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**Gender Mainstreaming in Development Policies and
Programmes as Tools for Enhancement of Women's
Advancement**

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**THE NATIONAL GENDER
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INTRODUCTION:

This paper will discuss the concept of gender as it applies to policy and program development. The paper will also discuss about gender mainstreaming and what the government has undertaken with respect to gender mainstreaming. In this case the experience of the government from the perspective of the Civil Service reforms program will be presented. Recommendations are provided in the last section as issues we need to consider for mainstreaming of gender.

1.1 Position of women

The position of women who constitute 51.5% of the population is still that of subordinate to men. Women hold less power, wealth and yet work longer hours in comparison to men. The following global statistics on the position and condition of women indicate the unequal power relations between men and women.

Women

- ◇ Are 1/2 of the world's population (51.5% in Tanzania)
- ◇ Work 2/3 of world's working hours
- ◇ Earn 1/10 of world's income
- ◇ Own 1/10 of world's property
- ◇ Are 2/3 of world's illiterate
- ◇ Produce 1/3 of world's agriculture output (60 to 80%) of total in Africa
- ◇ Head 1/3 of world's households population but hold no more than 10% of all seats in the national legislature (in Tanzania it is 15%)

There are also other differences among men and women that exist, e.g. on the basis class, ethnicity, and religion

1.2 Gender concept in development.

Gender refers to the different roles, responsibilities and expectations of men and women in societies and cultures, which affect their ability and their incentive to participate in development projects, and lead to a different project impact for men and women. These roles which are learned change over time and vary widely within and between culture.

As a concept in development, gender can be looked at in two ways, first as a relational concept and secondly as an analytical variable.

As a relational concept gender recognizes that societies are not homogenous, that the constructed social relations lead to differences in rights, responsibilities, obligations and status which are assigned to men, women, boys and girls differently. However men and boys are advantaged than women and girls thus creating dynamic social relation. Hence we can speak of gender roles, gender responsibilities, gender privileges and gender burdens.

As an analytical variable, gender concept in development can be looked at in four main areas:

- ◇ Multiple gender roles and responsibilities of men and women
- ◇ Position and condition of women and men (gender audit)
- ◇ Gender needs of men and women
- ◇ Access to and control over resources and benefits

1.2.1 Multiple gender roles and responsibilities of men and women

Gender roles refers to division of roles based on social convention. Gender roles are learned behaviors in a given society, conditioning activities, tasks and responsibilities which are considered feminine and masculine. Age, class, religion, ethnicity, regional origin and history affect gender roles. They can also be profoundly affected by changes brought on through development efforts. The gender roles of women and men are closely interrelated and may be similar, different, complementary or conflicting. Gender roles can and do change depending on circumstances. I.e. These roles and responsibilities are socially not biologically determined and context specific, changeable, but can also resist change.

It is recognized that in most societies low-income women have a triple role: women undertake reproductive, productive and community managing activities, while men primarily undertake productive and community politics activities. These different roles are explained below.

- ◇ **Reproductive role:** Child bearing/rearing responsibilities, and domestic tasks done by women, required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labor force. It includes not only biological reproduction but also the care and maintenance of the workforce (male partner and working children) and the future workforce (infants and school going children). This work is often neither valued nor included in national statistics.

- ◇ **Productive role:** Work done by both women and men for pay in cash or kind. It includes both market production with an exchange value, and subsistence/home production with actual use-value, and also potential exchange value. For women in agricultural production this includes work as independent farmers, peasant wives and wagedworkers.

- ◇ **Community managing role:** Activities undertaken primarily by women at the community level, as an extension of their reproductive role, to ensure the provision and maintenance of scarce resources of collective consumption, such as water, health care and education. This is voluntary unpaid work, undertaken in "free" time.

- ◇ **Community politics role:** Activities undertaken primarily by men at the community level, organizing at the formal political level, often within the framework of national politics. This is usually paid work either directly or indirectly, through status and gender roles refer to the division of roles based on social convention. (Gender roles are learned behaviors in a given society, conditioning which activities, tasks and responsibilities are considered feminine and masculine).

1.2.2 **Position and condition of women and men (gender audit).**

This looks at the situation analysis of men and women. What position do men and women in the society hold, what resources do they have access to and/or control, how do they participate economically and politically

1.2.3 **Gender needs of men and women.**

Men and women have different needs due to the different roles that the society has placed on them. Gender needs are at two levels: Practical gender needs (PGN) and strategic gender needs (SGN). PGN are those that are immediate or short term, relate to daily needs and are easily identifiable by the disadvantaged group. SGN on the other hand tend to be long term, relate to disadvantaged position/status; lack of ability to make independent decisions and control over resources. SGN are the basis of disadvantage and potential for change not always identifiable by

the affected group. Addressing PGN while can improve the condition of the affected group's lives, generally, does not alter or transform traditional roles and relationship. One can satisfy practical needs in ways that reinforce dependence or one can satisfy them in ways that empower women. How one go about meeting them reveals the extent to which one is treating women as autonomous, competent actors and to what extent one is treating them as passive clients. Addressing SGN leads to improved position or status of the disadvantaged in society, it also transforms relationships, gender roles and gender structures.

1.2.4 Access to and control over resources and benefits.

The social construction of gender determines access to and control over resources and benefits. Access to is gained by permission. Control over, means one has the power to decide when and how to use the resources or the benefits. Household resource management, is an important concept in determining gains from a development policy/project In addition decisions taken at household level e.g. number of children to have, how to manage income with a view to savings, all have important economic implications. For example, family savings in banks constitute important source of domestic mobilization. Number of children each family decides and actually gets, contributes to government need to plan for increased population in term of schools, clinic, housing, water etc.

1.3 The concept of development:

Development is the process by which some system, place, object or person is changed from one state into another.

The basic objective of development is that of enlarging people's choices. At the heart of this there are three essential components:

- ◇ Equality of opportunity for all people in society
- ◇ Sustainability of such opportunities from one generation to the next

- ◇ Empowerment of people (men and women) so that they participate in and benefit from development processes.

1.4 Engendered human development

Human development is a process of enlarging the choices for all people, not just for one part of society. Such a process becomes unjust and discriminatory if most women are excluded from its benefits. And the continuing exclusion of women from many economic and political opportunities is a continuing indictment of modern progress.

For too long, it was assumed that development was a process that benefited all people equally, that its benefits trickled down to all income classes – and that it was gender-neutral in its impact.

Experience has shown us that, men and women benefit differently and are impacted differently in development process. While men have been active beneficiaries, women have been the passive beneficiaries. Moving towards gender equality is not a technocratic goal – it is a political process. It requires a new way of thinking – in which the stereotyping of women and men gives way to a new philosophy that regards all people, irrespective of gender, as essential agents of change.

The human development paradigm, which puts people at the center of its concerns, must thus be fully engendered. Any such attempt would embrace at least the following three principles:

- ◇ Equality of rights between women and men must be enshrined as a fundamental principle. Legal, economic, political or cultural barriers that prevent the exercise of equal rights should be identified and removed through comprehensive policy reforms and strong affirmative action.
- ◇ Women must be regarded as agents and beneficiaries of change. Investing in women's capabilities and empowering them to exercise their choices is not only valuable in itself but is also the surest way to contribute to economic growth and overall development.
- ◇ The engendered development model, though aiming to widen choices for both women and men, should not predetermine how different cultures and different societies exercise these choices. What is important is that, equal opportunities to make a choice exist for both women and men.

Human development, if not engendered, is endangered. This is a simple but far-reaching message.

2 WHY GENDER IS AN ISSUE IN DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PROGRAMS

A gender issue arises when gender roles (arising from customs and traditions of particular societies, not due to biological difference) involve unequal burdens of work and unequal distribution of resources or benefits and this is recognized as undesirable or unjust.

A gender issue can be divided into three basic elements: *gender gap*, *gender discrimination* and *gender oppression*.

Gender gaps arise where the division into gender roles bring with it inequalities in the amount of work input or benefit received.

Gender discrimination. Gender gaps originate and are maintained in any given society by systems of gender discrimination, such discrimination against women is pervasive at the level of tradition and social practice and is also supported in official/formal administrative practice, sometimes arising from discriminatory legislation. Gender discrimination means giving differential treatment to individuals on the ground of gender. In a patriarchal society this involves systematic and structural discrimination against women in the distribution of income, access to resources and participation in decision making.

Gender oppression. Discriminatory treatment of women does not happen by cultural accident, but by itself a means of oppressing women. By discriminatory practice, men maintain their domination over women.

Therefore, underlying the systemic discrimination against women is the maintenance of patriarchal power: male domination of power within the home, government and other institutions for the purpose of maintaining male privilege.

Gender is thus an issue in development context because the benefits arising out of development have not reached men and women equally and equity. Researchers have found out that development initiatives have

been ignoring women and in some cases harming women. For example an irrigation project in the Gambia to increase rice production put ownership of land traditionally worked by women in the names of men. Money from twice-yearly harvests went to men labor-saving technology was applied to men's tasks (land clearing, ploughing) while arduous planting, hand cultivating (as in weeding) and harvesting work doubled with increases in crops and production. Women could not cope with the increased burden. Also as the women had no land to farm for family food, the consequence of ignoring women was that when the rice crop failed, for the first time in that community the people had to get food aid.

How many times do we plan to introduce modern technology like tractors and forget that the increased acreage means more acreage for weeding which translates into more work burden for women?

If during the planning of development policies or programs we would consider men's and women's role access and ownership of resources, the needs on men and women, in each activity separately, we would then be able to remove the negative impacts of policies and programs on women.

The gender concept has become an increasingly important developmental issue, not only because of the equality and social justification concerns, but also from the economic efficiency and sustainability point of view.

Despite the central role women play as active contributors to the socio-economic development and the main sectors of economies, they have either been invisible to development planners, or have been assigned a marginal role only. This has been due to the existing gender imbalances and insensitivity especially in our planning departments (for example in the planning commission, all the five directors are male and of 13 assistant directors only three are women).

As has been mentioned earlier, women's roles, rights and responsibilities differ from that of men. Women normally have less access to resources and opportunities such as education and training, credit, capital, land and decision – making authority. Inequalities in the access to development resources and opportunities hamper economic efficiency and sustainability. It is said that the persistent inequalities between women and men constrain society to a lower level of productivity and ultimately a lower level of economic growth.

This means that if development programs and policies do not address gender equity and equality, then the development objectives of the programs and policies will not be achieved, or sustained. Thus the persistent under development will continue.

Both women and men are active agents of their own development, and development in general, once resources and opportunities are made available to them on an equal basis.

It has also been observed that men and women spend according to their different responsibilities and preference towards family maintenance. Women tend to spend more on the basic necessities such as food, clothing, and health and education services than men do. Men tend to spend more on capital investments, major consumer goods and on their personal needs than women.

Thus strengthening women's resources/benefits from development policies and programs is likely to increase the overall well being of the family.

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PROGRAMS AND POLICIES.

3.1 From WID to GAD

Prior to 1980s equality measures were targeted at women and implemented through the special Women's programs or units, the focus being on Women in Development (WID). In recent years there has been a shift in focus from "Women in development" (WID) to "Gender and Development" (GAD).

The women in development approach began with an uncritical acceptance of existing social structures and focus on how women could be better integrated into development initiatives. It viewed women as the problem thus targeting women's productive work to the exclusion of their reproductive work. This approach was characterized by income generating projects for women that failed to address the systematic causes of gender inequalities. It also tended to view women as passive recipients of development assistance, rather than as active agents in transforming their own economic, social, political and cultural realities. This had resulted in women's concern being looked in isolation of mainstream concerns thus leading to marginalisation in the state systems and other structures.

The gender and development approach focuses more on the fact that women and men have different life courses and that development policies and programs affect them differently. The GAD approach seeks to address these differences by mainstreaming gender into development planning at all levels and in all sectors, focusing less on providing equal treatment for men and women (since equal treatment does not necessarily result into equal outcomes) and more on taking whatever steps to ensure equal outcomes. It recognizes that improving the status of women cannot be undertaken as a separate isolated issue and only be achieved by taking into account the status of both women and men.

The gender and development approach is built on awareness of not only the differences between men and women but also of the inequalities that emanate from these differences. It seeks to address not only the women's practical gender needs (the immediate material needs of women in their existing role) but also their strategic gender interests (the necessity of changing the position of women in society – addressing inequalities in employment, political participation and culture and legal status).

3.2 The experience with WID focal points in ministries.

In 1987, the then Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Youth and Sports required Ministries to establish focal points for Women in Development. The response to this requirement is that the Focal Points were established in differing modes and manner depending on the perceived needs as well as the interpretation of the requirement by the Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Youth and Sports. A summary of the status of implementation of establishment of WID focal points is provided in the appendix.

In 1998, the civil service commissioned a study on the focal points. the following is a summary of achievements and problems.

Achievements

- Appointment of WID-FP has brought the attention of ministries/organisations to women and gender related issues. In some ministries WID focal points have been instrumental in mainstreaming gender in policies as well as facilitating the participation of women in some decision making bodies.
- WID-Focal Points have assisted in the gender sensitization process in ministries
- In technical ministries (notably the Ministry of Works), deliberate attempts have been made to increase women participation in specific activities such as road construction or road related works, training/skills acquisition etc. These activities were usually regarded as a male domain.
- There have been efforts to organize professional women through formation of professional association e.g. Women Engineers and Quantity surveyors and Architecture Association (WEQA), Tanzania Association of Women Leaders in Agriculture and Environment (TAWLAE)

Problems

- WID-FP were not formalized in the organisation structure or ministerial schedule of work.
- Terms of reference for WID-FP were never issued/clarified by either MCDWAC or CSD.
- WID-FP activities were perceived as solely women related. This led to marginalization of the institution – (WID-FP) and the activities.
- Those ministries where a formal structure was created – e.g. CSD – the FP was placed low in the hierarchy to be able to effectively influence major decisions being undertaken.
- Funding of WID-FP related activities is heavily donor dependant.
- Except in the CSD, and to a certain extent the MOW, WID-FP did not address issues related to women workers/professionals in their respective organisations.
- Generally, WID-FP were not equipped to mainstream gender in sectoral/ministerial plans. Achievement to this effect is negligible.

3.3 Gender mainstreaming.

Mainstreaming Gender is the process of integrating equality concerns in all program objectives, activities and outputs of development programs and policies.

Mainstreaming is a strategy; a method for achieving gender perspective at all levels and in all areas and that is carried out by regular staff (not special person or units). It means that at all time in doing our work

- ◊ Different conditions and requirements for men and women should be identified
- ◊ Every question which concern individual should be examined from a gender perspective

- ◇ The expected consequences of changes for women and men respectively should be analyzed.

Mainstreaming gender implies a change of attitudes in all organization staff such that the staffs perform their daily activities with due consideration to gender and that Top Management responsible for ensuring that this happens in both administrative and development work.

Policy making is the process of social, economic and political decision making about how to allocate resources for the needs and interests of society. The process of policy making is ridden by controversies due to multifaceted nature and the diverse interest groups to be affected either positively or negatively by its implementation.

If gender issues are not considered at policy level as part of the overall sector policy, it is likely that gender gaps will not be considered at the project level.

Gender mainstreaming in development policies and programs would ensure that

- ◇ There is accountability and customer oriented service by delivering services according to the needs of men and women. Since in gender mainstreaming each program or policy is analyzed from the perspective of men and women.
- ◇ Policy and program development is more inclusive and client (i.e. men and women clients) based. Hence the voices of women and men will be heard. Gender mainstreaming requires making men and women visible in all areas.
- ◇ Increased motivation and incentive to participate in development work because of the imminent benefit of the program which, would have addressed the gender issues or minimized the negative gender impact.
- ◇ At work places there is increased effectiveness by staff by providing working environment that reflects the needs of staff. Gender mainstreaming in development programs and policies within our organizations will change working practices to work more efficiently and effectively

3.4 Mainstreaming in the government: The experience of mainstreaming gender in the Civil service.

The Government of the United republic of Tanzania is committed to the advancement of women as evidenced by its signatory to a number of declarations and pronouncements issued by the government. The government has addresses a number of gender issues in its sectoral policies for example the water policy, the education policy, the new land policy. GOT is the only country in sub sahara Africa reforms program where gender is a component within the civil service reforms program.

The Civil Service Department has since November 1997 been implementing a program to mainstream gender in the civil service. During this time we have learned the following

- i. Top management commitment is crucial for successful implementation of any gender program.
- ii. There is a lot of misconception about gender. To many it is taken to be only women's issue and hence marginalized. Gender sensitization needs to start with policy and decision-makers.
- iii. Gender equality involves a change of attitudes. This can not be achieved overnight. It involves continuous sensitization and training rather than a "one-off" workshop.
- iv. Gender insensitivity in programs and policies is not deliberate. Rather, it is a result of ignorance and lack of skills on gender issues on the part of those required to be more gender sensitive. In most cases those involved are not aware of the issues that need to be addressed nor how to address them. The gender-training efforts have mostly sensitization, they have not been sector specific and oriented enough to enable one to put knowledge into practice.

For policies and programs to be gender sensitive there is a need to:

- ◇ include a clause on gender sensitivity requirements in the consultants terms of reference;
- ◇ in selection of consulting firms and experts (both local and expatriate) gender competence should be part of the profile

in the selection and particularly the Leader/Co-ordinator; and

- ◇ Recruitment of a balance between female and male staff should be encouraged.
- vi. There is inadequate resources provided for gender activities in ministries. Either it is looked upon as a non-core activity or a donor driven activity to be supported through donor funds.
- vii. The gender mainstreaming efforts are greatly constrained by lack of accurate, reliable and current gender dis-aggregated data.
- viii. The solution to gender discrimination lies in “mainstreaming” gender issues (Ensuring that policy is “Mainstream” and not Malestream’) rather than the creation of separate women’s programs and policies. Separate programs view women as an “add on” or as the “other” who must be catered for after the main issue and people (i.e. men) have been addressed. However affirmative actions for women are currently a necessity if we are to reach the equality goal. As the Vice president of Uganda said during the 2nd post Beijing conference held in Uganda recently,

“Equality is our goal, affirmative action is a path or a strategy towards that goal.”

4. CONCLUSION.

Gender mainstreaming will advance women to reach their developmental potential since programs and policies will be analyzed from the perspectives of men and women. This will ensure that their needs and concerns are addressed and that any negative impacts are minimized. Gender mainstreaming will thus ensure that development programs and policies are people centered and that effects of development are sustained.

It should also be noted that gender mainstreaming is not a feminist’s cry but has its legality drawn from the following documents:

- ◇ *The constitution of Tanzania* does not condone discrimination. A fight for gender equality is a fight against discrimination.

- ◇ The government has ratified the *UN convention on Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women*
- ◇ The Government of Tanzania is a signatory to the *declaration by the head of states of Southern African Development Community (SADC)* signed in Blantyre on 8th September 1997. In this declaration the head of states reaffirm their commitments to the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, The African Platform of Action and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action.

The Head of States also endorsed the establishment of Gender Focal Points whose task would be to ensure that gender is taken into all sectoral initiatives and is placed on the agenda of all ministerial meetings.

This then implies that each one of us is responsible to ensure that we live to the expectations of the above documents.

5. **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In order for gender to be mainstreamed in development programs and policies the following are recommended:

- (a) Policies must be reviewed and plans established to increase the proportion of women involved as decision makers, planners, managers, scientists and technical advisers in the design, development and implementation of policies and programs for sustainable development.
- (b) **Gender sensitization programs** should be run for top management to obtain top management commitment and support. Gender mainstreaming will be ineffective if there is no top management support and commitment. With the commitment of top management programs to implement pronouncements on improving the status and on the advancement of women should be implemented.
- (c) Ensure that gender issues are mainstreamed in current reforms programmes. The focal points need to be facilitated

so that they can influence reform activities in the sectors. MCDWA&C need to facilitate ministries to draw guidelines to assist staff in mainstreaming gender in their specific ministry.

- (d) **Make men and women visible** through gender dis-aggregated data as well as undertaking a situational analysis of men and women in the policy or program area being developed or reviewed. Gender can be effectively mainstreamed when the situation of men and women is visible. Thus it is imperative that in each sector staff are made to maintain all data gender dis-aggregated and report any statistics in a gender dis-aggregated manner.
- (e) **Build gender analytical skills to all staff** involved in policy and program development, monitoring and evaluation. The training programs should be practical oriented to enable the trainees put knowledge into practice.
- (f) **Include gender training in training programs** of organizations. This will provide awareness to all staff in mainstreaming gender activities.
- (g) **Articulate the gender impact in all policies and programs.** Each organisation should make it a policy that for each program or policy developed the gender impact is clearly articulated within the document.
- (h) **Empower women** to make them articulate their needs and concerns in relevant fora.
- (i) **Lobby for adequate budget** and availability of funds both from the government and development partners. Gender activities should be properly funded just as any mainstream activity.

Finally gender mainstreaming is not an “add on” activity nor simply an equity issue or an issue for women advancement only. It can help our organizations and the country as a whole reach the goals of sustainable development for men, women, boys and girls.

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