Low-income women often not only use public transport more than men, but require it for multiple activities, such as school, shopping and health-related trips, in addition to work trips. While the provision of adequate off-peak transport meets practical gender needs, it cannot meet strategic gender needs since it does not alleviate women’s burden of domestic labor and childcare. In addition, in many large cities the fear of male harassment prevents low-income women from using public transport, particularly late at night. Where women-only transportation is introduced, this meets the more strategic gender need of countering male violence.

The examples cited above show the limitations of individual sectoral interventions for low-income women. Because of the need to “balance” their triple role, women require integrative strategies which cut across sectoral lines. The examples also reveal that the majority of planning interventions “for women” only meet practical gender needs, and do not seek to change existing divisions of labor, or other forms of discrimination against women, and therefore are not “feminist” in content. In reality, practical gender needs remain the only specific policy target for most of those concerned with planning for women. The underlying reasons for this, and the extent to which shifts in policy have occurred during the past 30 years, can best be understood through the examination of different policy approaches to women.

6. POLICY APPROACHES TO LOW-INCOME THIRD WORLD WOMEN AND GENDER PLANNING

Throughout the Third World, particularly in the past decade, there has been a proliferation of policies, programs and projects designed to assist low-income women. Identification of the extent to which such planned interventions have been appropriate to the gender needs of women requires an examination of the conceptual rationale underlying different policy approaches from a gender planning perspective. Each approach can be evaluated in terms of which of women’s triple roles it recognizes, and which practical or strategic gender needs it meets. Such analysis illustrates the utility of the methodological tools of gender planning evaluation.

Until recently there has been little systematic classification or categorization of the various policy initiative to help low-income women.24 Concern for their needs coincided historically with a recognition of their important role in development. Since the 1950s a diversity of interventions has been formulated, not in isolation, but reflecting changes in macro-level economic and social policy approaches to Third World development. Thus the shift in policy approach
toward women, from "welfare," to "equity" to "anti-poverty," as categorized by Buvinic (1983), to the two other approaches categorized here as "efficiency," and "empowerment," has mirrored general shifts 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.

While the different policy approaches, as summarized in Table 2, are described chronologically, it is recognized that the linear process implied is an over-simplification of reality. In practice many of the policies have appeared more or less simultaneously. Implementing agencies have not necessarily followed any ordered logic in changing their approach, most frequently jumping from welfare to efficiency without consideration of the other approaches. Different policies have particular appeal to different types of institutions. Policy makers often favor combined policy approaches in order to meet the needs of different constituencies at the same time. Finally, shifts in policy approach often occur not only during the formulation stage, but also during the implementation process (Buvinic, 1986). In order to examine the interrelationship between different policy approaches and gender needs, they are described here as ideal types.

(a) The welfare approach

The welfare approach is the oldest and still the most popular social development policy for the Third World in general, and women in particular. Its underlying rationale toward women reflects its origins which are linked to the residual model of social welfare, first introduced by colonial authorities in many Third World countries. Their concern with law and order and the maintenance of stable conditions for trade, and agricultural and mineral expansion, meant that social welfare was a low priority. Echoing the 19th-century European Poor Laws with their inherent belief that social needs should be satisfied through individual effort in the marketplace, administrations dealt largely with crime, delinquency, prostitution and other forms of "deviant" behavior, while voluntary charity organizations carried a large share of the burden of social welfare (Hardiman and Midgley, 1982). Since it was also compatible with the prevailing development paradigms of modernization, many post-independence governments continued this policy (MacPherson and Midgley, 1987). On the basis that "social welfare institutions should come into play only when the normal structure of supply, the family and the market, break down" (Wilen-sky and Lebeaux, 1965, p. 138), the ministries of social welfare, created for the implementation of such residual measures for "vulnerable groups," were invariably weak and underfinanced.

In fact it was First World welfare programs, specifically targeted at "vulnerable groups," which were among the first to identify women as the main beneficiaries. As Buvinic has noted, these were the emergency relief programs widely initiated in Europe after the end of World War II, accompanying the economic assistance measures intended to ensure reconstruction. Relief aid was provided directly to low-income women, who, in their engendered roles as wives and mothers, were seen as those primarily concerned with their family's welfare. This relief distribution was undertaken by international private relief agencies, and relied on the unpaid work of middle-class women volunteers for effective and cheap implementation (Buvinic, 1986).

The creation of two parallel approaches to development assistance — on the one hand financial aid for economic growth, on the other hand relief aid for socially "vulnerable" groups — was then replicated in development policy toward Third World countries. This had critical implications for Third World women. It meant that the international economic aid which prioritized government support for capital-intensive industrial and agricultural production to accelerate growth focused on increasing the productive capacity of the male labor force. Welfare provision for the family was targeted at women, who, along with the disabled and the sick, were identified as "vulnerable groups," remaining the responsibility of the marginalized ministries of social welfare. Further assistance was then provided by nongovernmental organizations, such as the mothers' clubs created in many Third World countries, and, to a lesser extent, by bilateral aid agencies with specific mandates for women and children, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The welfare approach is based on three assumptions. First, that women are passive recipients of development, rather than participants in the development process. Second, that motherhood is the most important role for women in society. Third, that child rearing is the most effective role for women in all aspects of economic development. While this approach sees itself as "family centered" in orientation, it focuses entirely on women in terms of their reproductive role, assumes men's role to be productive, and identifies the mother–child dyad
### Table 2. Different policy approaches to Third World women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Welfare</th>
<th>Equity</th>
<th>Anti-poverty</th>
<th>Efficiency</th>
<th>Empowerment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Period most popular</td>
<td>1950-70; but still widely used.</td>
<td>1975-85; attempts to adopt it during and since Women’s Decade.</td>
<td>1980s onwards; still limited popularity.</td>
<td>Post 1980s: now most popular approach.</td>
<td>1975 onwards: accelerated during 1980s, still limited popularity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To bring women into development as better mothers: this is seen as their most important role in development.</td>
<td>To gain equity for women in the development process: women seen as active participants in development.</td>
<td>To ensure poor women increase their productivity: women’s poverty seen as problem of underdevelopment not of subordination.</td>
<td>To ensure development is more efficient and more effective: women’s economic participation seen as associated with equity.</td>
<td>To empower women through greater self-reliance: women’s subordination seen not only as problem of men but also of colonial and neocolonial oppression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs of women met and roles recognized</td>
<td>To meet PGN* in reproductive role, relating particularly to food aid, malnutrition and family planning.</td>
<td>To meet SGN† in terms of role — directly through state top-down intervention, giving political and economic autonomy by reducing inequality with men.</td>
<td>To meet PGN* in productive role — to earn an income, particularly in small-scale income generating projects.</td>
<td>To meet PGN* in context of declining social services by relying on all three roles of women and elasticity of women’s time.</td>
<td>To reach SGN† in terms of triple role — indirectly through bottom-up mobilization around PGN* as means to confront oppression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>Women seen as passive beneficiaries of development with focus on reproductive role. Nonchallenging therefore still widely popular especially with government and traditional NGOs.</td>
<td>In identifying subordinate position of women in terms of relationship to men, challenging, criticized as Western feminism, considered threatening and not popular with government.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Women seen entirely in terms of delivery capacity and ability to extend working day. Most popular approach both with governments and multilateral agencies.</td>
<td>Potentially challenging with emphasis on Third World and women’s self-reliance. Largely unsupported by governments and agencies. Avoidance of Western feminism criticism, means slow significant growth of underfinanced voluntary organizations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*PGN — Practical gender needs.
†SGN — Strategic gender needs.
as the unit of concern. The main method of implementation is through "top-down" handouts of free goods and services. When training is included it is for those skills deemed appropriate for nonworking housewives and mothers. In their mothering roles, low-income women have been the primary targets for improving family welfare, particularly of children, through an increasing diversity of programs, reflecting a broadening of the mandate of welfare over the past decades.

With their origins in relief work, the first, and still the most important concern of welfare programs is family physical survival, through the direct provision of food aid to vulnerable groups. Generally this is provided on a short-term basis after such natural disasters as earthquakes or famines. However, it has increasingly become a longer-term need for refugees seeking protection, whose numbers have grown to 12-15 million in the past two decades. Although the majority of refugees in camps are women, left as heads of households to care and often provide for the children and elderly, they usually do not have refugee status in their own right but only as wives within the family (Bonnerjea, 1985). Projects implemented by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and nongovernmental organizations most often focus on these women in their reproductive role, with special attention given to those pregnant or lactating, identified as a "vulnerable group" in the same category as the elderly, orphans and the handicapped (Weeda, 1987).26

The second important type of welfare program is the extensive international effort to combat Third World malnutrition not just through food but also through nutritional education targeting children under five years, and pregnant and nursing mothers. Since the 1960s, Mother-Child Health Programs (MCH) have distributed cooked or rationed food along with nutrition education at feeding centres and health clinics (Jackson and Eade, 1982). In linking additional food for children and nutrition education for mothers, MCH focuses on the mother-child dyad and the reproductive role of women, on the assumption that extra provisions will make them better mothers. Although by the early 1980s considerable criticism had been expressed about the use of food aid to guarantee nutritional improvement of children, the focus on women in their role as mothers was not seen as problematic.27

Most recently, especially since the 1970s welfare policy toward women has been extended to include population control through family planning programs. Thus development agencies responding to the world's population "problem" identified women, in their reproductive role, as primarily responsible for limiting the size of families. Early programs assumed that poverty could be reduced by simply limiting fertility, achieved through the widespread dissemination of contraceptive knowledge and technology to women. Only the obvious failure of this approach led population planners to recognize that variables relating to women's status, such as education and labor force participation, could affect fertility differentials and consequently needed to be taken into consideration.28

Although welfare programs for women have widened their scope considerably over the past decades, the underlying assumption remains that motherhood is the most important role for women in Third World development, which means that the concern is to meet practical gender needs relating to their reproductive role. Intrinsically, welfare programs identify women rather than lack of resources as the problem, and place the solution to family welfare in their hands, without questioning their "natural" role. Although the top-down handout nature of so many welfare programs tends to create dependency rather than to assist women to become more independent, they remain very popular precisely because they are politically safe, not questioning the traditionally accepted role of women within the sexual division of labor. Such assumptions tend to result in the exclusion of women from development programs operated by the mainstream development agencies that provide a significant proportion of development funds (Germaine, 1977). The fact is that the welfare approach is not concerned with meeting strategic gender needs, one of the most important of which, the right for women to have control over their own reproduction, was highlighted by a Third World women's group which wrote:

Women know that childbearing is a social not purely personal phenomenon: nor do we deny that world population trends are likely to exert considerable pressure on resources and institutions by the end of the century. But our bodies have become a pawn in the struggles among states, religions, male heads of households, and private corporations. Programs that do not take the interests of women into account are unlikely to succeed (DAWN, 1985, p. 42).

Although by the 1970s dissatisfaction with the welfare approach was widespread, criticism differed as to its limitations, coming from groups representing three very different positions. First, in the United States, a group of mainly female professionals and researchers were concerned with the increasing evidence that Third World development projects were negatively affecting
women. Second, development economists and planners were concerned with the failure of modernization theory in the Third World. Third, the United Nations designated a Women’s Decade, starting in 1976. This was a result of the 1975 International Women’s Year Conference, which formally “put women on the agenda” and provided legitimacy for the proliferation of a wide diversity of Third World women’s organizations.

During the 1970s, criticisms of such groups resulted in the development of a number of alternative approaches to women, namely equity, anti-poverty, efficiency and empowerment. The fact that these approaches share many common origins, were formulated during the same decade, and are not entirely mutually exclusive, means that there has been a tendency not only to confuse them, but indeed to categorize them together as the “Women in Development” (WID) approach. With hindsight, it is clear that there are significant differences among these approaches which it is important to clarify.31

(b) The equity approach

By the 1970s studies showed that although women were often the predominant contributors to the basic productivity of their communities, particularly in agriculture, their economic contribution was referred to neither in national statistics nor in the planning and implementation of development projects (Boserup, 1970). At the same time new modernization projects, with innovative agricultural methods and sophisticated technologies, were negatively affecting women, displacing them from their traditional productive functions, and diminishing the income, status and power they had in traditional relations. Findings indicated that neocolonialism as much as colonialism was contributing to the decline in women’s status in developing countries.30

On the basis of evidence such as this, the WID group in the United States challenged the prevailing assumption that modernization was equated with increasing gender equality, asserting that capitalist development models imposed on much of Third World had exacerbated inequalities between men and women. Recognition of the damaging effects of ignoring women in United States Agency for International Development (USAID) projects during the First Development Decade made the WID group work to influence USAID policy. Lobbying of Congress and participation in Congressional hearings resulted in the 1973 Percy Amendment to the US Foreign Assistance Act, which mandated that US assistance help “move women into their national economies” in order to improve women’s status and assist the development process (Maguire, 1984; Tinker, 1982).

The original WID approach was in fact the equity approach.31 This approach recognizes that women are active participants in the development process, who through both their productive and reproductive roles provide a critical, if often unacknowledged contribution to economic growth. The approach starts with the basic assumption that economic strategies have frequently had a negative impact on women, and acknowledges that they must be “brought into” the development process through access to employment and the marketplace. It therefore recognizes their practical gender need to earn a livelihood. However, the equity approach is also concerned with fundamental issues of equality which transcend the development field. As Buvinić (1986) has described, its primary concern is with inequality between men and women, in both public and private spheres of life and across socioeconomic groups. It identifies the origins of women’s subordination as lying not only in the context of the family, but also in relationships between men and women in the marketplace, and hence it places considerable emphasis on economic independence as being synonymous with equity.

In focusing particularly on reducing inequality between men and women, especially in the sexual division of labor, the equity approach meets an important strategic gender need. Equity programs are identified as uniting notions of development and equality. The underlying logic is that women beneficiaries have lost ground to men in the development process. Therefore in a process of redistribution men have to share in a manner that entails women from all socioeconomic classes gaining and men from all socioeconomic classes losing, through positive discrimination policies if necessary. The rational consequence of this is seen to be greater equality with an accompanying increase in economic growth (Buvinić, 1983).

In fact the theme selection for the 1975 International Women’s Year (IYW) Conference showed that the equity approach, despite its identification as “developmental,” in many respects was more concerned with reflecting First World feminist preoccupations with equality. Third World delegations, while acknowledging women’s problems, identified development as their main concern, maintaining that this would increase women’s status. With Second World delegates more concerned with peace, claiming
that the capitalist system with its militarism was responsible for women's problems — hence the theme of Equality, Development and Peace (Stephenson, 1982).

Nevertheless, the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of IWY firmly reflected the equity approach, with its call for equality between men and women, its requirements that women should be given their fair share of the benefits of development, and its recognition of the need for changes in the traditional role of men as well as women (UN, 1976). The plan set the agenda for future action of both governments and development agencies for the Women's Decade, with the common goal of integrating women into the development process. In reality the interpretation of the agenda varied. This was reflected in the language used, which ranged from the definitely expressed aim to "integrate," "increase," "improve" or "upgrade" women's participation in development to the more tentatively worded desire to "help create a more favorable climate for improving women's options in development" (World Bank, 1980; Maguire, 1984).

Despite such rhetoric, equity programs encountered problems from the outset. Methodologically, the lack of a single unified indicator of social status or progress of women and of baseline information about women's economic, social, and political status meant that there were no standards against which "success" could be measured (USAID, 1978). Politically, the majority of development agencies were hostile to equity programs precisely because of their intention to meet not only practical gender needs but also strategic gender needs, whose very success depended on an implicit redistribution of power. From the perspective of the aid agency this was identified as unacceptable interference with the country's traditions. At the same time, recognition of equity as a policy principle did not guarantee its implementation in practice. Despite their endorsement of the Plan of Action, similar antipathy was felt by many Third World governments, legitimized by their belief in the irrelevance of Western-exported feminism to Third World women. In fact one of the outcomes of the 1975 conference was the labeling of feminism as ethnocentric and divisive to WID. Many Third World activists felt that to take "feminism to a woman who has no water, no food and no home is to talk nonsense" (Bunch, 1980, p. 27), and labeled Third World socialists and feminists as bourgeois imperialist sympathizers. At the same time, the fact that there was only one reference to women in the UN New International Economic Order showed that the importance of women was still identified in terms of their biological role by those formulating policies in the Third World.

In a climate of widespread antagonism to many of its underlying principles from development agencies and Third World governments alike, the equity approach has been effectively dropped by the majority of implementing agencies. However, its official endorsement in 1975 ensured that it continues to provide an important framework for those working within government to improve the status of women through official legislation. Tinker and Jaquette, in reviewing the 1975-85 women's decade conference documents, noted that the goal of legal equality of women — including the rights of divorce, custody of children, property, credit, voting and other citizen rights — had been accepted as a minimum basis of consensus from which to begin the discussion of more controversial issues (1987, p. 423).

Significant though the ratification of such legislation is, it is necessary, nevertheless, to recognize that it meets potential strategic gender needs, rather than actual needs. Property rights, arranged marriages, dowry and child custody rights provide much-cited examples of the highly sensitive strategic gender needs which are often still curtailed by custom, even when amended by law. Even the incorporation of practical gender needs into the mainstream of development plans does not guarantee their implementation in practice. Mazumdar (1979), for instance, noted that the incorporation of women's concerns into the framework of India's Six Year Plan indicated India's constitutional commitment to equality of opportunity. However, such constitutional inclusions in no way ensured practical changes, which in her opinion would be largely a function of the strength of the political power base of organized women's groups. Ultimately the equity approach has been constructed to meet strategic gender needs through top-down, legislative measures. The bottom-up mobilization of women into political pressure groups to ensure policy becomes action is the mandate of the empowerment approach, developed by Third World women, and described below.

(c) The anti-poverty approach

The anti-poverty approach to women can be identified as the second WID approach, in which economic inequality between women and men is linked not to subordination, but to poverty, with the emphasis thus shifting from reducing inequality between men and women, to reducing income inequality. Here women's issues are separated
from equity issues and linked with the particular concern for the majority of Third World women as the "poorest of the poor." Buvinić (1983) has argued that this is a toned-down version of the equity approach, arising out of the reluctance of development agencies to interfere with the manner in which relations between men and women are constructed in a given society. However, this shift also coincided with the end of the unsuccessful First Development Decade, and the formulation of alternative models of Third World economic and social development.

By the early 1970s it was widely recognized that modernization theory, with its accelerated growth strategies based on maximizing GNP, had failed either to redistribute income or solve the problems of Third World poverty and unemployment. Contrary to predictions about the positive welfare effects of rapid economic growth, financial benefits had not "trickled down" to the poor. An early initiative was the International Labor Organization's (ILO) World Employment Program, in which employment became a major policy objective in its own right. The "working poor" were identified as the target group requiring particular attention, and the informal sector with its assumed autonomous capacity to generate employment was seen as the solution (Moser, 1978, 1984). In 1972, the World Bank officially shifted from a preoccupation with economic growth to a broader concern with the eradication of absolute poverty and the promotion of "redistribution with growth." Integral to this was the "basic needs strategy," with its primary purpose to meet "basic needs" such as food, clothing, shelter and fuel, as well as social needs such as education, human rights and "participation" in social life through employment and political involvement (Streeten, 1981; Ghai, 1978). Low-income women were identified as one particular target group to be assisted in escaping absolute deprivation; first, because the failure of "trickle down" was partially attributed to the fact that women had been ignored in previous development plans, and, second, because of the traditional importance of women in meeting many of the basic needs of the family (Buvinic, 1982).

The anti-poverty policy approach to women focuses mainly on their productive role on the basis that poverty alleviation and the promotion of balanced economic growth requires the increased productivity of women in low-income households. Underlying this approach is the assumption that the origins of women's poverty and inequality with men are attributable to their lack of access to private ownership of land and capital, and to sexual discrimination in the labor market. Consequently, it aims to increase the employment and income-generating options of low-income women through better access to productive resources. The preoccupation of basic needs strategies with population control also resulted in increasing recognition that education and employment programs could simultaneously increase women's economic contribution and reduce fertility.

One of the principal criticisms of employment programs for women is that since they have the potential to modify the sexual division of labor within the household, they may also imply changes in the balance of power between men and women within the family. In anti-poverty programs, this redistribution of power is said to be reduced, because the focus is specifically on low-income women, and because of the tendency to encourage projects in sex-specific occupations in which women are concentrated, or projects which are particularly targeted at women who head households. Nevertheless, the fear that programs for low-income women may reduce the already insufficient amount of aid allocated to low-income groups in general means that Third World governments have remained reluctant to allocate resources from national budgets to women. Frequently the preference is to allocate resources at the "family" or household level, despite the fact that they generally remain in the hands of the male head of household.

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 nongovernmental organizations (most frequently all-women in composition), and to be assisted by grants, rather than loans, from international and bilateral agencies. Most frequently they aim to increase productivity in activities traditionally undertaken by women, rather than to introduce them to new areas of work, with a preference for supporting rural-based-production projects as opposed to those in the service and distribution sectors which are far more widespread in the urban areas of many developing countries.

Considerable variation has been experienced in the capacity of such projects to assist low-income women to generate income. While Buvinić (1986) has highlighted the problems experienced by anti-poverty projects in the implementation process, due to the preference to shift toward welfare-oriented projects, such projects also experience considerable constraints in the formulation stage. In the design of projects, fundamental conditions to ensure viability are often ignored, including access to easily available raw materials, guaranteed markets, and small-scale production capacity (Schmitz, 1979; Moser,
Despite widespread recognition of the limitations of the informal sector to generate employment and growth in an independent or evolutionary manner, income-generating projects for women continue to be designed as though small-scale enterprises have the capacity for autonomous growth (Moser, 1984; Schmitz, 1982).

Frequently ignored, in addition, are the particular constraints that women experience in their engaged role. These may include problems of perception in separating reproductive from productive work, as well as those associated with “balancing” productive work alongside domestic and childcare responsibilities. In many contexts there are cultural constraints that restrict women’s ability to move freely outside the domestic arena and therefore to compete equally with men running similar enterprises (Moser, 1981). Where men control household financial resources, women are unable to save unless special safe facilities are provided (Sebsted, 1982). Equally where women cannot obtain equal access to credit, through, for instance, a lack of collateral, they are often unable to expand their enterprises unless nontraditional forms of credit are available to them (Bruce, 1980; IWTC, 1981). Finally, the tendency to distinguish between microenterprise projects for men, and income-generating projects for women is indicative of the prevailing attitude, even among many nongovernmental organizations, that women’s productive work is of less importance than men’s, and undertaken as a secondary earner or “for pocket money.”

Anti-poverty income-generating projects may provide employment for women, and thereby meet practical gender needs to augment their income. But unless employment leads to greater autonomy, it does not meet strategic gender needs. This is the essential difference between the equity and anti-poverty approach. In addition, the predominant focus on the productive role of women in the anti-poverty approach means that their reproductive role is often ignored. Income-generating projects which assume that women have free time often only succeed by extending their working day and increasing their triple burden. Unless an income-generating project also alleviates the burden of women’s domestic labor and childcare, through, for instance, the provision of adequate, socialized childcare, it may fail even to meet the practical gender need to earn an income.

(d) The efficiency approach

While the shift from equity to anti-poverty has been well documented, the identification of WID as efficiency has passed almost unnoticed. Yet, I would argue the efficiency approach is now the predominant approach for those working within a WID framework — indeed for many it may always have been so. In the efficiency approach, the emphasis has shifted away from women and toward development on the assumption that increased economic participation for Third World women is automatically linked with increased equity. This has allowed organizations such as USAID, the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to propose that an increase in women’s economic participation in development links efficiency and equity together.

The assumption that economic participation increases women’s status and is associated with equity has been widely criticized, as has the identification of such problems as lack of education and underproductive technologies as the predominant constraints affecting women’s participation. Among others, Maguire (1984) has argued that the shift from equity to efficiency reflected a specific economic recognition of the fact that 50% of the human resources available for development were being wasted or underutilized. While the so-called development industry realized that women were essential to the success of the total development effort, it did not necessarily follow, however, that development improved conditions for women.

This shift toward efficiency coincided with a marked deterioration in the world economy, occurring from the mid-1970s onward, particularly in Latin America and Africa, where the problems of recession were compounded by falling export prices, protectionism and the mounting burden of debt. To alleviate the situation, economic stabilization and adjustment policies designed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have been implemented by an increasing number of national governments. These policies, through both demand management and supply expansion, lead to the reallocation of resources to enable the restoration of a balance-of-payments equilibrium, an increase in exports, and a restoration in growth rates.

With increased efficiency and productivity two of the main objectives of structural adjustment policies, it is no coincidence that efficiency is the policy approach toward women currently gaining popularity among international aid agencies and national governments alike. In reality this approach often simply means a shifting of costs from the paid to the unpaid economy, particularly through the use of women’s unpaid time.
While the emphasis is on women's increased economic participation, this has implications for women not only as reproducers, but also increasingly as community managers. In the housing sector, for instance, one such example is provided by site and service and upgrading projects with self-help components, which now regularly include women in the implementation phase. This is a consequence of the need for greater efficiency: not only are women as mothers more reliable than men in repaying building loans, as workers they are equally capable of self-building alongside men, while as community managers they have shown far greater commitment than men in ensuring that services are maintained (Fernando, 1987; Nimpuno-Parente, 1987).

Structural adjustment policies define economies only in terms of marketed goods and services and subsistence cash production, and exclude women's reproductive work. This built-in gender bias concerning the process of the reproduction and maintenance of human resources allows economic resource reallocation policies to assume that women's unpaid labor is elastic in such activities as caring for children, gathering fuel, processing food, preparing meals, and nursing the sick (Elson, 1987). Disinvestments in human resources, made in the name of greater efficiency in IMF and World Bank "conditionality" policies have resulted in declines in income levels, severe social expenditure cuts in government health and education, and reductions in food subsidies. These cuts in many of the practical gender needs of women are seen to be cushioned by the elasticity of women's labor in increasing self-production of food, and changes in purchasing habits and consumption patterns.

Until recently, structural adjustment has been seen as an economic issue, and evaluated in economic terms (Jolly, 1987). Although documentation regarding its social costs is still unsystematic, it does reveal a serious deterioration in living conditions of low-income populations resulting from a decline in income levels. A gender differentiated impact on intra-household resource distribution with particularly detrimental effects on the lives of children and women is also apparent (Cornia et al., 1987; 1988). Within the household a decline in consumption often affects women more than men, while the introduction of charges for education and health care can reduce access more severely for girls than for boys. The capacity of the household to shoulder the burden of adjustment can have detrimental effects in terms of human relationships, expressed in increased domestic violence, mental health disorders and increasing numbers of women-headed households resulting from the breakdown in nuclear family structures (UNICEF, n.d.).

UNICEF's widely publicized plea to devise adjustment policies "with a human face" now challenges the efficiency basis of IMF and World Bank policy. It argues that women's concerns, both in the household and in the workplace, need consciously to be made part of the formulation of adjustment policies, which in turn will require the direct involvement of women in both the definition of development and the adjustments in its management (Jolly, 1987). On paper, UNICEF's current recommendations to assist low-income women would appear highly laudable. Yet optimism that an international agency has the capacity to effect policy measures designed to increase the independence of women must be treated with caution.

This point can be illustrated, for instance, through the appraisal of some of the recent compensatory policies endorsed by UNICEF. These are designed to protect basic health and nutrition of the low-income population during adjustment, before growth resumption enables them to meet their basic needs independently. In a diversity of nutrition interventions, such as targeted food subsidies and direct feeding for the most vulnerable, it is assumed that women in their community managing role will take responsibility for the efficient delivery of such services. For example, in Lima, Peru, the Vaso de Leche (Glass of Milk) direct feeding program, which provides a free glass of milk to young children in the low-income areas of the city, is managed by women in their unpaid time. Similarly, the much acclaimed communal kitchen organizations, which receive targeted food subsidies and direct feeding for the low-income groups (Cornia et al., 1988), this is achieved through reliance on women's unpaid time.

These examples illustrate the fact that the efficiency approach relies heavily on the elasticity of women's labor in both their reproductive and community managing roles, and only meets practical gender needs at the cost of longer working hours and increased unpaid work. In most cases this approach not only fails to reach any strategic gender needs, but also, because of the reductions in resource allocations, results in a serious reduction of the practical gender needs met.

(c) The empowerment approach

The fifth policy approach to women is the
empowerment approach, still neither widely recognized as an "approach," nor documented as such, although its origins are by no means recent. Superficially it may appear synonymous with the equity approach, with references often made to a combined equity/empowerment approach. In many respects, empowerment as an identified approach developed out of dissatisfaction with the original WID as equity, because of its perceived co-option into the anti-poverty and efficiency approaches. However, the empowerment approach differs from the equity approach not only in its origins, but also in the causes, dynamics and structures of women’s oppression which it identifies, and in terms of the strategies it proposes to change the position of Third World women.

The origins of the empowerment approach are derived less from the research of First World women, and more from the emergent feminist writings and grass-roots organization experience of Third World women. It recognizes that feminism is not simply a recent Western, urban, middle-class import. As Jayawardena (1986) has written, the women’s movement was not imposed on women by the United Nations or Western feminists, but has an independent history. Since the late 19th-century, Third World feminism has been an important force for change, but with women’s participation more often in nationalist and patriotic struggles, working-class agitation and peasant rebellions than in the formation of autonomous women’s organizations. Although the empowerment approach acknowledges inequalities between men and women, and the origins of women’s subordination in the family, it also emphasizes the fact that women experience oppression differently according to their race, class, colonial history and current position in the international economic order. It therefore maintains that women have to challenge oppressive structures and situations simultaneously at different levels.

The empowerment approach questions some of the fundamental assumptions concerning the interrelationship between power and development that underlie previous approaches. While it acknowledges the importance for women to increase their power, it seeks to identify power less in terms of domination over others (with its implicit assumption that a gain for women implies a loss for men), and more in terms of the capacity of women to increase their own self-reliance and internal strength. 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 nonmaterial resources. It places far less emphasis than the equity approach on increasing women’s “status” relative to men, but seeks to empower women through the redistribution of power within, as well as between, societies. It also questions two underlying assumptions in the equity approach: first, that development necessarily helps all men, and second, that women want to be “integrated” into the mainstream of Western-designed development, in which they have no choice in defining the kind of society they want (UNAPCWD, 1979).

One especially succinct articulation of the empowerment approach has been made by the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), a loose formation of individual women and women’s groups set up prior to the 1985 World Conference of Women in Nairobi. DAWN’s purpose has been not only to analyze the conditions of the world’s women, but also to formulate a vision of an alternative future society, which it identifies as follows:

We want a world where inequality based on class, gender and race is absent from every country and from the relationships among countries. We want a world where basic needs become basic rights and where poverty and all forms of violence are eliminated. Each person will have the opportunity to develop her or his full potential and creativity, and women’s values of nurturance and solidarity will characterize human relationships. In such a world women’s reproductive role will be redefined: childcare will be shared by men, women and society as a whole... only by sharpening the links between equality, development and peace, can we show that the “basic rights” of the poor and the transformations of the institutions that subordinate women are inextricably linked. They can be achieved together through the self-empowerment of women (1985, pp. 73-75).

Using time as a basic parameter for change, DAWN distinguishes between long-term and short-term strategies. Long-term strategies are needed to break down the structures of inequality between genders, classes and nations. Fundamental requisites for this process include national liberation from colonial and neocolonial domination, shifts from export-led strategies in agriculture, and greater control over the activities of multinationals. Short term strategies are identified as the necessity to provide ways of responding to current crises, with measures to assist women both in food production through the promotion of a diversified agricultural base, as well as in formal and informal sector employment.

Although short-term strategies correspond to practical gender needs, long-term strategies contain a far wider agenda than do strategic gender needs, with national liberation identified as a
empowerment approach recognizes the triple gender needs will automatically result in the cannot be assumed that meeting practical change, is because of the implicit underlying categorization of practical/strategic gender needs does not identify the means to ensure that once description of this approach, however, DAWN

In its description of this approach, however, DAWN does not identify the means to ensure that once national liberation has been achieved, women's liberation will automatically follow. Recent liberation and socialist struggles in countries such as Cuba, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe have shown that this is not necessarily the case (Molyneux, 1981; 1985; Murray, 1979). One of the reasons why the categorization of practical/strategic gender needs in this article avoids time as a determinant of change, is because of the implicit underlying assumptions that short-term change leads to long-term transformation. In the same way, it cannot be assumed that meeting practical gender needs will automatically result in the satisfaction of strategic gender needs.

The new era envisaged by DAWN also requires the transformation of the structures of subordination that have been so inimical to women. Changes in law, civil codes, systems of property rights, control over women's bodies, labor codes and the social and legal institutions that underwrite male control and privilege are essential if women are to attain justice in society. These strategic gender needs are similar to those identified by the equity approach. It is in the means of achieving such needs that the empowerment approach differs most fundamentally from previous approaches. Recognition of the limitations of top-down government legislation to actually, rather than potentially, meet strategic gender needs has led adherents of the empowerment approach to acknowledge that their strategies will not be implemented without the sustained and systematic efforts by women's organizations and like-minded groups. Important points of leverage identified to be used by such organizations are therefore not only legal changes but also political mobilization, consciousness raising, and popular education.

In its emphasis on women's organizations, the empowerment approach might appear similar to the welfare approach, which also stressed the importance of women's organizations, leading some policy makers to conflate the two approaches. However, whereas the welfare approach recognizes only the reproductive role of women and utilizes women's organizations as a top-down means of delivering services, the empowerment approach recognizes the triple role of women and seeks through bottom-up women's organizations to raise women's consciousness to challenge their subordination. In fact Third World women's organizations form a continuum from those whose purpose is direct political action, to those exchanging research and information, to the traditional, service-oriented organizations with their class biases and limited scope for participatory action. While acknowledging the valuable function of different types of organizations, the empowerment approach seeks to assist the more traditional organizations to move toward a greater awareness of feminist issues.

Similarly, an important distinction between the empowerment and equity approach is the manner in which the former seeks to reach strategic gender needs indirectly through practical gender needs. The very limited success of the equity approach to confront directly the nature of women's subordination through legislative changes has led the empowerment approach to avoid direct confrontation, and to utilize practical gender needs as the basis on which to build a secure support base, and a means through which more strategic needs may be reached. The following examples illustrate this.

In the Philippines, GABRIELA (an alliance of local and national women's organizations) ran a project which combined women's traditional task of sewing tapestry with a nontraditional activity, the discussion of women's legal rights and the constitution. A nation-wide educational "tapestry-making drive" enabled the discussion of rights in communities, factories and schools, with the end product, a "Tapestry of Women's Rights," seen to be a liberating instrument (Gomez, 1986).

A feminist group in Bombay, India, the "Forum Against Oppression of Women," first started campaigning in 1979 on such issues as rape and bride burning. However, with 55% of the low-income population living in squatter settlements, the forum soon realized that housing was a much greater priority for local women, and, consequently, soon shifted its focus to this issue. In a context where women by tradition had no access to housing in their own right, homelessness, through breakdown of marriage or domestic violence, was an acute problem, and the provision of women's hostels a critical practical gender need. Mobilization around homelessness, however, also raised consciousness of patriarchal bias in inheritance legislation as well as in the interpretation of housing rights. In seeking to broaden the problem from a "women's concern" and raise men's awareness, the forum has become part of a nation-wide alliance of non-governmental organizations, lobbying national government for a National Housing Charter. Through this alliance, the forum has ensured that women's strategic gender needs relating to housing rights have been placed on the mainstream political agenda, and not remained simply the concern of women.
Conflicts often occur when empowered women's organizations succeed in challenging their subordination. One widely-cited example, the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) started in Ahmedabad, India in 1972 by a group of self-employed women laborers. It initially struggled for higher wages and for the defense of members against police harassment and exploitation by middlemen. At first, with the assistance of the male-dominated Textile Labor Association (TLA), SEWA established a bank, and provided support for low-income women, such as skill training programs, social security systems, production and marketing cooperatives. It has been said that the TLA expelled SEWA from its organization, not only because the TLA leaders felt increasingly threatened by the women's advance toward independence, but also because their methods of struggle, in opposition to TLA policy of compromise and collaboration, provided a dangerous model to male workers (Karl, 1983). In fact, SEWA has survived considerable setbacks in its development largely due to its widespread membership support and the fact that it has developed into a movement, making it increasingly difficult to eliminate. In addition, at various times the grant support SEWA has received from international agencies has assisted in giving the organization a level of independence within the local political context.

As highlighted by DAWN, "empowering ourselves through organization" has been a slow global process, accelerating during and since the Women's Decade, in which diverse women's organizations, movements, networks and alliances have developed. These cover a multitude of issues and purposes, with common interests ranging from disarmament at the international level, to mobilization around specific laws and codes at the national level. All share a similar commitment to empower women, and a concern to reject rigid bureaucratic structures in favor of nonhierarchical open structures, although they are not necessarily the most efficient organizational form. Experience to date has shown that the most effective organizations have been those which started around concrete practical gender needs relating to health, employment and basic service provision, but which have been able to utilize concerns such as these as a means to reach specific strategic gender needs identified by women in particular socio-political contexts.

The potentially challenging nature of the empowerment approach has meant that it remains largely unsupported either by national governments or bilateral aid agencies. Despite the widespread growth of Third World groups and organizations whose approach to women is essentially one of empowerment, they remain underfunded, reliant on the use of voluntary and unpaid women's time, and dependent on the resources of those few international nongovernmental agencies and First World governments prepared to support this approach to women and development.29

7. CONCLUSION

This article has outlined the essential components of a planning approach which, in incorporating gender into planning, challenges Western planning stereotypes. Its conceptual rationale is based on the identification of the triple role of women and the necessity of making a fundamental analytical distinction between practical and strategic gender needs. The methodological tools identified simplify complex theoretical feminist concerns relating both to the productive, reproductive and community managing roles of women, and to the nature of their gender subordination, such that they can be translated into specific interventions in planning practice. At the same time the examples illustrate how simplified methodological tools can assist planners in the appraisal and evaluation of complex planning interventions, and in the formulation of more gender-aware proposals at policy, program or project level, within particular socioeconomic and political contexts.

In order to provide a critique of different policy approaches to women from a gender planning perspective, it has proved necessary not only to critique the well-documented welfare, equity and anti-poverty approaches, but also to classify more systematically the efficiency and empowerment approaches. This review shows that wide-scale confusions still exist concerning both the definition and use of different policy approaches, with many institutions at both national government and international agency level either unclear or conflating their policy approach to women. Similarly, the ubiquitous WID approach has mystified rather than clarified conceptual categories and served to legitimize a diversity of approaches to women, which incorporate different underlying assumptions in relation to their practical and strategic gender needs. Indeed it is precisely because of confusions such as these that it is important to develop simple, but sufficiently rigorous, tools to enable policy makers and planners to understand with greater clarity the implications of their interventions in
terms of both their potential and their limitations in assisting Third World women.

From this policy review it is clear that the "room for maneuver" still remains limited, with welfare, and more recently efficiency, the predominant policy approaches endorsed by most governments and international agencies. With increasing political and ideological control in many contexts, severe difficulties continue to be encountered in shifting policy toward the anti-poverty, equity or empowerment approach.

However, there are also individuals and groups involved in changing policy approaches: government and aid agency personnel who argue that the efficiency approach can also be the means, with a hidden agenda, to empower women, and the proliferating number of underfinanced, small-scale, Third World women's organizations, in which women are increasingly struggling not only to meet practical gender needs, but also to raise consciousness to struggle for strategic gender needs.

NOTES

1. This article is the result of five years of research, developing the conceptual rationale for gender planning. The author acknowledges the collaborative work and support of Caren Levy, without which this would not have been written. She would also like to thank Maxine Molyneux, Linda Peake, Michael Saifer, Marianne Schmink and Peter Solis for their comments on various drafts, and to acknowledge the support of the Ford Foundation, New York in the development of training courses and materials on gender planning. For earlier versions of some sections of this article see Moser (1986), and Moser and Levy (1986).

2. Among the wide diversity of studies of Third World women's employment are the edited volumes by Jain and Banerjee (1985); Nash and Safa (1986); Redclift and Mignonie (1985); and Young and Moser (1981).

3. The term WID was first coined in the early 1970s by the women's committee of the Washington, DC Chapter of the Society for International Development, a network of female development professionals, influenced by the work on Third World development undertaken by Ester Boserup and other "new" anthropologists. (See Boserup, 1970; Tinker, 1982; and Maguire, 1984.) USAID, with its Office of Women in Development, has been one of the most resolute advocates of the WID approach. Together with the Harvard Institute of International Development they have produced a case study-based methodology to identify how women have been left out of development on the grounds that "women are key actors in the economic system, yet their neglect in development plans has left untapped a potentially large contribution" (Overholt et al., 1984, p. 3).

4. A summary of the distinction between sex and gender is provided by Oakley (1972), while Whitehead (1979) has highlighted the reasons for choosing the term "subordination," rather than patriarchy, to refer to the general character of male/female relations.

5. From 1981-86 the author taught at the Development Planning Unit, University College London, in training courses for Third World planners involved in such sectors as transport, housing, employment, land use, and infrastructure. Efforts to make them gender aware by "grafting" on gender to their particular planning disciplines met with little success, and led to recognition of the necessity to distinguish between a gender-aware planner (in, say, transport planning) and gender planning, a specific planning approach in its own right. This was developed at the DPU in the training course "Planning with Women for Development" (1983-86), in in-country workshops in Egypt (1987) and Peru (1988), and in gender planning workshops with British non-governmental organizations involved in Third World countries, such as Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), Christian Aid, and OXFAM U.K. (1987-88).


7. The term "triple" has already been used in relation to women, in various contexts. Bronstein (1982), for instance, discusses the three ways in which Third World peasant women suffer in terms of a "triple struggle," "as citizens of underdeveloped countries: as peasants, living in the most impoverished and disadvantaged areas of those countries; and as women in male-dominated societies." In contrast to this, European feminists have used the term to refer to the increasing parental caretaking role of women (Finch and Groves, 1983; Pascale, 1986).

8. In developing the conceptual rationale of gender planning, the term "productive work" is used to indicate work that has an exchange value, either actual or potential. This includes work in both the formal and the informal sectors, as well as in family enterprises. In this case it may not be perceived as work with an exchange value, since a salary is not given directly for work undertaken. It is critical, however, to acknowledge that reproductive work is also productive, but because of the production of use value under nonwage relations it is not identified as "productive" work. For further discussion of this debate see, for instance, Gardiner (1977), CSE (1976), and Barrett (1980). It is recognized, therefore, that the use of the term "productive...
value is an over-simplification of reality, particularly in working to improve living conditions for their families. Von Elms (1978) and Lele (1985). In many contexts it is difficult to assess their numbers accurately because slums in that same city put the figure at 70%. Thus between 3-4%. A woman social worker working in the rural subsistence economies where the divisions are not always separated. In fact, it is recognition of the multiple forms of women's work that has highlighted the severe limitations of categories used principally to show the differences between men's productive work and women's reproductive work. The purpose of this simplification is not to undervalue or ignore the importance of production for use value, but is based on the necessity for the development of a conceptual rationale of gender planning which recognizes that women, unlike men, have a triple role as producers, reproducers and community managers.

9. Although the important role of women in local-level protest groups has been most widely documented in urban South America, with case studies by, for instance, Barrig and Fort (1987), and Moser (1987b), this phenomenon is neither uniquely South American nor urban. Recent examples, for instance, by Barrett et al. (1985), Omveldt (1986), Sharma et al. (1985) and Yoon (1985) show the community managing role of women in rural environmental and basic service struggles in Asia and Africa.

10. A recent unpublished random survey of Third World community-level organizations showed a consistent trend for political organizations to be run by men with mainly men members, and collective consumption groups to be in the hands of women. For instance, in Lima the Junta Comunal is most frequently led and controlled by men, while the Community Kitchen Associations are organized by women; in Manila the Baranguay Captain is generally a man, while the Women's Club is obviously led by a woman; in Bombay the National Slum Dwellers Association local representative is a man, but the Mahila Mandal leader is a woman (Moser, 1987c).

11. The fact that men leaders are frequently paid for their work is legitimized by the fact that "a man has to work," whereas women are expected to be selfless and "pure," with their participation justified in terms of working to improve living conditions for their families (Moser, 1987b). An example of the gender division between paid men's work and unpaid women's voluntary work is provided by the UNICEF urban basic services program in India, which was designed to provide paid employment for men in official positions but required the unpaid work of women in the community for its successful implementation (Metha, 1986).

12. Useful reviews of Third World women-headed households are provided by Buvinić, Youssef, with Von Eins (1978) and Lele (1985). In many contexts it is difficult to assess their numbers accurately because cultural discrimination and stigma against women-headed households makes officials reluctant to admit the scale of the "problem." For instance, the author was informed by a senior Indian Administrative Service Official that in a metropolitan Indian city the figure was between 3-4%. A woman social worker working in the slums in that same city put the figure at 70%, thus demonstrating the differences both in definition and in perception.

13. Different feminist approaches place varying emphasis on the relative importance of class and gender. While radical feminists utilizing the concept of a "sex class" stress that the sexual imbalance of power is biologically based, and see sexual politics as the central area of struggle (Hartmann, 1981), Marxist feminists, in contrast, identify economic or class relations as the primary oppression, with capitalism particularly responsible for women's double oppression in productive and reproductive work (Barrett, 1980). Finally, socialist feminists have emerged in part as an attempt to deal with the "unhappy marriage" of Marxism and feminism, and seek to expose the pervasiveness and persistence of patriarchy within and across societies and classes even in socialist countries (Maguire, 1984; Sargent, 1981).

14. In fact, Molyneux (1985) does not define "interests" as such, nor does she make the distinction between "interests" and "needs." From a planning perspective this separation is essential because of its focus on the process whereby an interest, defined as a "prioritized concern" is translated into a need, defined as the "means by which concerns are satisfied."

15. Following the definition of "interests" and "needs" made in this article, Molyneux's differentiation between practical and strategic gender interests provides a useful theoretical and methodological distinction when translated into practical and strategic gender needs. For example, if the strategic gender interest, i.e., the prioritized concern, is for a more equal society then a strategic gender need, i.e., the means by which the concern may be satisfied, could be identified as the abolition of the sexual division of labor. On the other hand, if the practical gender interest is for human survival, then a practical gender need could be the provision of water.

16. In a recent example from Nigeria, the curriculum in a community development home economics course included new recipes such as angel cakes to be cooked in Western-style ovens (Erinle, 1986). In fact the majority of low-income women dropped out of the program, preferring to cook for sale "traditional" food such as gari. While the training recognized the reproductive role of women and might have met nutritional needs, assuming that angel cake had greater nutritional value than the traditional foods it substituted, it failed to recognize the productive role of women, which for the women themselves was their priority.

17. The capacity to earn an income from dressmaking varies from place to place, as the following three examples show. In Amman, Jordan, the Urban Development Department implements an extensive program in purpose-built premises, although there are considerable problems for Muslim women to work outside the home (Khairi, 1986). Consequently, the majority attending sewing classes are young, unmarried women, for whom the class itself is an escape from the tedium of the home. For the few older women who for
economic reasons try to put their newly acquired skill to practice, there are very limited job opportunities. In Madras, where medium sized nongovernmental organizations such as the Dom Bosco Society run extensive courses, one of the problems for newly trained dressmakers is the lack of demand for their skills, in a context where the majority of women still wear the sari, and sewing of the quota is still traditionally a men's occupation. In Recife, where in one self-help mothers' group Tres Caraços some 80 women received dressmaking training, problems relate to the over-supply of dressmakers in low-income slum communities and the lack of resources to buy the sewing materials.

18. In a recent community-level project in Colombo, Sri Lanka, for instance, masonry training was initially extended to women as a means to ensure that those who headed households, but lacked both employment and housing, could get access to the project. Initially the women were hesitant to train, experiencing problems with the male trainer who had to be persuaded by the project officer to find room for them in his crowded training shed. But the demand for masonry skills grew so rapidly that the project was soon forced to absorb women straight into construction teams and provide on-the-job training (Fernando, 1987).

19. For an extensive analysis of the consequences of household stereotypes for human settlement and housing policy, see Moser (1986a), while for detailed case study examples see Moser and Peake (1987).

20. In Tunis, Tunisia, in two low income settlements, Mellassine, a squatter upgrading project, and Ibn Khalkoun, a planned community, women were dissatisfied with house design because of the small size of the inner courtyard. Pressure on land, insensitivity to women's needs, and middle-class aspirations to European architecture had resulted in a reduction of inner courtyard area, in some cases leading to psychological depression, neuroses, and even suicide among women (Resources for Action, 1982).

21. At the Dandora Site and Service Project, in Nairobi, Kenya, partially funded by the World Bank, restrictive zoning legislation was identified by women as the main cause of arrears in repaying building loans (Nimpuno-Parente, 1987).

22. In an upgrading project in Jordan, for instance, it was found that because a woman staff member happened to be in charge of handling the title deeds in the Community Development Office, many men in the community allowed their wives to complete the relevant paperwork. As a result, title deeds ended up in the women's names, thus meeting, if unintentionally, their strategic gender need to own land.

23. Schmink (1982) in a study of transport needs in Belo Horizonte, Brazil showed that the routing of buses from the low-income settlements to the industrial areas and then into the city meant that women spent twice as much on transport costs, with their daily average travel time three times longer than men's.

24. The most systematic classification of different policy approaches to women is the informative work of Buvnič (1983; 1986).

25. In most countries the ministries of social welfare and the profession of social planning, frequently seen as their mandate, are dominated by women, particularly at the lower levels. Consequently this is often identified as "women's work," serving to reinforce social planning as soft-edged, and of lesser importance than the hard-edged areas of economic and physical planning.

26. Gender-blindness on the part of those formulating refugee programs has severe consequences. As Harrell-Bond has commented. "The failure to recognize their pivotal position in the household economy, and the special needs and particular vulnerability of women in the refugee situation has led not just to women being disadvantaged, although this is obviously the case, but to whole programs going awry" (1986, p. 267).

27. In their critique of food aid. Jackson and Eade (1982) argue that MCH programs can have detrimental effects on participants. In support of this assertion they cite a survey in the Dominican Republic that found food aid to be encouraging malnutrition. Pre-school children who ate rations at a MCH center and were weighed monthly over two years were found not to gain weight noticeably except during the mango and avocado season and whenever food aid stopped. After questioning the mothers, the nutritionist concluded that when children received food aid mothers tended to overestimate the value of this foreign "wonder food" and to feed them less local food. Whenever the food aid failed to arrive, mothers would, as a matter of course, ensure that their children had food. This resulted in a weight gain. The experiment repeated elsewhere confirmed the same findings that with food aid there was not weight gain; without food aid weight increased (see Hilsung, 1983).

28. By 1984, for instance, the World Bank Development Report identified reducing infant and child mortality, educating parents (especially women) and raising rural incomes, women's employment and legal and social status, as key incentives to fertility decline (World Bank, 1984). However, recognition of the links between women's autonomy over their own lives and fertility control is not widespread and women continue to be treated in an instrumental manner in population programs. The lack of satisfactory birth control methods, and the introduction of more invasive techniques (such as IUDs and hormonal implants) is making birth control even more "women centered." As DAWN (1985) has argued, this lets men off the hook in terms of their responsibility for birth control, while increasingly placing the burden on women, whose own ambivalence toward contraceptive technology will only be removed when the technology is better adapted to the social and health environments in which it is used.

29. The lack of definition of WID is widespread in the proliferating number of national-level WID ministries
and bureaus, which implement a wide diversity of policies under the umbrella of the WID approach (Gordon, 1984). UNICEF in a policy review paper on the agency’s response to women’s concerns also showed a lack of clarity in defining its policy approach when it stated,

“There is a growing recognition within UNICEF of the multi-dimensional nature of women’s roles and the need for increasing support to programs that are both women- and mother-centered and are based on a development rather than a welfare approach” (UNICEF, 1985, p. 4).

Although UNICEF distinguished between “welfare” and “development,” no further elaboration as to the definition of the latter was provided.

30. Tinker, in her documentation of development projects that had widened the gap between men and women, argued that development planners were, “unable to deal with the fact that women must perform two roles in society whereas men perform only one” (1976a, p. 22). She attributed the adverse impact of development on women to three types of planning error. First, errors of omission or failure to acknowledge and utilize women’s productive role. Second, errors that reinforced values which restrict women to the household engaged in childbearing and childrearing activities. Third, errors of inappropriate application of Western values regarding women’s work (1976b). Maguire (1984) also provides an extensive discussion of these issues.

31. The Oxford English Dictionary defines “equity” as “fairness” and “equality” as “condition of being equal” (OUP, 1964). Despite her important analysis of policy approaches to women, Buvinić (1983; 1986) has never sought to qualify the semantic shift from “equity” to “equality.” In much of the literature, the two terms are often used interchangeably, despite the definitional differences.

32. As Buvinić has commented, “Productivity programs for women usually require some restructuring of the cultural fabric of society, and development agencies do not like to tamper with unknown and unfamiliar social variables. As a rule of thumb they tend to believe in upholding social traditions and thus are reluctant to implement these programs” (1983, p. 26).

33. In Europe, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Guiding Principles to Aid Agencies for Supporting the Role of Women in Development identified “integration” as critical for a policy on WID issues. In a review of European development assistance, Anderson and Baud argue, “at the most abstract level the concept points the way toward a society in which men and women have interchangeable social roles, so that gender will only be marginally a defining element in life choices. The policy statements of most donor countries are in general accord with this general abstract idea of equality. At the level of actual policy, integration has been mainly interpreted to mean an increasing number of women in existing policies and programs . . . implicit in such an approach is the idea that current development models are in principle favorable to women, and that they therefore do not need to take account of women’s vision or priorities” (1987, p. 22).

34. A typical example is that of loans provided to landless families in Bangladesh to assist households to buy additional paddy. Although their wives then undertook additional production activities, men still sold the final product and controlled the earnings (Carr, 1984). In contrast to this, women controlled the marketing and were able to use their additional resources to buy a tractor to assist the men to put more land under cassava cultivation. In this case “involving the women in the design of the new technology undoubtedly contributed to the success of the project” (Carr, 1984).

35. While undertaking gender planning training workshops during 1987–88, the author reviewed documentation on a range of projects that had received financial assistance from such UK-based agencies as Oxfam and Christian Aid. Their support for women’s income-generating projects at that time included projects as diverse as handmills in Tanzania, fish processing in Sierra Leone, dressmaking in Brazil, foundry work in Bangladesh, rope making in Bangalore, India, Khadi spinning in Tamil Nadu, India and clay pot making in Indonesia. However, one largely unrecognized income-generating activity for low-income urban women was the street foods trade. Recent research has shown this as vital to urban survival strategies, with the widespread availability of low-cost cooked food reducing the time women spend in food marketing and home preparation (Cohen, 1986; UNICEF, 1987).

36. The following quotes from international organizations illustrate not only that women are essential to the total development effort, but also suggest efficiency has always been a primary rationale for working with women.

“The experience of the past ten years tells us that the key issue underlying the women in development concept is ultimately an economic one” (USAID, 1982, p. 3).

“... leaving questions of justice and fairness aside, women’s disproportionate lack of education with its consequences in low productivity, as well as for the nutrition and health of their families, has adverse effects on the economy at large” (World Bank, 1979, p. 2).

“Substantial gains will only be achieved with the contribution of both sexes, for women play a vital role in contributing to the development of their countries. If women do not share fully in the development process, the broad objectives of development will not be attained” (OECD, 1983).

37. The project Development Alternatives with
Women for a New Era (DAWN), grew "from small seeds planted in Bangalore, India in August 1984" (DAWN, 1985, p. 9). In 1985, collaborating institutions included the African Association of Women for Research and Development (AAWORD), Dakar, Senegal; the Women and Development Unit of the University of the West Indies (WAND), Barbados; the Asian and Pacific Development Centre (APDC), Malaysia; and the Chr. Michelson Institute (CMI), Norway, with support provided by the Ford Foundation, the Population Council and the Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD). Research organizations and funding institutions such as these have all played a critical role in supporting the development of the empowerment approach.

38. DAWN placed great importance on the relationship between international structures of domination warfare and technology, and the subordinate position of Third World women. Thus they state, "We want a world where the massive resources now used in the production of the means of destruction will be diverted to areas where they will help to relieve oppression both inside and outside the home. This technological revolution will eliminate disease and hunger, and will give women means for safe control of her fertility" (1985, pp. 73–75).

39. Evidence suggests that considerable support has come from the governments of such countries as Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The Netherlands government, in its Development Cooperation Policy, has probably gone furthest in questioning the WID approach, and identifying the importance of what is termed an "autonomy" approach (Boesveld et al., 1986). A 1986 summary of their Overseas Development Assistance objectives include "stimulating structural improvements in the position of women . . . increasing women’s control over their own lives . . . strengthening women’s organizations." It is recognized that a stimulus for the shift in approach was the appointment of a feminist as Minister for Development Cooperation from 1982 until 1986 (Berden and Papma, 1987).

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