



# Gender, Poverty and Rights

A Trainer's Manual

Ranjani K. Murthy  
Mercy Kappen

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*Linocut prints:* C.F. John  
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Ranjani K. Murthy  
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April 2006

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## INTRODUCTION

### The context

The last fifteen years has seen a rapid globalisation of the economy. With the breaking up of the former USSR and the communist Eastern European countries in the late 1980s/early 1990s, there has been a shift from a bi-polar economic order (capitalist and communist), to a unipolar one (capitalist). The power of the USA and its allies has increased, apparent amongst other things is the increase in the role and resources of the World Bank, and decline in the role and resources of the United Nations; as well as unaccountable attacks in the name of 'war on terror' on countries populated by Muslims. The unfettered exploitation of natural resources for profit by multinational as well as national companies has led to the depletion of natural resources and increased human-made disasters. The lack of resolution of the Palestine issue and the 'war on terror' have led to a backlash by the communities who are victims of such attacks; often pushing women back into traditional roles and dress codes. How far the war on terror is linked to the need for strengthening arms production and sale, and boosting the slow economic growth in developed countries over the last decade is a moot question.

India has seen a rise in Hindu fundamentalism since the mid 1980s, which led to the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992 and assault on Muslims in Gujarat in 2002. In the Gujarat riots, members of the majority community used bodies of women from the minority community as sites for exercising their dominance. In 1991, the Indian



government started the process of opening up its economy through adoption of new economic policies, and has since then progressed steadily in integrating itself into the global economy. The tenth five-year plan (2003-2007) reflects the government's prioritization of market-led economic growth, and includes policies that allow agriculture land to be used for industrial measures, contract farming, removal of urban land ceiling act, privatization of power sector and expansion of private sector in health and education. These developments have had a more adverse impact on the poor than the middle class/rich, and amongst the poor on rural poor, women, dalits, adivasis, minorities, non-literates, differently abled, children, and elderly. Atrocities against dalits and adivasis continue, by both the state and caste Hindus. The increase in migration of rural poor (in particular men), the accepted norm that men have a 'biological' need to be sexually active, and the fact that women cannot demand safe sex, have led to increase in HIV/AIDS, and the proportion of women and girls affected by the same. Instead of addressing these issues, the Indian government, irrespective of the ruling political regime, has strengthened militarization and nuclearization.

Not all the developments over the last fifteen years have been negative. The international and national social and women's movements have strengthened over time. The World Bank, for example, was forced to withdraw its support for the Sardar Sarovar Project in India due to

years have also seen the emergence of World Social Forums that have highlighted the negative impact of neo-liberal models of development and suggested alternatives. In 1993, violence against women was declared as a violation of human rights in Vienna. In 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo recognised that population cannot be stabilised or developed by state exercising control over women's bodies. On the contrary, women's reproductive and sexual rights are central to stabilisation and development of populations. The Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995 drew attention to women's continued secondary status in all spheres. It also mounted pressure on governments yet to sign and ratify the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979 without reservations to do so, and urged countries to sign the optional protocol that empowers civil society groups to bring state violations directly to the notice of treaty monitoring bodies. At the turn of the millennium, the UN bodies framed the Millennium Development Goals, whose main purpose is to reduce poverty and promote gender equality (though the sub goals and targets are far from gender sensitive); and committed to allocating greater aid for development.

The last fifteen years has also seen shifts in thinking on, and application of, concepts of gender. Feminists across the world and in India have sought to examine the gender-differentiated implications of globalisation, war on terror, militarisation, and communalism, and allied with other people's movements to combat these trends. They have at the same time questioned the male leadership of these movements. They have also attempted to rescue gender from the 'neo-liberal trap', by redefining gender as 'power relations' and not 'roles', which are closely linked with patriarchy, capitalism and in the Indian context with caste. Gender relations, it is now argued, are not only about power relations between men and women, but also about

relations of power between women and between men that are based on the social construction of gender. Debates have emerged on whether and how to engage with men and boys on gender issues. Related, there have been attempts to conceptualise the 'third gender' (transsexuals); who were ignored in gender studies in the 1980s and early 1990s. Whether the attention to gender and poverty, deviates attention from women's rights has been another issue of debate, in particular after women's rights have gained prominence through the strengthening of the human rights movement and the UN proclamation that women's rights are human rights in 1993.

#### **Why this series of manuals? Whom is it for?**

There are several gender-training manuals targeted at an international audience, but only few at the national level. Most of these manuals were prepared in the late 1980s/1990s, since when issues, debates, and concepts have changed at both the international and national levels. Most of the existing manuals are hence 'first generational', and need to move to 'second generation' issues, debates and concepts on gender. At the same time there is rich experience in India in gender training which attempts to grapple with some, though not all, of the emerging issues and concepts. It is time this rich experience was studied, and methodologies and methods were pulled out into a series of manuals that could be used by facilitators of gender training programmes. Though the case studies used in the manuals are rooted in India, they could be modified and used in other South Asian settings as well.

The objectives of the series of manuals are to enable facilitators to strengthen participants':





- Understanding of the concept of gender relations, and their origin in the system of patriarchy, capitalism and caste in the Indian context.
- Understanding of the links between gender relations and their own selves and attempt shifts in their own attitudes on gender.
- Understanding of the recent debates on concepts of gender, third gender, masculinities, women's rights and empowerment.
- Understanding of the implications of emerging issues like globalisation, war on terror, communalism and disasters for gender relations and women's rights.
- Understanding of issues of gender, spirituality and alternatives in development.
- Skills in analysis of policies and budgets from a gender lens and in formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, projects and programmes.
- Understanding of how gender issues influence the internal functioning of their organisations, and skills to change these.

The manual is primarily targeted at facilitators of gender training programmes who work with staff at leadership level of NGOs, trade unions and other civil society organisations. With modifications it could be used for government officials and other stakeholders.

The first in the series of manuals is the one on Gender, Poverty and Rights

### **The manual on Gender, Poverty and Rights**

This manual, **Gender, Poverty and Rights**, has been conceptualized to familiarize facilitators with current debates in the academia on whether attention to gender and poverty issues diverts resources and programmes from addressing women's rights. The manual promotes the position that there is a need to address issues of gender and poverty from a rights perspective.

The manual begins with methodologies for facilitating sessions on gender in our own lives. It then moves to concepts of gender, social relations and institutions, and how they have a bearing on poverty. The impact of globalisation in the Indian context is explored next. Finally, it presents strategies that could be used by facilitators to update participants on current debates on gender, poverty and rights.

The specific objectives of the manual are to equip facilitators with skills and knowledge to strengthen participants' understanding of:

- Gender and social relations and how they affects one's identity, values, and behaviour patterns.
- The social relations and institutional perspective to gender, and the changes in the concepts of gender relations.
- The dimensions and causes of poverty and its gender specific aspects in the Indian context.
- The elements of globalisation and its impact on lives and livelihood of the poor, women and other marginalized groups.
- The concept of human rights, and rights enshrined in human rights Covenants and CEDAW.
- The debates on the links (or its absence) between gender, poverty and rights.

## Structure of the manual

The manual comprises of six modules whose contents are presented below.

Module	Content
Module 1 Gender and Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The personal constructs of masculinities and femininities</li><li>• Issues of power and self</li><li>• Self as a mixture of masculinities and femininities and the need for integrating best of both</li></ul>
Module 2 Gender Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sex and gender</li><li>• Gender roles and gender relations</li><li>• Changing definitions on gender relations</li><li>• Gender, social relations and institutions</li></ul>
Module 3 Understanding Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dimensions of poverty</li><li>• Causes of poverty: an entitlement approach</li><li>• Gender dimensions and causes of poverty</li></ul>
Module 4 Globalisation, Poverty and Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Production of life and livelihood</li><li>• Impact of globalisation on the production of life and livelihood of the poor (and women)</li><li>• Strategies to resist and negotiate globalisation</li></ul>
Module 5 Gender and Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concept of Human Rights</li><li>• International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic and Socio Cultural Rights</li><li>• CEDAW and women's rights</li><li>• India and human rights instruments</li><li>• Legal strategies for making use of human rights instruments</li></ul>
Module 6 Gender, Poverty and Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two different positions on the link between gender, poverty and rights</li><li>• Need to look at gender and poverty from a rights lens</li><li>• Strategies towards the above</li></ul>

Each module consists of one to five sessions. The outline of each session includes:

- Possible objectives of the session
- Alternative training methodologies
- Approximate time required for different methodologies
- Materials required for each methodology
- Hand out on key discussion points
- Annexes on exercises and recording sheets
- List of essential reading for participants and facilitators

### **How can this manual be used?**

The facilitator could use the manual as a whole (requiring approximately 5 days), or only those bits that are relevant to the level of participants, their training needs, and the time that is available.

The facilitator may also decide to ‘adapt’ the module instead of sticking to it word by word. For example, if all the participants are from one state, it may make sense to use case studies from that state, or a state of a similar profile, rather than all the case studies indicated.

Whichever way it is used, it is imperative that the facilitators read the relevant essential readings; as the handouts only introduce the basic issues and are targeted at participants.

Feedback on the manual is welcome, and may be sent to:  
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## **FOR EVERY WOMAN**

By Nancy R. Smith

For every woman who is tired of acting weak when she knows she is strong,  
there is a man who is tired of appearing strong when he feels vulnerable.

For every woman who is tired of acting dumb,  
there is a man who is burdened with the constant expectation of “knowing everything”.

For every woman who is tired of being called “an emotional female”,  
there is a man who is denied the right to weep and be gentle.

For every woman who feels “tied down” by her children,  
there is a man who is denied the full pleasure of shared parenthood.

For every woman who is denied meaningful employment and equal pay,  
there is a man who must bear full financial responsibility for another human being.

For every woman who was not taught the intricacies of an automobile,  
there is a man who was not taught the satisfaction of cooking.

For every woman who takes a step towards her own liberation,  
there is a man who finds that the way to freedom has been made a little easier.



MODULE 1  
**GENDER AND SELF**



### Objectives

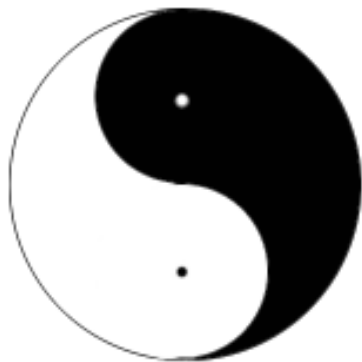
- *To become aware and gain insights into the way men and women construct their gender reality.*
- *To understand self as a mixture of masculinities and femininities and the need for integrating the best of both.*

### Materials

- *The 'I am' handout<sup>1</sup> (Handout 1.1.1)*
- *Handout on gender and self (Handout 1.1.2)*
- *Sketch pens*
- *Chart paper*

### Time

*One hour 30 minutes*



### Methodology

#### *Alternative 1<sup>1</sup>*

1. Give participants the 'I am' handout.
2. Ask them to circle the qualities or attributes they think they have. Request them to connect the circled points. As they connect, a human form emerges. The shape depends on the number of points circled and where those points are located.
3. Facilitate reflection on the part of each participant on the shape that has emerged and comparison with their self perception.
4. Highlight how certain traits are considered masculine and get projected on to men and certain other traits perceived as feminine and projected on to women; while in reality human beings consist of a mixture of masculine and feminine qualities (though there are variations).
5. Facilitate discussion on the implications of this division of human qualities for both women and men; the roles they play, the resources they have and the expectations on them from society.
6. Form groups of five and give handout 1.1.2 to read and discuss.
7. Participants present their insights and questions, if any, for clarification in the plenary.
8. Sum up, highlighting the need to integrate the best of 'masculine' and 'feminine' into one's self to become fully human.

<sup>1</sup> Developed by Human and Institutional Development Forum (HIDF), Bangalore

### *Alternative 2*

1. Ask the participants to go for a short (5 minutes) meditative walk and pick up two objects from nature: one symbolising their perceptions of women and the other of men.
2. After all the participants have brought their symbols, request them to come forward, one by one, and place their symbol in the centre of the hall and explain the reasons for their choice.
3. Write down the reasons for their choice of symbols in two columns on the board, marked 'men' and 'women'. If it is a mixed group, distinguish the perceptions of women about men and vice versa by further dividing the column into two.
4. After all have completed, facilitate an interactive session highlighting:
  - The differences in qualities, roles and behaviour patterns attributed to women and men.
  - The gendering process each one has undergone and the need to unlearn and challenge the stereotypes and gain insights into the way men and women have constructed their gender reality.
  - The fact that some men may possess qualities that are considered feminine and vice versa, pointing that these qualities are not biologically determined, but socially acquired.
  - The need to integrate the masculine and feminine into one's own self.
5. The facilitator should be able to respect and weave individual perceptions and experiences.
6. The symbols help to draw participants into discussion in an informal and non-threatening way and to challenge stereotypes about the roles and qualities of women and men.





I AM

- Inter-dependent
- Intellectual ● Strategic
- Objective ● Intuitive
- Logical ● Firm ● Spiritual ●
- Analytical ● Flexible
- Achieving ● Anxious ● Responsible
- Risk taking ● Seeking approval
- Willing to take a stand
- Task oriented ● Caring
- Stable ● Friendly ● Loving ● Warm
- Shrewed ● Conservative ● Nurturing
- Intimate ● Supportive
- Enterprising ● Dynamic ● Diffident
- Confident ● Fun loving ● Introspective ● Compassionate
- Critical ● Reasoning ● Impulsive ●
- Discriminating ● Accommodative ●
- Reciprocatve ● Collaborative
- Sociable
- Hierarchical ● Romantic ●
- Assertive ● Persuasive
- Cool thinker ● Sensitive
- Defensive ● Truthful ● Reflective
- Forceful ● Ambitious ● Spontaneous
- Perfectionist ● Pushy ● Unsure ● Affectionate
- Powerful ● Self-righteous ●
- Competitive ● Tentative
- Forthright ● Suspicious ● Sensual ●
- Adventurous ● Pioneering ● Yielding ● Creative
- Stubborn ● Vulnerable ● Tenacious ●
- Independent ● Aggressive ● Subjective ● Dependent ●

## GENDER AND SELF

Individuals live by the meaning they give to their lives. Similarly the collective called society holds because of the common framework of meaning that its members – women and men share. The connections between the individual self and society therefore are intimate and complex. Individuals shape, and are shaped by societal institutions and their culture.

Gender refers to culturally manifested characteristic/values that define the behavior and identity of women and men and their relations. The culture of gender has deep roots in society and the personality of an individual, which are mutually reinforcing. Bringing change in gender relations calls for awareness to the way gender operates in human consciousness and its expression in society.

Biological difference between men and women contribute to their distinct sexual identities. But culture and social factors determine their social roles. Societies world over recognize specific behavior as being more appropriate for men and women. Also societies differ in their definition of what is masculine and what is feminine. Gender roles, given to women and men, are culture specific. Yet there are universal gender patterns associated with masculinity and femininity. At a fundamental level, masculinity and femininity are human qualities but are projected by culture as masculine and feminine. For e.g. men are considered to be competitive, assertive, strong, and tough and concerned with material success. Women are viewed to be tender, nurturing concerned with taking care of home and welfare of human beings. In all societies, one also runs into what may be termed as men's culture that is different from women's culture. Women are not considered suitable for jobs that are traditionally performed by men, not because they do not have the potential but because culture programme them so. When women and men are stereotyped with specific qualities and roles, they develop capacities, power equations and a sense of self worth. As fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, men and women enact traditional masculine and feminine roles, profoundly impacting the psyche of children who in turn get programmed about masculinity and femininity. Gender roles within the family deeply influence values about appropriate

behaviour for girls and boys. Gender values are programmed into us in subtle ways from infancy. Every individual carries within herself or himself gender software that is learned through a process of selection.

### Perceiving and experiencing

As women and men, human beings go through a bundle of experiences. These experiences which are intimately linked to the biological make-up of human beings are never the same in all places and at all the times. From infancy, boys and girls become conscious of their bodies. Dress, language, symbols and myths are built around these biological differences to create distinct sexual identities. The primary agents of socialization- family, neighborhood, community and schools - help build distinct perceptions, beliefs and values on gender which take root in the minds of individuals.



By the time one reaches adulthood, every man and woman has a gendered “I” (eye) that is deeply rooted in his/her psychological make-up. This gendered “I” is at play all the times – perceiving, experiencing, believing and valuing – consciously or unconsciously. The meanings which individuals give to gender are profoundly influenced by the way they perceive and experience “I”. One may go through life as most individuals do without ever being aware of the divided lives and worlds of men and women.

Women’s movements, the world over, have shown that it is only when you share one’s personal experiences that one begins to perceive the vast field of oppression and subordination that women experience. This sharing of experience also reveals why a majority of women experience feelings of inadequacy and low self worth. It is this learning that has made women alter the “I’s” of perceiving their own reality and helped them question and change their life situations. Similarly a few men’s groups which went through the journey of self reflection on their stereotypical masculine ways have realized how their gendered selves have allowed them to experience only one set of human qualities. Many of these men have altered their ways of experiencing reality- sharing work at home and bringing up children.

### **Integration of feminine and masculine**

Essentially, the feminine and masculine refer to modes of consciousness and ways of experiencing life. Cultures have portrayed these two principles through myth, symbol, legend, depiction of gods and goddesses. Some of these portrayal focuses on the opposing qualities of the masculine and feminine. But all cultures also have integrative symbols. The classic examples are Arthanariswara of Indian mythology, Adinath of Nepal and the Chinese yin and yang. They combine both principles in one form. The implication is that these two principles are not opposed, but supportive of each other. In practice however, it is the idiom of opposition and not of integration which has taken deep roots in popular imagery. Diverse cultures have projected the opposing classifications of the feminine and masculine

as the norm. This has resulted in the stereotype of men as being aggressive, competitive, logical, and businesslike and qualities such as caring, nurturing, dependent, vulnerable have been associated with the feminine. Cultures across the world have divided these qualities and projected them as being appropriate for women and men. Men have gained primacy in the public domain as heads of households, associated with bread winning and shouldering family responsibilities. As women are linked to such activities as child rearing and welfare of the family they have been positioned in the private world of family and neighbourhood. These divisions have compartmentalized human qualities as belonging to two separate worlds- *public and private*- although they have relevance in both the worlds. Gender stereotypes have masked the fact that femininity and masculinity are innate human qualities and not restricted to either the female or the male. What has to be recognized is that the feminine and masculine are interconnected and should be integrated for fuller development of human personality.

### **Ranking of values**

Human qualities have been given values, some being considered more important than others. The ranking of these values finds expression in relationships and institutional practices. For example not only are rationality and objectivity given a higher value, but it is also thought that men have a larger share of it. The systematic assertion of this notion by society and its institutions has resulted in men enjoying greater powers, self worth and privilege. Feelings and emotions are said to belong to the personal and private world. The primary place of women has therefore been in the private domain of family and neighbourhood- arenas where emotions and feelings predominate. The psychological make up of women has been deeply influenced by the assertion that they are emotional and vulnerable. Experience sharing in women’s groups bring out their low self-esteem, dependency and sense of inadequacy.

The experience of men gives the other side of the story. Men are not without emotions and feelings, but they have been socialized into subduing them. The way they have grown up with, “be a man and don’t cry”, “don’t sit at

home and mop like a woman” and other such usages discounting feminine qualities, are all too familiar. At the same time, anger is not denied to men and it enjoys social acceptance. Experience sharing in men’s groups shows that they have muted an array of soft emotions such as tenderness, fear and anxiety.

### **Carving a new identity**

The process of gendering is two-way: as individuals, women and men selectively imbibe and modify norms, values and orientations to suit their life contexts. For example there are many who have deviated from the prescribed path to take on atypical roles. Each individual therefore has her/his unique personal set of mental programmes related to gender. The biology of the sexes, culture of gender and personality of individuals together explain the different expressions of gender and also the distinct psychological identities that women and men operate with.

The biology and social roles of women and men give rise to distinct social and psychological identities. As a result in their self-growth, women and men set out from different points. The biological vulnerability makes women seek protection and security. Men and women develop different notions of self worth because the value attached to their work is so different. In the normal course to gain acceptance and to manage their relationships, women and men begin to conform to these social givens.

It requires conviction, to alter deeply ingrained values that oppress, constrain and limit one’s potential. Those who have attempted to liberate themselves from this situation have had to face personal anxieties, feelings of insecurities, powerlessness, conflict and social rejection. To break through, change must begin in the internal self of the individual and find its translation in relationships in the family, community and work universe.

### **Bringing about change**

The self is the only tool women and men have with which they experience, observe, reflect on and analyse the vast field of perceptions, emotions and

meanings in gender relationships. The tricky part is that this individual self is both a tool and the field of analysis. Moreover the individual self is dynamically related to the wider socio-cultural environment and is never separate. To understand the deep roots of gender within oneself, the first step is to examine the known field of gender realities. The unknown is deep layered and is not within easy access, requiring skills to be consciously known.

To transcend the individual, the personal journey must at some stage translate into the change process of an organisation or a social movement that is attempting to redefine gender relationships in wider society. Like minded individuals need to come together to form a critical mass to take forward the change process. Ultimately the personal situation of an individual can never be separated from his or her social situation. Any change must therefore go beyond the self to address the wider context.

Altering gender equations is full of challenges. To bring about transformation, it is pertinent to address the following questions:

- How to remain continually aware of gender dynamics within the self and in relationships
- How to bring about a balance between the masculine and the feminine within the self
- How to understand and dialogue with the internalized assessor/oppressor?
- How to promote a change agent within the self?

Source: Uma Ramasamy, Bhanumathy Vasudevan, Anuradha Prasad, Gagan Sethi and Sulagna Sengupta, *Reconstructing gender towards collaboration*, Swiss Development Corporation, Bangalore 1999



### Objectives

- *To share individual experiences of feeling powerful and powerless.*
- *To analyse sources of power and powerlessness, and how gender and other social relations have a bearing on these experiences.*

### Materials

- *Charts*
- *Felt pens*
- *Handout 1.2.1 on concept of power*

### Time

*One hour 30 minutes*



### Methodology

1. Distribute two cards of two different colours to each participant.
2. Ask participants to share their experiences of feeling powerful in one colour, and powerless in the other.
3. Ask participants to indicate their age, sex and other identities (e.g. caste, religion). They need not put their names.
4. If a participant has not felt powerful (or powerless) they may leave the card blank, but write details on identities.
5. Collect the cards, and post them in a matrix on the board consisting of two columns 'men' and 'women', and two rows 'powerful' and 'powerless'.
6. Ask a participant to read out the content of the cards.
7. Facilitate an analysis of gender differences in the experiences of feeling powerful and powerless, like:
  - Proportion of men and women participants who felt powerful and powerless
  - Reasons for feeling powerful and powerless
  - Age at which they experienced feeling powerful or powerless
  - Institution (e.g. family, school) and space (public or private) in which they felt powerful or powerless
8. Facilitate an analysis of the role of caste, class, religion and other social relations on experiences of feeling powerful and powerless.
9. Give a brief input on concepts and types of power: power over, power to, power with and power within.
10. Examine what type of power is present or absent in the experiences shared.
11. Sum up highlighting the importance of 'power with' and 'power within' in transforming gender and power relations. Discuss strategies for strengthening the above two types of powers.

## THE CONCEPT OF POWER

The idea of ‘power’ is at the root of the term empowerment. Power can be understood as operating in a number of different ways:

- *power over:* This power involves an either/or relationship of domination/subordination. Ultimately, it is based on socially sanctioned threats of violence and intimidation, it requires constant vigilance to maintain, and it invites active and passive resistance.
- *power to:* This power relates to having decision-making authority, power to solve problems and can be creative and enabling.
- *power with:* This power involves people organising with a common purpose or common understanding to achieve collective goals.
- *power within:* This power refers to self confidence, self awareness and assertiveness. It relates to how individuals can recognise through analysing their experience of how power operates in their lives, and gain the confidence to act to influence and change this. (Williams *et al*, 1994).

Whilst understanding of power and empowerment have come from many different movements and traditions, the feminist movement has emphasised collective organisation (‘power with’) and has been influential in developing ideas about ‘power within’.

Power must be understood as working at different levels, including the institutional, the household and the individual. For some theorists power is a zero-sum: one group’s increase in power necessarily involves another’s loss of power. The idea of a redistribution of power is therefore seen as necessarily involving conflict. In this perspective, women’s empowerment

would lead by implication to less power for men. Some feminist writers on power have challenged the idea that power must necessarily involve domination by some, and obedience or oppression of others. Men would also benefit from the results of women’s empowerment with the chance to live in a more equitable society and explore new roles. The kinds of power described above as power-to, power-with and power-within can be developed as alternatives to power-over.

Source: BRIDGE (Development - Gender) Report No. 40 (1997), Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.





MODULE 2  
**GENDER CONCEPTS**





### Objective

- To introduce concepts of sex and gender, and the difference between gender roles and gender relations.

### Materials

- Two cards marked 'Male' and 'Female'
- Recording Sheets 2.1.1 and 2.1.2
- Chart papers
- Sketch pens
- Hand out 2.1.1 on definitions pertaining to sex and gender

### Time

Two hours



### Methodology

#### Alternative 1

1. Label two spots on opposite sides of the room as 'Female' and 'Male'.
2. Ask the participants, "If you have a choice would you like to be born as a male or a female"? Do not give the option of saying either. Ask them to move to the appropriate spot.
3. Request participants in each spot (group) to discuss reasons for choosing a particular sex, and to distinguish between the reasons given by men and women participants.
4. Let each group present their arguments, and if after hearing each others' arguments some want to change their preference ask them to do so.
5. Note the number of participants of each sex opting to be a male or a female after any swappings, and the reasons in Recording Sheet 2.1.1
6. Analyse the roles, qualities and behaviour patterns of men and women stemming from the reasons using Recording Sheet 2.2.2
7. Go through each role, behaviour or quality listed and ask participants which of these are due to biological and which are due to sociological factors. If there is a difference of opinion in the group, allow them to debate for five minutes.
8. Define the terms gender and sex. Reinforce that gender is dynamic while sexual differences are static (Hand out 2.1.1).
9. Facilitate discussion on what happens when women and men deviate from socially expected norms on their roles, qualities and behaviour. Reinforce that deviation by women meets with violence (reflecting power relations), and deviation by men meets with ridicule.
10. Discuss how gender differences in roles, behaviour and qualities lead to differences in access to resources, decision-making, and responsibilities; again pointing to how social differences are linked to issues of power.
11. Ask whether men and women uniformly display the roles, behaviours and qualities described in the list. In what situations do these aspects differ? How do men and women of different ages behave or assume roles with other age groups? How do women and men of different relation positions (mother, father, brother, sister, mother in law, and daughter in law) relate to women and men of different relation positions?
12. Introduce the more complex definition of gender relations in Handout 2.1.1.

## Materials

- Two cards marked 'Male' and 'Female'
- Recording Sheets 2.1.3
- Chart papers
- Sketch pens
- Hand out 2.1.1 on definitions pertaining to sex and gender

## Time

Two hours



## Alternative 2

1. Introduce the objectives of the session.
2. Discuss with each participant at what age they realized they were boys or girls, in which institution, what exactly happened, and how they felt at that time. Record in Recording Sheet 2.1.3<sup>1</sup>
3. Facilitate a discussion on the key differences between men/boys and women/girls in terms of roles, qualities and behaviour pattern. Use Recording Sheet 2.1.1.
4. From then on follow steps 7 to 11 in Alternative 1.
5. Share that the training programme will return to the examples of institutions that shape gender relations later.

<sup>1</sup>This method was developed by Dr. Sundari Ravindran, Independent Researcher, Trivandrum for introducing the concept of gender.

**SEX PREFERENCE EXERCISE**

	Reasons for the preference	
	Males (No....)	Females (No....)
Men Participants		
Women Participants		

**DIFFERENCES IN ROLES, QUALITIES AND  
BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS OF WOMEN AND MEN**

	Women	Men
Roles		
Qualities		
Behaviour Patterns		

**PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF REALISING THAT THEY ARE BOYS/GIRLS**

Sex	Age	Incident	Reaction	Institution*

\* Family, kinship, school, neighbourhood community, religious institutions etc.

## SEX, GENDER, GENDER ROLES AND GENDER RELATIONS

### Sex

- Sex refers to biological differences between men and women.
- Sexual differences do not vary with race, caste, class, ethnicity and religion.
- Sexual differences do not vary with time.
- Some of the key sexual differences are women's ability to give birth, breast feed, menstruate, produce eggs, and men's ability to produce sperms.

### Gender

- Gender refers to social differences between men and women
- Gender differences are manifested in different roles, qualities and behaviours of women and men in society.
- Gender differences vary with race, caste, class, ethnicity, religion, relation position, and age.
- Gender differences vary with time.
- Gender differences vary across situations. That is, the same person may behave differently in different contexts (for example, in family and work place).

### Gender roles

- Refers to socially differentiated roles of men and women
- Refers to the ideology that social differences in roles of men and women are determined by a 'smooth' or 'non conflictual' process.
- Hence gender roles can be changed easily through sensitization of women and men.

### Gender relations

#### *Definition and understanding-1 (1980s/1990s):*

- Gender relations are power relations between men and women. The ideology that gender differences between men and women are shaped by the exercise of power by men over women underpins this definition.

- Changing these power relations entails women's empowerment and men's conscientisation.

#### *Definition and understanding-2 (2000s):*

- Gender relations are not only about power relations between men and women, but also about power relations between women and between men where gender makes a difference (example, between mother and daughter, father and son, mother in law and young daughter in law, and middle aged daughter in law and elderly mother in law)
- Changing these power relations demands not only the empowerment of women vis-à-vis men in the household, but also empowerment of marginalized women vis-à-vis the more powerful within the household and outside.

### Essential readings for facilitators

Whitehead, Ann (April 1979), *Some Preliminary Notes on Subordination of Women*, Vol. 10, No. 3, IDS Bulletin.

Cornwall, Andrea (2000), "*Making a difference? Gender and Participatory Development*", Discussion Paper, UK: Institute of Development Studies.

V., Geetha (2002), *Gender*, Calcutta: Stree.

## SOCIAL RELATIONS, INSTITUTIONS AND CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER

### Methodology

#### Alternative 1<sup>1</sup>

1. Before the session begins draw an inner circle, and an outer circle.
2. In the inner circle, put five markers that are equidistant from each other, and call them sex, gender, class, caste and religious identity. You may like to add ethnicity or sexual preference if necessary.
3. In the outer circle put five markers, one each for the institutions of household, community (including religion), state, markets, and supra state (e.g. WTO) organisations.
4. Request the participants to stand in the outer circle. Ask the participants what they understand by the terms class, caste, religious identity, sex and gender (recapturing), and add any inputs if necessary.
5. Read out the case study on Nagavalli. Stop at appropriate points of the story, throw the twine ball to a participant, and ask why a particular incident in the story is happening the way it is. Is women's biology responsible (sex) or a particular social relation? If so, which one? Ask the participant to stand in the appropriate spot in the inner circle.
6. Explore whether any other social relation is responsible for the particular incident. If yes, the first participant should hold the twine and throw the ball to the participant who feels that another social relation is also responsible.
7. Continue with the same method, stopping at different points of the case study, till there is clarity on how gender and other social relations interlock to keep women in a subordinate position. Do not wait for the case study to end, but half way through the case study move to step 9.
8. Stop at appropriate stages of the case study, get the ball thrown to the quieter participants, and ask which institution is responsible for the incident in the story.

### Objectives

- To examine how gender relations interlock with other social relations to maintain women in a subordinate position.
- To understand the institutional construction of gender relations in India, and in the area where the participants work .



<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Ravindran, S. 1983, "Subverting Patriarchy: Workshops for Rural Women", Chengalpattu: RUWSEC

Request the participants to move to the appropriate spot in the outer circle. If there are differences of opinion, and both views are valid, two people could be asked to occupy different markers or spots.

## Materials

- *Four square cards of different colours*
- *Five round cards of different colours*
- *1-2 large twine balls*
- *Nagavalli case study 2.2.1*
- *Questions for discussion on institutions-2.2.1*
- *Recording Sheet 2.2.1 for output from role play*
- *Hand out 2.2.1 on social relations, institutions and construction of gender*

## Time

Three hours



9. Ask the participants what they learnt from the game. Reinforce that a woman's life is shaped by the interlocking of gender with other social relations (relations of power) like caste, class, age, race, religious identity, and sexual orientation. These relationships in turn are shaped by the institutions of households, market (including private media), community (including religion), state (including executive, legislative and judiciary), and supra state organisations.
10. Explore the topic of institutions more in depth by asking the participants what they think are the components of an institution. See Handout 2.2.1.
11. Divide the participants into five or more groups (the participants may like to look at education, media and market separately, and religion than community institutions as a whole). Ask them to discuss the gender related rules, resources, membership and distribution of power in these institutions; and whether this varies with caste, class, urban/rural location etc. Distribute questions for group discussion on institutions that are attached (Question 2.2.1).
12. Ask the participants to make their presentation in the form of a role-play. Record institutional membership, rules, structure and resources in a sheet (Recording Sheet 2.1.1). If some aspects of institutions are left out, it could be added. Sum up by saying that though all institutions have an official or projected positive ideology, in reality the institutions discriminate against women.
13. Distribute Handout 2.2.1 on Social Relations, Institutions and Construction of Gender in India.



## Materials

- *Three case studies of women from different socio economic backgrounds (Case Studies 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4 and 2.2.5)*
- *Questions for group discussion on social relations and institutions: Question Set 2.2.2*
- *Recording Sheet 2.2.2 for output from group discussion.*
- *Hand out 2.2.1 on social relations, institutions and construction of gender*

## Time

Three hours



## Alternative 2

1. Ask the participants what they understand by the terms class, caste, ethnicity, sex and gender, and add any inputs if necessary.
2. Explore the participants' understanding of the term institution, and cull out different institutions of society from the participants: household, market, community, state and supra state, and its four aspects (Point 12, Alternative 1).
3. Divide the participants into four groups, and give them each a different case study describing the life of a woman (one Dalit, one tribal, one Muslim, one 'upper' caste) and her interactions in work place, community institutions and with government and ask each group to analyse questions in 2.2.2 and record it in Recording Sheet 2.2.2
4. Cull out from the group presentations:
  - That Dalit woman's life and caste Hindu woman's lives are shaped by the interlocking of gender with caste, class, and age but in different ways.
  - The inter-linkages between gender, class, and ethnicity shape an adivasi woman's life and that the interlocking of gender with religious identity, class and age shapes a Muslim woman's life.
  - The institutions of household, market (e.g. labour market, MNCs) community (e.g. including jamat, caste panchayats, extremist organisations), state (e.g. army, family courts, police), shape the above social relations and women's lives.
5. Elicit comments on how supra-state organisations may have a bearing on the lives of the women examined in the case studies.
6. Sum up by saying that though all institutions have an official or projected positive ideology, in reality the institutions discriminate against women.
7. Distribute Hand out 2.2.1 on Social Relations, Institutions and Construction of Gender in India.

## Essential reading for facilitators:

Kabeer, Naila (1994), "Gender Aware Policy and Planning: A Social Relations Perspective" in Macdonald, M. (ed.), *Gender Planning and Development Agencies: Meeting the Challenges*, Oxford: Oxfam.

## NAGAVALLI'S STORY

Forty-five year old Nagavalli, a Dalit, is the leader of a self-help group (SHG) in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. She has three children, two girls and one boy, and her mother-in-law (a widow) resides with them. A year back Nagavalli took a loan from a commercial bank, through her SHG for purchase of two milch animals. Nagavalli, (till recently) her mother in law and her children look after the milch animals jointly, with milking and grazing the animals being her responsibility. Nagavalli first sells the milk to her neighbours, and her husband sells whatever is then left to hotels in a small town nearby. Some hotels however do not accept milk from him because he is a Dalit. The household earns a profit of roughly Rs 150-600<sup>2</sup> per month. Till recently her mother-in-law managed the money from the sale of milk. As of late she has not been well. Nagavalli has started managing the proceeds from the sale of milk; but has to give money to her husband for personal expenses like purchase of beedis and occasional consumption of alcohol.

Her husband Medappa is a construction labourer. The number of days he gets work has come down from 200 days a year, to around 100 as a lot of mechanized equipments have replaced manual construction labourers. He earns Rs 70 per day. Six months back Nagavalli and other landless Dalit SHG members mobilized two acres of land each on their names through a government programme. The scheme entailed distribution of *porombokku* (common) land exclusively for Dalits. The land was given on joint name of her husband and self, as per the new government rule on titles for land-distribution. Her husband has taken a loan for irrigation from a commercial bank. He carries out land preparation and ploughing, and undertakes all external

activities like purchase of inputs and marketing of produce. Nagavalli does the weeding and transplanting of paddy, and looks after the vegetable crops. While the paddy crop was very good this year, they needed the produce for consumption. The produce met consumption needs of the family for 7 months a year. Though the vegetable crop was also good, they could not make much profit (they however recovered costs, and also costs of inputs for paddy), as the prices of tomatoes slumped, due to excess produce in the markets. Neither did they have access to cold storage facilities to sell later. They barely scrapped through the installment on the irrigation loan. Nagavalli also worked as an agricultural labourer for 60 days this year on others' field at Rs 40 per day. She would have got more number of days of work if she was also allowed to do post harvest processing inside the 'upper' caste house compound. She retains some degree of control over the income, but has to give money to her husband when he demands it.

On the whole, the living conditions of the household members have improved only slightly after Nagavalli joined the SHG, purchased livestock and after their engagement in irrigated agriculture. The expected income increase through agriculture has not occurred, though food security has improved. The livestock income, has just offset the reduced income of Medappa from construction work. Nagavalli now plays a greater role in earning income for the household, and Medappa less. Nagavalli is however happy that she has the backing of group members, in the event of her husband getting drunk and, occasionally, beating her up. Such incidences have reduced a little bit. She is also happy that her bargaining power vis-à-vis her mother-in-law has improved.

Nagavalli's husband and her children (irrespective of sex) are more privileged with respect to their access to food and milk when compared to herself and her aged mother-in-law. She believes that her husband does more "hard" work when compared to her, and after all he is the head of the household. Though her household's living conditions has improved, she is worried about whether they will face hardships in the future as she has more daughters than sons, and will have to give atleast Rs 40,000 as dowry, apart from jewels to get them married to somebody of the same economic and social status. She does not want her daughters to face the same situation as herself. She had to get married to a landless widower (Medappa's first wife passed away during delivery, as well as the child) as she was the third daughter and her parents (who were by then landless labourers) could not afford to pay a handsome dowry. Though Nagavalli has acquired land on her name, she intends to pass it on to her sons as per the traditions in her community. After all, she believes, they will look after her.

She is relieved that her relationship with her husband and mother-in-law, though very strained in the beginning of her marriage, has improved over the years. According to her, she would literally be on the streets otherwise. As per the local custom all assets acquired after marriage went to the husband's household upon any separation, unless she had brought it as part of her dowry and it was still intact.

Notes for the facilitator who uses the web game

*While initiating the web game, the facilitator may (after reading the first eight lines) like to throw the ball to a participant and ask 'why Nagavalli sells only to her neighbours, but her husband alone is*

*responsible for selling to outside markets? Is it a gender issue, caste issue, class issue or related to sexual differences'. Depending on the choice, the participant moves to the appropriate spot in the inner circle. The ball can then be thrown to another participant by the first participant, while continuing to hold the twine. One could then ask why only some hotels accept milk from the husband while others do not? And so on, till a web is created in the inner circle. After it is clear as to how gender, caste, and class relations affect a woman's life, then move to institutions, and ask what are the institutions in society, and which institution is responsible for the next incident in the story. For example one could ask 'If Nagavalli's husband (Medappa) is getting lesser jobs than before machines came into the area, which institution is responsible?'. Throw the ball to participants who have not answered so far. If there are differences of opinion, and two or more views are valid, two participants could occupy different spots in the outer circle. For example, one participant may say that the 'construction market' is responsible for Medappa's loss of work, another participant may say that the 'state' is responsible for importing construction machinery from outside, others may say 'supra state' organizations like the World Trade Organisation is responsible as they are pressing for free trade of goods, services and finance.*



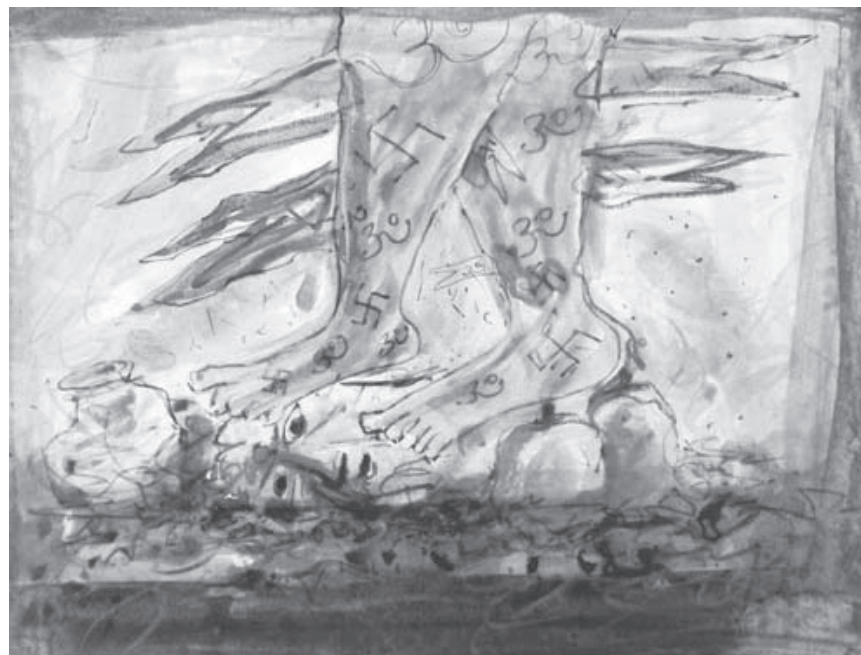
**SITA'S STORY\***

Sita is an 'upper' caste and middle class woman from Maharashtra. After her post-graduation in an English medium college she worked as a clerk in a private company, and returned home by 6 p.m. Her parents got her married into a conservative family from the same caste. Her husband and in-laws were not keen that she work after her marriage. Her husband was a junior officer in a bank, and he ran the family, as his father was too old to work. Though Sita did not like being home bound, she did not have a choice. She bore two children in three years. By the time the youngest was four, her marital family members realised that her husband's earnings were not enough to meet the growing demands of children for toys, and medical needs of the aging in-laws. She was hence asked to go out and work. She first trained herself in operating computers. She took up a job in a multinational company, and was given the job of a personal secretary to the managing director, as she was fluent in English, Word/Excel, and pleasant looking. Computers had replaced clerical jobs of the past, and it was fortunate that she had acquired this skill. She however had to stay on till meetings got over, and at times returned only at 8.30 at night. As she was efficient at her work, she received promotion, and was earning slightly more than her husband. Since she started coming late her husband started getting suspicious of her, but did not ask her anything. Once she had to travel with the Managing Director to another city. This was the last straw. Her husband asked her with whom she stayed and whether there were women in the meeting she attended. When she replied that there were no other women, and she stayed alone, he slapped her and accused her of having a relationship with her Managing Director. Such incidences kept happening repeatedly, with her in laws also joining in. They asked her to leave the job, and work as a clerk in an accounts company run by a relative.

She refused to do so. Her husband moved for divorce with custody of the child. The counselors in the family court advised her to quit the present job, and take on the job her husband suggested. But she did not want to do so. She wanted to move to her parents' house with her children, but they refused to accept her back, as they had already 'given her away' to another family.

\* Adapted from RUWSEC (ed), (2004), *Planning and Implementing Community based Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme*, Chengalpattu: RUWSEC

*Ensure that the participants analyzing this case study focus on the institutions of household (here a joint family), community (neighbours), market (here the MNC), and the state*



<http://www.newint.org/issue380/pics/mariammas-pic.jpg>

### STORY OF FATIMA, A MUSLIM WOMAN

Fatima is a Muslim woman from a lower middle class family in Kerala. Her parents, who were tailors (with her mother helping her father who was perceived to be the main worker), got her married to a driver working in Dubai from a village in an adjacent taluk. As she was the only daughter, they wanted her to be well settled; and paid a handsome dowry (which was a new custom in the community). The husband used to go to Dubai every two years, then spend six months at home, and again go on a contract. She had just delivered a baby a year after marriage, when her mother in law died out of uterine cancer. Her husband came for the funeral and returned to Dubai. Since his wife's death, her father in law had been eying her in a sexual manner. One day he cornered her, and raped her. Though she shouted for help nobody came to her rescue. She went and complained to the Jamat of the village. The Jamat called her husband from Dubai and dissolved Fatima's marriage with him, and asked Fatima to marry her father in law. She was against this, and approached the women's group in the village (in which she was not allowed to become a member) to help out. They in turn took up the matter with the local NGO that had initiated the sangam, which in turn took up the case with the State Commission for Women. In the meantime, the father in law said that she tried to seduce him, and not the other way around. Her husband refused to have anything to do with her. And her parents would not take her back. The State Commission for Women insisted that justice be meted out to her. The Jamat leaders said that the issue should be taken up by the Minority Commission, as there were no Muslim women in the State Commission and it was bent on giving a wrong impression about men in the community.



*Ensure that the participants analyzing this case study focus on the institutions of household (here a joint family), community (jamat), markets (labour market), state (the State Commission for women, Minority commission) and the organisations indicated in parentheses.*

### STORY OF INA, AN ADIVASI GIRL

Mai is a tribal woman from a North Eastern State. Mai and her daughter, Ina, work in a tea estate owned by a company from a state in the mainland. They get paid below the minimum wages for pluckers. Her husband passed away a few years back, while her high school educated son- Sian- is unemployed. The NELF (North East Liberation Front) has been asking them to give their son for conscription for a paltry sum of Rs 5000, but the mother refused, and neither was the son interested. Mai lives in perpetual fear of her son being abducted. One day the army entered the village, and came to know that the NELF cadre had visited Mai's house twice in the last three months. They took Sian for questioning. They did not believe him when he told the truth that the NELF had asked him to join, but he had refused, and he did not know the whereabouts of NELF leaders. Believing that he was not telling the truth, they thrashed him badly. Hearing of this the NELF came again three days later and offered financial support, in return for their son. The family again refused. In the evening when Ina was returning from work, their cadres kidnapped and raped her. The police would not register the case, as they believed that the case was fabricated to prove that the family had no links with NELF. Fed up with life and humiliated by his inability to protect his sister, Sian took to consumption of drugs.

*Ensure that the participants analyzing this case study focus on the institutions of household (here a nuclear family), community (NELF), state (army), market (labour market, tea estates).*



**STORY OF PANCHAVARAM AND BAKKIAM\***

Allaperi village of Kamaraj district of Tamil Nadu comprises 33 Dalit families and 100 'upper' caste Hindus. Most of the Dalits owned between half and two acres of land, while the 'upper' caste owned 5-15 acres. The Dalits lived off through wage work on 'upper' caste land, cultivation of their marginal land and basket making. One Dalit leader Guruswamy owned more than the average land, and refused to do wage work. He was mobilizing Dalits for self-respect and dignity. One day in the year 1989 his daughter Panchavaram was raped by the 'upper' caste while she was grazing goats. Against the custom Guruswamy registered a case with the police. Since no medical report was taken, the complaint was molestation and attempted rape. The village Panchayat dominated by the 'upper' caste convened a meeting and reproached him for going to the police. They also imposed on the Dalits not to wear *chappals*, not to ride a bicycle, and similar restrictions. Dalits therefore refused to carry dead bodies of animals and humans, and announcing of death by drumming. The conflicts got enhanced when a young 'upper' caste girl died, and a Dalit refused to carry the body. He was slapped by the 'upper' caste, and complained to the police who took no action. The Panchayat in addition to all the other bans, refused Dalits access to the common pump, and were told not to use the straight road running through 'upper' caste areas. In a public meeting Guruswamy told how the 'upper' castes were putting pressure on him to withdraw the case by offering a paltry sum of money. He further said 'As nobody will come forward and marry the girl, why not the boy (who raped her) marry her, as per accepted norms in society?'. That night stones were thrown on Dalit households. Subsequently Dalits were prevented from using the main road. When they tried to board a bus to complain to the police, the

'upper' caste women laid down on the road, and prevented the bus from moving. Guruswamy's daughter-in-law Bakkiam was also raped on the same day

\* Abridged from the case study highlighted in Chapter X of Dietrich, G. (2001), *A New Thing on Earth: Hopes and Fears on Feminist Theology*, Delhi: ISPCK, Madurai: TTS.



### ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL RELATIONS

1. List the social relations that have a bearing on the life of the woman / women in the case study.
2. How do these different relations (including gender) affect the woman / women concerned? Give examples.
3. List the institutions/organisations that shape the lives of the women in the case study. Is the impact of the institution positive or negative?
4. Analyse these institutions/organisations
  - Who is included and who is excluded from the institution?
  - What are the rules of the institution pertaining to women/ girls and men/boys?
  - How are resources allocated within or by the institution to women/girls and men/boys?
  - Who occupies positions of power- women or men- within these institutions?
  - Do the membership, other rules, resource allocation, and structure of the institution vary depending on the caste, class, age, and religious identity of women and men? Give reasons for your response.





### **ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

*(Household / Community / Market / State / Suprastate)*

Vis-à-vis the institution that has been allocated to you answer the following questions:

1. Who is included and who is excluded from the institution?
2. What are the rules of the institution pertaining to women/girls and men/boys?
3. How are resources allocated within or by the institution to women/girls and men/boys?
4. Who occupies positions of power- women or men- within these institutions?
5. Do the membership, other rules, resource allocation, and structure of the institution vary depending on the caste, class, age, and religious identity of women and men? Give reasons for your response.



**ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL RELATIONS**

**Output from role play and large group discussion**

<b>Membership</b>	<b>Rules</b>	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Resource Allocation</b>

## INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CASE STUDY

	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Rules</b>	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Resource Allocation</b>
<b>Household</b>				
<b>Community</b>				
<b>Market</b>				
<b>State</b>				

## GENDER, SOCIAL RELATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

1. Gender relations interlock with other social/power relations to keep women in a subordinate position.
2. The other social relations in the Indian context include those based on hierarchies of caste, class, religious identity, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, differential ability, occupation and health status.
3. Gender/social relations in turn are shaped by institutions of society: household, market (commodities, labour, finance, services, from local to international levels) community, state (executive, legislature, and judiciary), supra-state institutions
4. These institutions take different organizational forms.
  - State is the larger institutional framework for a range of departments, ministries, local government organisations (Gram Panchayats<sup>1</sup> and Nagarapalikas<sup>2</sup>), judicial organisations (supreme court, high courts, district courts, family courts, *mahila courts*<sup>3</sup>, police stations etc.)
  - The market is the framework for organisations like farming arrangements, small scale enterprises, private limited companies, public limited companies, multinational companies, and private media.
  - The community comprises of different organisations like religious organisations, village *traditional* panchayats<sup>4</sup>, political factions, community groups, and NGOs.
  - The household may comprise of nuclear or extended families.
5. Thus institution is a framework of rules, ideologies and structures for achieving certain social or economic goals, organisations refer to the specific structural forms that institutions take.
6. Each institution, as well as organisation, includes certain members and keeps certain members out, has rules or norms, distributes resources unequally, distributes decision-making powers differentially and has certain ideology.
7. Women, girls and elderly, in particular from Dalit, adivasi and minority communities, from landless households, and from other socially excluded groups (e.g. sex workers, those affected by HIV/AIDS) are particularly disadvantaged through institutional rules, membership, resource and power allocation. This also applies to those who are sexual minorities and differently abled.
8. The official ideology of institutions is far from true in reality:
  - Households are not ‘altruistic’ but sites of ‘cooperative conflicts’
  - Markets are ‘not neutral’ but biased towards the ‘rich’
  - Most traditional community organisations do not maintain a ‘moral society’ but maintain ‘gender and social hierarchies’
  - State does not ‘promote the welfare or protect citizens’, but at times violates or turns a blind eye to violation of women’s rights
  - Supra-state institutions (in particular WTO and Bretton woods related) do not protect and promote the welfare or protect ‘global citizens’, but act in the interests of global capital and developed countries.

<sup>1</sup> Lowest level of self-governance in rural areas.

<sup>2</sup> Lowest level of self-governance in urban areas.

<sup>3</sup> Women’s courts established by the government to deal with issues of violence against women and discrimination against them.

<sup>4</sup> Traditional panchayats are different from the statutory local governments that are established by the state through elections. Often traditional panchayats are caste based or village based. In a village of households from different communities, the ‘upper’ castes and class control these panchayats.

## Methodology

### Objective

*To familiarise the participants with understanding of the following terminologies:*

- *Gender discrimination*
- *Gender based violence*
- *Formal equality*
- *Substantive equality*
- *Gender awareness*

### Materials

- *Four boxes*
- *Four sets of terminology cards (small) and explanation cards (big)*

### Time

*One hour*

1. Divide participants into four groups. Give each group a box containing seven terminologies in seven small cards (of one colour) and seven big cards (of another colour) explaining their meanings.
2. Ask each group to match the ‘terminology cards’ with ‘explanation cards’.
3. Ask each group to present their conclusions.
4. If the conclusions of the four groups differ, let them debate for five minutes, and then the facilitator can intervene to clarify correct meaning (in Hand out 2.2.3).



**TERMINOLOGIES RELATED TO GENDER\***

Terms	Meaning
Gender awareness	Refers to an understanding that there are socially determined differences and power relations between men and women that affect their access to and control over resources and access to decision making positions.
Gender Discrimination	The systematic, unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies them rights, opportunities or resources
Formal equality	Denotes women having the same opportunities in life as men, including the ability to participate in the public sphere
Substantive equality	Denotes the equivalence in life outcomes for women and men, recognising their different needs and interests, and requiring a redistribution of power and resources
Gender Training	A facilitated process of developing awareness and capacity on gender issues, to bring about personal or organisational change for gender equality
Gender Violence	Any act or threat by men or male-dominated institutions, that inflicts physical, sexual, or psychological harm on a woman or girl because of their gender Any act or threat by a man or woman in power due to social construction of gender over another woman/girl or man/boy in a less privileged position.
Social Justice	Fairness and substantive equality as a right for all in the outcomes of development, through processes of social transformation

\* Adapted from Reeves, Hazel and Sally Baden (2000), *Gender and Development: Concepts and Definitions*, Bridge prepared for DFID for its gender mainstreaming intranet resource, UK.

Kapur, Ratna and Brenda, Crossman (1996), *Subversive Sites: Feminist Engagement with Law in India*, New Delhi: Sage, London: Thousand Oaks.



**MODULE 3**  
**UNDERSTANDING POVERTY**





### Objectives

- To equip participants with a holistic and comprehensive understanding of poverty and human needs.
- Enable participants acquire a sense of peoplecentred /human scale development.
- To familiarize participants with the application of the wheel of fundamental human needs.

### Materials

- Human needs Handout 3.1.1
- The wheel handout 3.1.2
- Human scale development 3.1.3

### Time

Two hours













### Methodology<sup>1</sup>

#### Alternative 1

1. Form groups of five and request each group to formulate a definition of poverty.
2. Request participants to present their definitions in the plenary.
3. Facilitate discussion on each presentation and arrive at a common definition incorporating different dimensions of poverty, going beyond the economic concept of poverty.
4. Give a brief input on poverty from a human needs perspective i.e. any fundamental human need that is not adequately satisfied reveals a human poverty. Therefore we need to speak of poverties, not poverty.
5. Highlight the different types of poverties such as poverty of subsistence (due to insufficient income, food, shelter, etc.), of protection (due to bad health systems, violence, arms race etc.), of affection (due to paternalism, oppression etc.), of understanding (due to poor quality of education), of participation (due to marginalisation and discrimination women, children and minorities), of identity (due to cultural imperialism, political exile, forced immigration etc.) etc. Use handout 3.1.1
6. Form small groups with participants from the same area or familiar with similar communities. Give each group a 'wheel of fundamental human needs'. Ask them to discuss to what extent each of these needs are met in their own area and shade each section indicating how far the need is being met.
7. Ask each group to present their wheel in the plenary.
8. Sum up using the handout on human scale development.

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from Hope, Anne and Sally Timmel (1995), *Training for Transformation*, Book I.

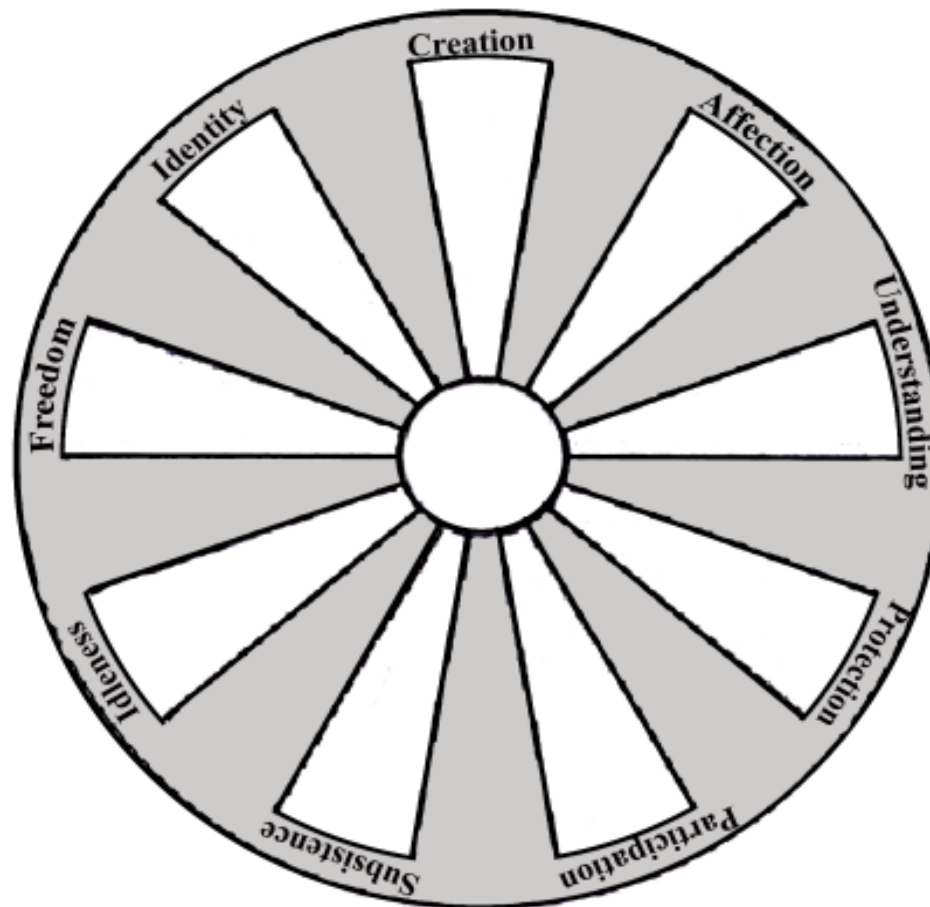
## HUMAN NEEDS AND THEIR SATISFIERS\*

HUMAN NEEDS		SATISFIERS
<b>Subsistence</b> - The need for bodily survival, for food, water, and primary health care.		Water, work flexibility and determination, sense of humour, equilibrium, shelter, procreation.
<b>Protection</b> - The need for protection from all major threats to the human body and spirit. As with other needs, these are satisfied personally or collectively, in various ways.		Solidarity, caring for, Human Rights constitution, self-reliance, community saving schemes, family.
<b>Affection</b> - The need for interpersonal relationships of warmth and intimacy.		Self-esteem, respect, tolerance, friendship, spaces for togetherness.
<b>Understanding</b> - Not mere knowledge, but a deeper sense of insight and enlightenment that comes through awareness, acceptance and interconnectedness of self, others and shared life.		Cultural television, non-discriminatory communication, critical consciousness, schools etc.
<b>Participation</b> - The desire and ability of people to being involved in life, ie, choosing, implementing, playing, deciding, worshipping, learning and working.		Initiate, share, interact, dialogue, dedication, factories, respect.
<b>Idleness</b> - The time and space to relax, reflect, to heal and re-create.		Tranquility, landscapes and daydreaming, give way to fantasy and closeness, community centres, free time, sports, peace.
<b>Creation</b> - The need to innovate and explore our unlimited human potential.		Abilities, passion, boldness, an expression of imagination, cultural groups.
<b>Identity</b> - The existential, personal and collective need to belong and participate in family, peer group and community.		Symbols and language, consistency and integrity, historical memory, personal achievement, take responsibility, self-esteem.
<b>Freedom</b> - The opportunity to act without stifling restrictions on one's space, time and consciousness.		Autonomy, respect, take risks, inspiration, assertiveness, commitment.
<b>Transcendence</b> - The need to find an ultimate reality that gives meaning and purpose to one's life. Not yet universally felt by all people of all cultures, but appears to be emerging as a fundamental human need as Human society continues to evolve.		Religion, spirituality, humility, openness, belief systems, gratitude, hope.

\* Adapted from *Fundamental Human Needs and Holistic Community Ministry*, A workshop document, October 2002

THE WHEEL OF FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN NEEDS\*

The Wheel of Fundamental Human Needs



\* Hope, Anne and Sally Timmel (1995), *Training for Transformation*, Book I.

## HUMAN SCALE DEVELOPMENT(HSD)\*

Development to be holistic and inclusive should create conditions and opportunities whereby the total needs of every person and every community will be met on a long-term and permanent basis. It should lead to the flourishing of every human being and every community to its full potential. To reduce development to the material and economic needs of human beings, communities and societies at large, is a gross distortion of true development. Likewise, individuals', communities' and whole societies' material and economic needs may not be neglected in authentic development programmes.

Manfred Max-Neef's theory of HSD is proving of immense value as a tool for raising awareness and developing a common vision of the type of society we want to create. It enables us to be more holistic and more comprehensive in ones thinking and therefore more active and hopeful about the future. HSD has its origins in Latin America – a context of wealth and poverty existing side by side. Manfred Max-Neef is an economist from Chile. Together with an international team of researchers Max-Neef presented HSD as a radically new development approach in the 1980s. The principles of HSD have since been applied by many grassroots organisations and governmental bodies in various parts of the world.

The HSD explanation of human needs touches on the very essence of human nature. It also explains what development and community development are about, namely the synergic and coherent (or holistic) realisation of human needs. This explanation of development in terms of human beings and their needs within a particular context gives us a real-life framework within which holistic liberation can be realized. It understands development as a holistic, people-centred, liberating and transforming process in which local communities consciously and actively take part.

Fundamental human needs, or meta-materialistic needs, are finite, few, classifiable, and the same in all cultures and historical periods. In their matrix of needs and satisfiers, Max Neef et al classify the needs for **subsistence** (including water, food, fuel and shelter), **protection, affection, understanding, participation, idleness, creation, identity and freedom**. Such a radical reinterpretation of needs has the potential of becoming a cornerstone in the rebuilding and reclamation of a holistic (ecological) economic agenda.

HSD is a new holistic people-centred theory and vision of society and human well-being. It radically departs from conventional narrow-minded materialistic and economic-biased theories of development and presents a comprehensive and qualitative perspective on human well-being. It focuses on development on a human scale, placing more emphasis on the local community level (healthy communities) than on the macro level. It presents a needs perspective of development: human and community development are only successfully achieved when certain material and non-material needs are met.

HSD thus radically differs from the conventional view of economic development that human needs are infinite, that they change all the time, that they are different in each culture or environment, and that they are different in each historical period. In contrast HSD postulates that human needs are finite, few (only nine), classifiable, and the same in all cultures and historical periods.

### **Human needs must be viewed as a system**

In the HSD framework human needs must be understood as a **system**: that is, all human needs are **interrelated** and **interactive**. In this sense HSD theory distinguishes itself from other influential theories such

as psychologist Abraham Maslow's theory of a hierarchy of needs. With the exception of the need for subsistence, that is, to remain alive, no hierarchies of needs exist in the HSD system.

In contrast to Maslow's hierarchical system the well-known South African development practitioner, Anne Hope, has used *the image of a wheel* to portray the HSD system of fundamental needs. In this image the fundamental needs are thought of as the spokes of a wheel. Just as every spoke forms an integral part of the wheel (the wheel depends on all its spokes to function successfully), all human beings have nine fundamental needs. It is the satisfaction or lack of satisfaction of these needs that determines one's quality of life. Unless the fundamental needs are met in an equal way, real development will not happen!

In HSD theory a distinction is not merely made between needs and satisfiers. It goes further by distinguishing between two categories of needs: 1) Needs according to axiological (value) categories - i.e. the nine fundamental human needs. 2) Needs according to the four existential categories of *being, having, doing and interacting*. By also defining needs according to the second category, HSD emphasises that we should not merely distinguish between satisfiers that satisfy different fundamental needs. Satisfiers must also be classified according to the four existential categories of needs.

*According to HSD theory holistic development is only achieved when the different fundamental human needs are met by satisfiers in all four existential categories. Together these four categories make up a closed system in which no single category can exist without the other three.*

There is no one-to-one correspondence between needs and satisfiers in HSD. A satisfier may contribute simultaneously to the satisfaction of different needs or, conversely, a need may require various satisfiers in order to be met. For example, a mother breast-feeding her baby is simultaneously satisfying the infant's needs for Subsistence, Protection, Affection and Identity. In HSD theory a distinction is furthermore made between different types of negative and positive satisfiers: Destroyers, Pseudo-satisfiers, Inhibiting satisfiers, Singular satisfiers, Synergic satisfiers, Exogenous and Endogenous satisfiers. In this paper we will not elaborate on these distinctions, except to point to HSD's emphasis on the need for SYNERGIC SATISFIERS. These are satisfiers that meet more than one fundamental need at the same time. A good example is the above-mentioned one of breast-feeding. It meets the baby's need for Subsistence, Protection and Affection and the mother's need for Identity, Affection and Creation.

The HSD Matrix provides development workers, groups and organisations with an excellent practical tool to plan, assess and evaluate their projects and programmes in terms of HSD values and criteria. At the same time the Matrix can be used by groups as a tool to diagnose their own organisations and societies in HSD terms. The Matrix makes it possible, firstly, to identify at a local level a strategy for development aimed at the actualisation of human needs. It can secondly serve as an educational, creative and participatory exercise (a conscientising tool) that may greatly enhance participants awareness and understanding of the nature and problems of their own society.

\* Adapted from *Fundamental Human Needs and Holistic Community Ministry*, A workshop document, October 2002



**HUMAN SCALE DEVELOPMENT MATRIX\***

Needs according to existential categories Needs according to axiological categories	BEING	HAVING	DOING	INTERACTING
<b>SUBSISTENCE</b>	1/ Physical health, mental health, equilibrium, sense of humour, adaptability	2/ Food, shelter, work	3/ Feed, procreate, rest, work	4/ Living environment, social setting
<b>PROTECTION</b>	5/ Care, adaptability, autonomy, equilibrium, solidarity	6/ Insurance systems, savings, social, security, health systems, rights, family, work	7/ Co-operate, prevent, plan, take care of, cure, help	8/ Living space, social environment, dwelling
<b>AFFECTION</b>	9/ Self-esteem, solidarity, respect, tolerance, generosity, respectiveness, passion, determination, sensuality, sense of humour	10/ Friendships, family, partnerships, relationships with nature	11/ Make love, caress, express emotions, share, take care of, cultivate, appreciate	12/ Privacy, intimacy, home, spaces of togetherness
<b>UNDERSTANDING</b>	13/ Critical conscience, receptiveness, curiosity, astonishment, discipline, intuition, rationality	14/ Literature, teachers, method, educational policies, communication policies	15/ Investigate, study, experiment, educate, analyse, meditate	16/ Settings of formative interaction, schools, universities, academies, groups, communities, family
<b>PARTICIPATION</b>	17/ Adaptability, receptiveness, solidarity, willingness, determination, dedication, respect, passion, sense of humour	18/ Rights, responsibilities, duties, privileges, work	19/ Become affiliated, co-operate, propose, share, dissent, obey, interact, agree on, express opinions	20/ Settings of participative interaction, parties, associations, churches, communities, neighbourhoods, family
<b>IDLENESS</b>	21/ Curiosity, receptiveness, imagination, recklessness, sense of humour, tranquility, sensuality	22/ Games, spectacles, clubs, parties, peace of mind	23/ Day-dream, dream, recall old times, give way to fantasies, relax, have fun, play	24/ Privacy, intimacy, spaces of closeness, free time, surroundings, landscapes
<b>CREATION</b>	25/ Passion, determination, intuition, imagination, boldness, rationality, autonomy, inventiveness, curiosity	26/ Abilities, skills, method, work	27/ Work, invent, build, design, compose, interpret	28/ Productive and feedback settings, workshops, cultural groups, audiences, spaces for expression
<b>IDENTITY</b>	29/ Sense of belonging, consistency, differentiation, self-esteem, assertiveness	30/ Symbols, language, religion, habits, customs, sexuality, values, norms, historical memory, work	31/ Commit oneself, integrate oneself, confront, get to know oneself, recognise oneself, actualise oneself, grow	32/ Social rhythms, everyday settings, settings which one belongs to, maturation stages
<b>FREEDOM</b>	33/ Autonomy, self-esteem, determination, passion, assertiveness, open-mindedness, boldness, rebelliousness, tolerance	34/ Equal rights	35/ Dissent, choose, be different from, run risks, develop awareness, commit oneself, disobey	36/ Temporal/ spatial plasticity

\* Max-Neef M (1991), Human Scale Development, The Apex Press.

## Methodology

### Objectives

- To strengthen understanding of causes of poverty from an entitlements perspective
- To explore gender specific causes of poverty

### Materials

- Cards
- Flip chart
- Felt pen
- Handout 3.2
- Nagavalli's case study (c.f. pages.28-29)

### Time

one hour



#### Alternative 1

1. Give participants two cards and ask them to list causes of poverty in one card.
2. Distinguish between dominant understanding of poverty and alternative understanding of poverty as stemming from shortfalls in endowments, production, and exchange options (Handout 3.2).
3. Ask participants to reclassify their list of causes of poverty using these three categories.
4. If cards that do not fall in these three categories come, see if they pertain to social relations and institutions.
5. Place these miscellaneous cards into five institutional categories: household, community, market, state and inter-state organisations, and different social relations categories: class, caste, gender, age, ethnicity, minority, etc.
6. Sum up reiterating the following (Handout 3.2):
  - Shortfalls in endowments, production and exchange options stem from failure of legal and customary entitlements, as well as environmental factors.
  - Failure of entitlements is rooted in social relations that are shaped by different institutions of society- household, community, market, state, supra state organisations.
  - Poverty can be seen as resulting from entitlement failures stemming from weak position in social relations and institutions.
  - Women, Dalits, Adivasis and landless face poverty more intensely as they have lesser endowments, have access to lesser skills/education, and have lower exchange options (are located in low waged jobs, can stake lesser claims on community institutions- see Essential Reading 3.2)
7. The links between gender and poverty would be discussed in greater detail in the last module.

#### Alternative 2

1. Form groups of 3-5 participants and ask them to discuss
  - The reasons for poverty of Nagavalli's household
  - How Nagavalli's poverty (dimensions and causes) is different from that of her husband Medappa, and her mother-in-law.
2. Ask each group to present their analysis of causes of poverty of Nagavalli's household and of Nagavalli and make a consolidated list.
3. Reiterate points elaborated in Step 6, Alternative 1.

## CAUSES OF POVERTY

### Dominant view of poverty

Poverty stems from

- Lack of economic growth
- Lack of integration of countries into global economy
- Lack of infrastructure
- Population growth
- Lack of efforts and skills on the part of the poor
- Illiteracy



### Alternative view

Adapting from Amartya Sen's (1981) concept of entitlements

1. Poverty stems from shortfalls in a) endowments, b) production possibilities, and c) exchange options
2. Endowments can be divided into:
  - Land, livestock and finance
  - Share of common property resources
  - Labour power
  - Membership in family
  - Membership in community
  - Citizenship vis-a-vis state
  - Membership in global society
3. Production possibilities refer to:
  - What one can produce vis-à-vis land and livestock that one owns
  - What yield common property resources give
  - What skills and knowledge one has had access to and acquired



4. Exchange options:
  - What price one can sell one's produce for
  - What price one can sell one's share of produce from common property resources for
  - How many days of work one can get vis-à-vis one's labour, and at what wages and terms
  - What quantity of water, food, clothing, health care and education expenditure one can exchange one's membership in the family for
  - What claims one can make on community leaders and members with one's membership in the community
  - What claims one can make on the government run public distribution system, schools, health care services, police protection etc.
  - What claims one can make vis a vis global society and institutions
  
5. Shortfalls in endowments, production possibilities and exchange options stem from failure of ownership and exchange entitlements, as well as environmental factors.
  
6. These entitlements comprise of those binding by law (legal entitlements) and those binding by customs (customary entitlements).
  
7. The failure in entitlements in turn stem from one's position in social relations of caste, class, race, gender, ethnicity, age etc and in the institutions of family, markets, community, religion, state, and the supra state.

8. Thus poverty can be seen as resulting from entitlement failures stemming from weak position in social relations and institutions.
  
9. Women, Dalits, Adivasis and landless face poverty more intensely as they have lesser endowments, have access to lesser skills/ education, and have lower exchange options (are located in low waged jobs, can stake lesser claims on community institutions-see Essential Reading 3.2.2)

#### **Essential Reading for facilitators**

Sen, A.K. (1981), *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.



**GENDER AND POVERTY: CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND DEBATES<sup>1</sup>**

(Extract from Ranjani.K.Murthy and Lakshmi Sankar, (2003), *Distress and Denial: Gender, Poverty and Human Rights in Asia*, Books for Change, Bangalore)

**Poverty as Institutional Exclusion**

There is a general consensus that the poor can be defined as those who are deprived of basic human needs required for their well being. But there are different points of view on what exactly are these basic needs. Most national governments and international organisations associate poverty with deprivation with respect to basic needs required for physical survival; that is food, nutrition, clothing, shelter, water and basic education. However, the Human Development Report<sup>1</sup>, 1997, brought out by the UNDP, questions such a narrow equation of poverty with the tangible dimensions of deprivation<sup>2</sup>. It argues the need for broadening the definition of poverty to include deprivation in terms of creativity, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and the respect of others (UNDP, 1997). Others, like Chambers (1988), draw attention to a few additional intangible dimensions of deprivation: vulnerability, powerlessness and isolation.

In this report the term poverty is used to refer to the experience of deprivation simultaneously with respect to: i) the basic needs required for survival like food, nutrition, clothing, shelter, water and basic education, and ii) the basic needs required for security and autonomy like stock of foods/minimum independent savings to cope with contingencies, control over one's labour, mobility, body and so on. As per this definition even a woman in a non-poor household who is deprived of basic needs required for survival, security and self esteem due to intra-household inequalities or extreme forms of violence would be considered as poor.<sup>3,4</sup>

On the causes of poverty, as well, there are many positions. The World Bank views lack of adequate rate of (market led) economic growth, labour intensive employment, and household income as the main causes of poverty (see the World Bank, 1990, 1998). Such a conceptualisation prioritises market over other institutional mechanisms in meeting basic needs, and views the market as a neutral institution. Equally, it ignores the differential ability of social groups (women, ethnic/religious minorities, dalits, tribals, landless labourers) to convert income into well being, and, in particular, the differential ability of household members to make claims on household resources on the basis of gender, age and (dis) abilities (Murthy and Rao, 1997). The Human Development Report, 1997 expands the analysis of causes of poverty from a narrow concern with growth, employment and household income, to lack of choices, and opportunities<sup>5</sup>. However, it does not make an effort to analyse the underlying causes of this lack of choice and opportunities, which often can be traced to lack of customary and legal rights of marginalised sections. Further, it ignores the fact that as important as *availability of choices and opportunities*, is the degree to which the poor are *empowered to exercise choices and make use of opportunities* in such a manner that it improves their well being in both the short and long run. Again, social practices and legal rights can at times come 'in the way of the ability of the poor to exercise choices and make use of opportunities in their favour.'<sup>6</sup>

Sen's concept of "entitlements" (1981) has the merit of expanding the analysis of cause of poverty from a narrow concern with income or choices to precisely this broader set of legal and customary rights by which people acquire the means to meet basic needs. Entitlements can be divided into two categories: ownership and exchange entitlements, and they are of two kinds: legal and normative (Sen, A.K., 1990, Kabeer, 1994a). Ownership entitlements refer to what one is legally or normatively entitled to own, while exchange entitlements refer to what one can exchange (one's endowment) as per law and customary practices. Building upon Sen's framework<sup>7</sup> one could argue that in mixed economies (most of the Asian and countries of the CIS) one is entitled to own productive assets (upto certain limits), one's physical labour power<sup>8</sup>, and one's membership in household/community/global society and citizenship in the state one resides in. One's actual endowments<sup>9</sup>, what one can produce using one's productive endowments (e.g. land, labour) and what one can exchange one's produce and one's non-productive endowments (e.g. membership in household, community, citizenship) for, depends on one's position within social relations of race, class, caste, gender, ethnicity and religion, and allocation of resources to different social groups within the institutions of household, community, markets (local to global), state and inter-governmental bodies<sup>10</sup>. The interactions within all social relations and institutions simultaneously contains elements of co-operation and conflict. The different parties or groups (big farmers and landless, men and women, upper caste and dalits, northerners and southerners or a combination of the above<sup>11</sup> etc.) involved co-operate with each other in so far as co-operation leaves them better off than non co-operation. But there is also a strong element of conflict between these groups as to what co-operative arrangement is arrived at, each arrangement of the set being more or less consistently better for one party (for example, upper class/majority

community/upper caste men ) than the other (lower class, minority community, lower caste, women, for example). On the whole the poor, and different poverty groups, have weak bargaining power within these social relations and institutions. *Thus the main cause of poverty can be seen as shortfalls in the ownership entitlements, endowments, production and exchange options of the poor and different poverty groups* (see Figure 2.1), *due to their weak bargaining power within existing social relations and institutions*<sup>12</sup>

(see Murthy and Rao, 1997 for an elaboration of this framework) .

#### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Though the foreword to the HDR, 1997 does state that the analysis presented in the report does not necessarily reflect the views of UNDP, if its views were dramatically different it is highly unlikely that it would publish the same.
- <sup>2</sup> Such a narrow equation of poverty with material deprivation has been challenged as early as the 1970s when the basic needs approach was popular.
- <sup>3</sup> A matter of debate within ACTIONAID has been whether women subject to violence should be considered as poor, as they are deprived in the intangible sense (they are more vulnerable, lack little power over themselves and so on). On this issue, the Research Team feels that if the concerned woman also faces tangible forms of deprivation at the same time, either as a consequence or form of domestic violence or because she comes from a poor family she could be considered poor. On the other hand, it would not consider a woman who is not deprived of food, clothing, shelter etc. as poor, even if she is subject to domestic violence.
- <sup>4</sup> Using this definition, women from *non-poor households* (for example, in northwest India), who are deprived of access to basic needs because of very marked intra-household inequalities in distribution of resources would also be considered poor.
- <sup>5</sup> According to it, poverty of choices and opportunities is more relevant than income poverty as it focuses "on the causes of poverty and leads to strategies of empowerment and other actions to enhance opportunities for everyone" (UNDP, 1997:p5).
- <sup>6</sup> For example, credit programmes targeted at poor South Asian women can expand the range of choices and opportunities they have, provided women

are able to break social rules or norms favoring male control over household credit and barring women from certain production processes and marketing activities. Even if these barriers are surmounted, their ability to convert increased income in their hands into enhanced well being depends on their ability to question norms on the unequal distribution of food and nutrition within the family and norms preferring male ownership of property.

<sup>7</sup> Sen (1981 and 1990) does not view membership in household and community, and citizenship as ownership entitlements. But these have also been included as membership in household and community provides independent access to resources, irrespective of one's ownership of productive assets and control over one's labour power. Similarly, citizenship does accord one certain (though inadequate) access to government resources and certain privileges in the market place, which may not be enjoyed by illegal migrants from other countries.

<sup>8</sup> Bonded labour is legally banned in most Asian and CIS countries.

<sup>9</sup> i) How much private or common land one owns or has claims over, ii) whether one is physically able and has control over one's labour power (not bonded to employer), iii) whether one is an orphan or is member of a household, and one's gender and age, iv) whether one is a member of a community or one is displaced from the community due to migration, war etc. , and one's caste, gender, ethnic and religious identity and , v) whether one is a citizen of the country or an illegal migrant from another country, which country one belongs to, and one's caste, ethnic, gender and religious identity.

<sup>10</sup> While the state of the physical environment does have a role to play in determining productivity of one's assets, this is largely mediated by policies/practices of global institutions, the national state, markets (global to local) and communities, and only partly by natural factors.

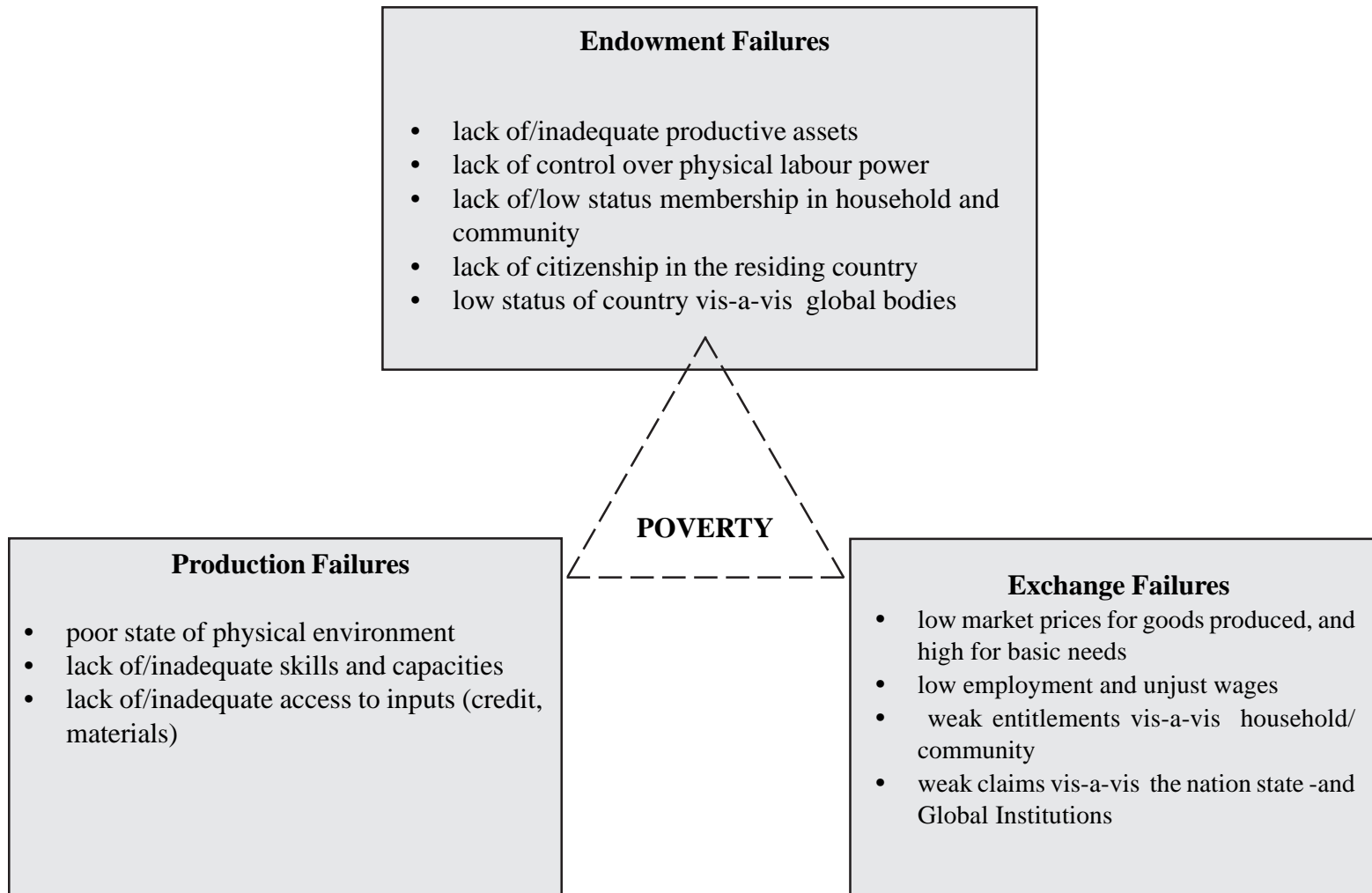
<sup>11</sup> Upper caste, class, men vs. lower class, caste, women for example.

<sup>12</sup> Institutions can be seen as a set of formal and informal rules, norms or behaviour which shape social perceptions of people's needs and roles and lead to certain allocation of resources and power between people. These rules, norms or behaviour are routinised through certain structures and practices (Goetz, 1995, Kabeer, 1994a and 1994b, Uphoff, 1993). Key institutions which have a key bearing on the poor, and different sections of the poor, include: the household/family, community, markets, state and inter-

governmental/global institutions. Social relations are relations of power, which are socially constructed, rather than biologically determined or God ordained. They can hence be changed. Key social relations which have a bearing on poverty include relationships based on class, caste, gender, ethnicity, religion and race. Power relations are inherently unequal and lead to unequal distribution of resources, responsibilities and power.



## FAILURES LEADING TO POVERTY\*



\* Adapted from Murthy and Rao (1997)

## GENDER AND POVERTY: THE FEMINISATION OF POVERTY DEBATE

In as much as the rules and practices of these institutions entitle different groups differently and unequally, an institutional approach draws attention to the fact that deprivation is experienced differently by women and men, girls and boys, tribals and non-tribals, minority and majority communities, dalits and upper castes and so on. Across the world, women occupy an unequal position within different institutions of society, though the extent varies based on norms governing gender and their non-gender related identities. *This is reflected in the fact that there is no country in the world wherein the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) value is higher than the Human Development Index (HDI) value and wherein Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) value exceeds 0.800<sup>1</sup> (leave alone the ideal figure of 1.00).* The GDI and GEM figures tell us that women are likely to have lesser access to basic needs required for physical survival than men, and also lesser means to overcome deprivation.

There are no reliable figures on the proportion of women amongst the global poor. It is frequently asserted that 70% of the world's poor are women (UNDP, 1995 and UN, 1996a). Slightly more modestly, the UNIFEM (1995) states that “women constitute at least 60% of the world's poor”. No rigorous data is, however, presented to back these claims. The proponents of the argument that poverty is feminised also claim that poverty is experienced more severely by poor women than poor men (i.e. the shortfalls from what is required for survival is often more for women than that for men). They put forward the following explanations for explaining the feminisation of incidence and severity of poverty<sup>2</sup>:

- *Female headed households are disproportionately represented amongst the poor households, and that such households normally have more female members than male members.*

- *Poor households have a greater proportion of women members than men members.*
- *Within households and outside, women and girls have lesser access to food, education and health care than men and boys. Hence, they may face poverty more severely than men.*
- *Some of the poverty processes- like lack of basic infrastructure and environmental degradation- have a more adverse impact on women's work burden than men's given their responsibility for fetching fuel and water, and leads to reduced health status.*
- *Women may also slip into poverty through certain gender-specific processes. For example, given unequal inheritance rights, earning opportunities and returns to labour, women's economic position is highly dependent on men. If their marriage breaks down women's economic position may deteriorate very fast, and they may slip into poverty while their husband remains non-poor.*
- *Women have lesser means- assets, skills, employment options, education, legal resources, financial resources - to overcome poverty than men, and are more economically insecure and vulnerable in times of crisis. Given greater constraints from the household to the market, their range of income earning options and the returns to their labour and education is lower.*
- *Women disproportionately bear the burden of structural adjustment in the sense that they are more represented in the growing informal sector, and that they constitute a large chunk of the reserve army of labour which is called in and thrown out when necessary, and they spend greater time on reproductive work to compensate for cut back in social services by the government and increase in prices of basic commodities. In fact, the feminisation of labour seen recently in some of the countries is attributed to feminisation of poverty rather than increase in their mobility and control over their labour.*

On the whole, the proponents of the feminisation of poverty theory seem to not only be arguing that the incidence of poverty is more, and more severe, amongst women than men, but also that some of the dimensions of women's poverty are different from that of poor men, and so are the causes or process of poverty. They are lesser endowed than men, they face lesser production possibilities vis-a-vis their endowment, they can exchange their labour for lesser days of employment, at lower wages and more insecure conditions than men, they have lesser access to commodity markets, they can exchange their household and community membership for fewer goods and services, and, finally, they can/are able to stake lesser claims on the state and global institutions than men. Their ability to overcome poverty is hence of a lower order.

In the last three years some of the gender advocates have begun to question the blind belief in the position that poverty is "feminised" the world over (Lockwood and Baden, 1995, Jackson, 1995, Kabeer, 1997). They are also critical of the instrumental<sup>3</sup> way in which gender has been assimilated into the poverty discourse using this argument, leading to increase in women's work burden without proportionate increase in benefits. The World Bank's Gender Policy<sup>4</sup> is an often cited example in this regard. According to Naila Kabeer:

*Analysis appears to have been replaced in policy circles by simple and sweeping generalisations (leading to) the automatic inclusion of women in the category of 'vulnerable group', the equation of female headship with poverty, and tenuously substantiated claims about the global feminisation of poverty. This has been accompanied by increased 'instrumentalisation' of women by major agencies such as the World Bank.... The conflation of gender concerns with poverty matters allows issues of gender discrimination and injustice which affect the well-being of women to disappear from the agenda. Simultaneously, of course, the poverty of men becomes increasingly sidelined, and the costs of masculinity, whether borne by men themselves or passed on to other family members, is erased from view (Kabeer, 1997:2, parenthesis added).*

Both the sweeping generalisation on feminisation of poverty and its recent critique need to be investigated by ongoing empirical analysis.

#### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The *human development index* measures the average achievements of a country in three basic dimensions of human development: longevity (life expectancy), knowledge (education attainment) and a decent standard of living (real Gross Domestic Product per capita). The *gender-related development index* measures achievements in the same dimensions and variables as the HDI does, but takes account of inequality in achievement between women and men. The greater the gender disparity in basic human development, the lower a country's GDI compared with its HDI. The *gender empowerment measure* indicates whether women are able to actively participate in economic and political life. It thus differs from the GDI, an indicator of gender-inequalities in basic capabilities (UNDP, 1997:14)
- <sup>2</sup> See Safilios-Rothschild, 1991, Heyzer, 1992, 1993, Bardhan, K., 1993, Heyzer, N., 1994, Sen, G., 1994, Kabeer, 1994, UNDP, 1995, Buvinic and Gupta, 1997, World Bank, 1994a, 1995a, Baulch, 1996
- <sup>3</sup> By the term "instrumental" these researchers are referring to the phenomenon wherein women are targeted not because they need development, but because their involvement is considered important for poverty-alleviation (Kabeer, 1997)
- <sup>4</sup> According to the World Bank "Improving women's productive capacity can contribute to growth, efficiency and poverty reduction-key development goals everywhere. Investing proportionately more in women than in men- in education, health, family planning, access to land... is thus an important part of development strategy, as well as an act of social justice" (World Bank, 1994:9)





Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.

Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General





MODULE 4

## GLOBALISATION, POVERTY AND WOMEN



### Objectives

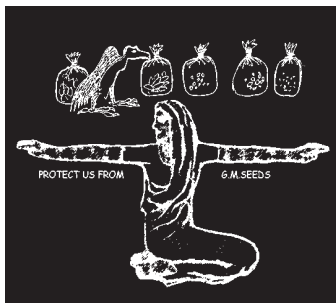
- *To understand the impact of globalisation on the poor, women and other marginalised groups.*
- *To examine what NGOs, women, and other marginalised communities can do to meet the challenges posed by globalisation.*

### Materials

- *Two chairs*
- *Two big sized white cards and 15-20 small cards*
- *Marker pens*
- *Handout 4.1,4.2,4.3*

### Time

*Two hours*



### Methodology

#### *Alternative 1*

1. Place two chairs in the center of the room.
2. Request two participants to volunteer for an exercise (preferably a man and a woman), and stick a big sized white card 'production of life' on one volunteer and a card on 'production of livelihood' on the other.
3. With the help of the participants define production of life and production of livelihood (Handout 4.1).
4. Ask the participants to name and write in a small card one element of production of life or livelihood and stick it on the appropriate seated person, till a comprehensive list of elements of production of life and livelihood is evolved.
5. Initiate a debate amongst the participants on
  - Who is responsible for various aspects of production of life (men/boys, women/girls, state, others)?
  - Why?
  - Whether the division of labour varies with economic background, caste, ethnicity, religion, location of household etc and if yes, how?
  - Which of the elements of production of life are paid for in cash, which are paid for in kind, and which are paid for in both cash and kind?
6. Ask each participant to choose one element of production of life and livelihood and state whether its availability, quality, responsibility, mode of payment or affordability changed over the last 15 years, and if yes whether overall the changes are positive, negative, or neutral.
7. If overall the change with regard to the particular element of production of life or livelihood is positive ask participants to remain seated on the chair, if negative to stand up, if neutral ask them to sit on the floor. Mark in a card which element the participant analysed, and clip it on to their dress.
8. Complete the exercise till all the changes in all elements of life and livelihood are analysed.

9. Initiate a debate on how these changes have affected the poor and the rich, different caste groups, different location groups (urban/rural), women/girls and men/boys, those with access to formal education and those without etc. If the impact has differed across different groups unravel the reasons.
10. Ask the participants why these changes have occurred in the last 10 years, and link the changes to globalisation, its elements, instruments, and institutions (Handout 4.2 and 4.3). Make them sit in the outer circle.
11. Facilitate a consensus on the effect of globalisation on the lives and livelihood of women and other marginalised groups using the endowment, production entitlement and exchange framework; pointing to the overall negative impact on production of lives and livelihoods by poor and poor women (Handout 4.3).
12. Promote brainstorming on strategies to counter harmful impact of globalisation on poor and marginalised women, and to help these groups make use of opportunities where they exist (Handout 4.3).

*Alternative 2*

1. Arrange chairs in three circles: inner, middle and outer. Ask participants to stand in the margins of the outer circle, and commence the 'onion peel' exercise.
2. Explain that the 'onion peel' exercise will begin with analysis of production of life.
3. Ask 6-8 volunteers to name the elements of production of life (e.g. food), write it and pin on themselves and occupy a chair in the inner circle.
4. Initiate a debate in the inner circle on
  - Who is responsible for various aspects of production of life (men/boys, women/girls, state, others)?
  - Why?
  - Whether the division of labour varies with economic background, caste, ethnicity, religion, location of household and if yes, how?
  - Which of the elements of production of life are paid for in cash, which are paid for in kind, and which are paid for in both cash and kind?



5. Ask 6-8 participants who are still standing to come to the inner circle and choose one element of production of life, and sit behind the person in the inner circle.
6. Ask how the production of that element has changed in the last ten years- availability, affordability, quality, responsibilities and payment procedures. If the change cited by the participant is positive put a green card on their dress. If negative place a blue card, and if neutral place an yellow card. Count the number of participants with cards of each colour.
7. Initiate a debate with the participants in the middle circle on the overall direction of changes. Explore how these changes have affected the poor and the rich, caste Hindus and Dalits/Adivasis/minorities, different location groups (urban/rural), women/girls and men/boys, those with access to formal education and those without etc. If the impact has differed across different groups unravel the reasons.
8. Ask the rest of the participants to occupy the outer circle and analyse why these changes have occurred in the last 10 years, and link the changes to globalisation, its elements, instruments, and institutions (Handout 4.2 and 4.3). Make them sit in the outer circle.
9. Repeat the 'onion peel' exercise again for an analysis of production of livelihood, this time making sure that those in the outer circle sit in the inner circle.
10. Use the causes of poverty framework to point to how globalisation has affected the endowment, production possibilities and exchange options of the poor, women and other marginalised groups; and its overall implications for poverty.
11. Promote brainstorming on strategies to counter harmful impact of globalisation on poor and marginalised women, and to help these groups make use of opportunities where they exist (Handout 4.3).



**WHAT IS PRODUCTION OF LIFE AND LIVELIHOOD?\***

**Elements of production of life**

- Conception/contraception
  - Pregnancy
  - Giving birth
- Food and nutrition
  - Clothing
  - Fuel
  - Water
  - Shelter
  - Sanitation
  - Fresh-air
  - Child-care
  - Spirituality
- Taking care of elderly
- Cleaning and washing of house
- Education of children
- Health care
- Recreation and entertainment
- Necessary social obligations
  - Festivals
  - Claims from state
- Claims for religious institutions
- Claims from community institutions
- Others

**Elements of production of livelihood**

- Land, livestock, and other assets
- Common property resources
- Loans
- Skills
- Employment and wages
- Technology
- Productivity
- Access to markets
- Prices
- Income
- Organisation
- Infrastructure and communication
- Claims from state
- Claims from other community institutions
- Claims from global institutions
- Others



\* Adapted from PEACE (2003), *Appeal: Handbook for Field Activists*, Action Programme for People’s Economics and Allied Literacy, New Delhi: PEACE, and Dietrich, G. (2001), *A New Thing on Earth: Hopes and Fears on Feminist Theology*, Delhi: ISPCK, Madurai: TTS.

**GLOBALISATION\***

1. Globalisation refers to the growing interdependence of economies and societies in the contemporary world. Globalisation has both social and imperialist dimensions.
  - The social dimension consists of utilising the growing possibilities of global cooperation to promote development, democracy, peace, justice (including gender justice) and related aspects of human progress. These possibilities have been poorly utilized in the past.
  - The imperialist dimension consists of harnessing the globalisation process to the service of power and privilege, in particular to service business interests and governments of high-income countries. This is the dominant trend in globalisation.
2. The proponents of the imperialist agenda reduce globalisation to liberalisation, de-regulation and privatization of trade, investment and capital flows
  - Privatisation refers to the process by which state-owned economic enterprises and services, as well as common property resources, are being transferred to private entities- local, national or transnational.
  - Liberalisation refers to the removal of government regulation and control in the trade of goods and services, as well as in investment and finance, in order to promote free markets
  - De-regulation refers to the process of removing regulations over economic activities governing what is produced for local consumption and for exports, by whom (local or transnational companies), and over terms and conditions of work.
3. The main instruments used by the proponents of imperialist agendas include:
  - Stabilisation policies of the International Monetary Fund that give short-term loans to countries facing balance of payment crisis on the condition that they adhere to policies to reduce such deficits like freeing up of exchange rates (this often implied devaluation of currency).
  - Structural adjustment policies of the World Bank (and recently of the IMF) which entail provision of long term loans with interest to countries only if they adhere to fiscal discipline, redirection of public expenditure only to those that give higher economic return, tax reforms to widen tax base, financial and interest rate liberalisation, trade, investment/capital liberalisation and promotion of private property.
  - World Bank promoted interest free loans (late 1980s onwards) for sectoral projects in health, water, power and other social sectors which promote user fees, privatisation, public-private partnerships and cost-effectiveness approach to priority setting.
  - WTO Agreements like agreement on agriculture (which includes framework for liberalisation of agriculture), liberalisation of information technology and commerce, trade related intellectual property rights (which supposedly protects intellectual property while trading) and trade related investment measures (which go against previous norms on local content requirements and import-export balancing).

4. The main institutions for promoting globalisation are:

- The International Monetary Fund (formed in 1944) which usually gives short term financial and technical assistance for addressing balance of payment deficit, albeit with conditionalities (that adhere to stabilisation policies). Finance for lending comes from subscriptions of the 184 member countries through a quota system (a percent of national currency reserve), with a majority of the lending coming from a few high income countries (in particular United States, Japan, Germany, France and the UK) who also control decision making, along with China, Russia and Saudi Arabia
- The World Bank (formed in 1944) which gives long term loans and technical assistance through the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (for middle income countries, with interest), International Development Association (for low income countries, without interest) and other bodies for countries that abide by long term structural adjustment policies. Again the finances for lending come from high income countries and decision making is controlled by them (same countries as in the case of the IMF)
- The World Trade Organisation (formed in 1994) which supposedly provides a forum in which rules of trade in goods and services, investment measures, and intellectual property rights are negotiated between countries through 'consensus'. It also acts as a forum for reviewing national trade policies, providing technical assistance on trade issues and for settling disputes. In practice, decisions of WTO are taken in informal back room sessions, dominated by high-income countries. Often low-income countries are coerced by the high-income countries to accept their positions on trade policies, as well as

to not attack the latter with regard to non-implementation of some agreements (for example, free trade in agriculture and textiles is far from reality due to protectionism and subsidies in the high income ones).

The proponents of the social dimension of globalisation argue, correctly, that many of the low-income countries are former colonies of the present day high income ones, and have been economically exploited by the latter. Low-income countries face balance of payment crisis now due to such exploitation, as well as the escalation of oil prices in the 1970s. Instead of addressing these issues, the international organisations are only addressing the symptoms. They argue for greater equality in distribution of power and resources between the high-income and low-income countries.

\* Adapted from Sampat, Preeti (2003), *Economic Globalisation Today: Resource Book*, Bangalore: Books for Change.





## GLOBALISATION AND INDIAN WOMEN

- The impact of globalisation on Indian women can be studied through
  - Examining changes in the production of life and production of livelihoods as a result of globalisation and,
  - The gender differentiated consequences of these changes.
- Globalisation has affected the production of life, with gendered consequences, in the following manner:

### *Access to health*

- The access of poor households to health care has reduced due to introduction of user fees, privatisation of health care, and due to the rising costs of drugs (due to patenting under TRIPS). Women's access to health has declined more than that of men.
- Priority setting methods in health care based on cost effectiveness has led to prioritisation of curative over preventive/promotive care and measurable health needs over immeasurable ones. Health services for infertility and violence related health complications are not prioritised
- With privatisation of health care, health care treatment is becoming medicalised. For example, the proportion of caesarians is much higher in private hospitals than the public ones.
- The access of women to safe contraception has reduced through the coming back of hormonal contraceptions that were banned in the 1980s. International research on male contraception has lagged behind that of female contraception.

### *Access to water and fuel*

- With the privatisation in water and garbage collection, the costs of these are going up. Access to drinking water is also coming down due to over exploitation, pollution and privatisation. As in poor households women and girls bear the burden of fetching water, they have to go longer distances to collect them.
- With privatisation of commons, access of poor households to fuel is coming down. Gathering fuel is the responsibility of women and girls, and fuel shortages add to their work burden.

### *Education:*

- With privatisation of education, access to tertiary education (college and above) is skewed in favour of the upper class. Poor Indian households, when it comes to allocating scarce resources or borrowing for education, prefer to invest in education of sons over daughters.

### *Food and nutrition:*

- With cutting back of public expenditure, there is more 'targeting' with regard to eligibility for subsidised rations under public distribution systems, excluding some sections of the poor.
- With greater use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in agriculture, as well as rise in media advertisement for non-nutritious foods, consumption of nutritional food is on the decline. This has greater impact on women/girls than men/boys; given that women are also involved in biological reproduction

### ***Other aspects of social development***

- With increase in use of drudgery reducing equipments like mixie, grinding machine, and washing machine, the workload of middle class women has come down. However such equipments may have reduced the demand for domestic workers from poorer economic group.
- To boost their arms sale, and thereby their stagnant economies, USA and UK are increasingly invading Muslim dominated countries on the name of 'war on terror'. The gap been the expenditure on arms and that on social development has further increased; affecting women more than men.

### ***Consumerism and homogenisation of cultures***

- Globalisation has led to an increase in consumerism, and a rise in preference for branded products. This has led to 'cultural homogenization' on the one hand, and a decrease in demand for artisanal products and services.
- The demands for dowry have increased and spread to communities which earlier practiced bride price. Dowry related harassment and son preference are on the rise; leading to practices like female foeticide (and earlier infanticide as well).
- The joint family system is coming down. This has on the one hand given more decision making space for new brides, but also increased their workload and reduced the emotional security of children and the elderly.
- Partly, in response to the spread of western culture, right wing movements have strengthened in the 1990s. These movements use their own interpretation of 'tradition' and 'culture' at the expense of women's rights.

3. Globalisation has affected production of livelihoods, with gendered consequences, in the following manner:

#### ***Endowments and production possibilities:***

- With liberalization of land legislation under the tenth five-year plan (2002-2007), agricultural land can be used for industrial purposes in India. Several small and marginal farmers are being lured and at times even forced to sell their land. As more women are employed in agriculture than men these developments affect women more than men.
- Globalisation has led to privatisation of commons. This can be seen especially with regard to water resources, having more adverse consequences for women.
- Production possibilities out of land have decreased with soil and ground water erosion.

#### ***Exchange options***

- Though the country has grown by 5-6% in the 1990s, the employment elasticity of growth is less than one in all sectors in India, being higher in service sector (0.79), and lowest in agriculture (0.02) and in between in industries (0.29) for the period 1990-2000, and growth in employment being more in the informal sector than formal sector. Employment elasticity of growth is declining with new technologies coming in to displace labour and bringing costs down (e.g. Construction).
- Shift from subsistence to commercial agriculture, has made marginal and small farmers vulnerable to indebtedness and vagaries of the market (leading to suicides), and eroded women's control over produce. As Indian women have less access to agricultural markets, they do not have control over the income generated through the sale of produce. If the cash

crop fails, women and girl children bear the brunt of food shortage in large parts of India.

- In the field of manufacturing there was a tendency in the 1980s and early 1990s to employ women at lower end jobs by export processing zones. Now contracting to smaller worksheds or home-based-work has become popular. Adolescent girls and unmarried young women are preferred as they are willing to work at lower wages, insecure terms and conditions, and poor working conditions. They are also seen as possessing greater dexterity than males, and are seen as less likely to go on maternity leave than adult women.
- Studies from South India suggest that Dalit women are being incorporated into these low-end jobs more than 'upper' caste Hindu women as they are considered less problematic to exploit; thereby perpetuating caste and gender based exploitation while maybe increasing employment opportunity.

**Overall:**

- Urban women with access to higher education and fluency in English (mainly from urban areas and middle/upper class) have benefited from the growth in the service sector. But again they are mainly located at the lower rungs of the service sector, and often work in night shifts in call centers, affecting their health and safety,
- Thus, there has been increase in disparity between women with access to formal education and non literate women. Urban/rural disparities have also increased with many of the services and manufacturing work being located in urban areas.

- In both urban and rural settings, there has been a change in gender composition of labour. India has seen a feminisation of labour in India in the 1990s, with increase in female labour force participation rates while male labour force participation rates have being stagnant during the same period\*. As the increase in work has been mainly increase in marginal work (less than 183 days a year) it cannot be seen as leading to economic empowerment of women. At the same time, there has been no change in the division of domestic work and child care; thus increasing the total work-load of women.
  - With increase in poverty, trafficking of poor women, men and children across and within countries has increased for employment, sale of organs or sex work.
4. With few exceptions, the endowments the production possibilities of these endowments (land, common property resources), and exchange options (vis-à-vis produce, labour, state claims, community claims, kinship claims) of the poor and women/marginalised groups have decreased with globalisation.
  5. NGOs, trade unions and social movements in India can adopt the following general and gender specific strategies:

***International level***

- Advocate global taxation for development, unconditional debt cancellation for low-income countries, cut back in global defense expenditure, and greater overseas development grants.

\* The female labour force participation rate for India increased from 22.3% in 1990 to 25.7% in 2001. The labour force participation rate for men for the same period was 51.5% and 51.9% respectively (data cited by Jayathi Ghosh, 2004).

- Advocate greater transparency and accountability in trade decision-making in the inter-ministerial meetings of WTO; and press for right to information of public to decision making processes.
- Develop links with international and regional networks such as the Informal Working Group on Gender and Trade, Engender (Asia) and the Women's Strategic Planning Seminar on Trade (WSPT) who are advocating for gender sensitive labour codes as part of globalisation.
- Lobby that WTO reports in inter-ministerial meetings should focus on the impact of trade liberalisation on low-income countries and households and marginalised women/social groups, and not just progress of governments towards trade liberalisation.
- Lobby for total removal of protectionism and subsidisation of agriculture and textiles by high-income countries.
- Advocate for gender and socially aware code of conduct for Transnational Corporations; and monitoring of its implementation by the WTO.
- Help poor women and marginalised groups in India patent their products and indigenous knowledge under TRIPs.
- Lobby for de-linking decision making in the IMF and the World Bank with economic contribution to funds to these two institutions; and for proportionate representation of low-income and lower-middle income countries in decision making forums.
- Lobby for right to information on Executive Board meetings of the IMF and the World Bank, and greater interaction of the Boards with rights based organisations.

#### *National level*

- Carry out a gender and social audit of globalisation and its impact at the national level; and prepare country level shadow reports on impact of trade policies for the Inter Ministerial meetings of the WTO.
- Lobby for reversal of national policies towards liberalising laws on use of land and common property resources.
- Scrutinise all the World Bank projects in India in the sphere of development at the appraisal stage, and lobby for changes or aborting them if necessary.
- Lobby for democratisation of cooperative laws in the Indian states where Mutually Aided Cooperatives Act is not in place, and for reservation of women.
- Advocate with the central and state government to implement the recently passed employment guarantee bill in all districts with provision that atleast 50% of the employment generated should be for women at equal and minimum wages
- Advocate with the Indian government to invest less in defense and more in social services.
- Improve the quality of education and ensure that gender and social disparities in education outcomes are reduced through free higher education for children from those households in poverty.
- Advocate for reversal of policies such as user fees for essential services like health, higher education, drinking water and electricity for domestic use.
- Form associations of women producers for accessing common property resources being auctioned, achieving economies of scale in production, and for penetrating the market.
- Form women labourers' cooperatives/associations for collectively intervening in labour market- especially in construction, and food for work programmes.

- Form consumer associations to make consumer product industries more accountable with regard to their products and services.
- Evolve a methodology for gender and economic literacy at the local level, focusing on both production of lives and livelihoods. Generate local level data on impact of globalisation on poverty and women.
- Pilot alternative models of development, which do not rely on global markets but at the same time meets the informed needs of poor women and marginalised groups.

**Essential reading for facilitators:**

- Ghosh, Jayathi (2004), “Moving Beijing Forward: Gaps and Challenges, Globalisation and the Economic Empowerment of women”, Paper presented in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific High Level Inter Government meeting to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and its Regional and Global outcomes held in Bangkok between 7 – 10 September.
- Kerr, Joanna and Sweetman, Caroline (May 2003), *Gender and Development*, Vol. 11, No. 1, Trade. “Editorial”,
- Sampat, Preeti (2003), *Economic Globalisation Today: Resource Book*, Bangalore: Books for Change.





*Listen to the women  
listen to the many voices,  
spoken and unspoken*

Women have been excluded from the main human rights discourse; from its precepts, from its praxis. The parameters that have defined the discourse have been drawn blinded and mindless to gender. Political paradigms that determine political thinking and institutions in our times have been based on the legitimated discrimination and degradation of women. These political paradigms have excluded and erased the women. If we must look for a new understanding of human rights, then we must look anew. With new eyes.

*women have begun to see with new eyes,  
we have begun to shift the parameters of the human rights discourse;  
we have dared to call rape a war crime  
we have dared to call the battering, the burning, the brutalisation of women  
as acts of female sexual slavery  
we know today that most refugees are women, that most internally displaced are women,  
that women are the poorest of the poor,  
that poverty has a woman's face*

The old categories, the old concepts have become insufficient; they are almost unable to grasp the violence of the times. We need to urge the passing of a paradigm that has understood human rights as the rights of the privileged, the rights of the powerful. We need to listen to the voices of those who do not share that power. To see these violations through the eyes of the victims - victims of development, of progress, of technical fixes. Through the eyes of the powerless of those who are on the edges - the indigenous, the tribals, the dalits, the disabled, the dispossessed; knowing that from the peripheries of power, the world is seen differently. Through the eyes of the South in the South; and of the South in the North.

*through the eyes of the women.  
it is another way of seeing.  
it is another way of knowing.*

Speaking Tree, Womenspeak, AWHRC, 1995



MODULE 5  
**GENDER AND RIGHTS**





### Objectives

- To examine violations of civil and political, economic and socio cultural rights in our own lives, and the effect they have on our well being.
- To analyse the relation between personal violations of rights and international covenants.

### Materials

- Charts/transparent sheets
- Handout 5.1.1 on Human rights
- Handout 5.1.2 on the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Handout 5.1.3 on the Covenant on Economic and Socio-cultural Rights

### Time

Two hours, 30 minutes



### Methodology

#### Alternative 1

1. Give inputs on
  - The concept and history of human rights, and the gist of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Handout 5.1.1)
  - The different articles of the Civil and Political Rights (Handout 5.1.2)
  - The different articles of the Civil and Socio Cultural Rights (Handout 5.1.3)
2. Form four to five small groups. Ask each group to discuss the following questions:
  - Record when each participant felt that their rights were violated
  - Prepare a list of civil/political and economic/socio/cultural rights that are being violated through different incidences, using handout 5.1.2 and 5.1.3
  - Note the number of persons stating that a particular right is violated, and
  - Observe if there are systematic differences in the violations of rights based on gender, class, caste, religious identity, age, sexual orientation, occupation, and physical abilities of the participant.
3. Ask each group to present their analysis, and comment on patterns that emerge.
4. Facilitate analysis of how the violations of rights affect our well being, and point to the link between protection of rights of women and development of women.
5. Point out that the concept of human rights is not just relevant to the poor and marginalised, but to each of us.

## Materials

- Charts/transparent sheets
- Handout 5.1.1 on Human rights
- Handout 5.1.2 on the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Handout 5.1.3 on the Covenant on Economic and Socio-cultural Rights

## Time

Two hours, 30 minutes



## Alternative 2

1. Form groups of three to four. Ask each group to:
  - Record one incident when each participant felt that their rights were violated.
  - Analyse the rights that are being violated in that incident using their own terms.
  - Observe if there are systematic differences in the violations of rights based on gender, class, caste, religious identity, age, sexual orientation, occupation, and physical abilities of the participant.
2. Ask each group to present their analysis.
3. Prepare a consolidated list of incidences of violation of rights and the number of participants who reported that incident.
4. Give inputs on the
  - Concept and history of human rights, and the gist of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Handout 5.1.1).
  - The different articles of the Covenant on the Civil and Political Rights (Handout 5.1.2).
  - The different articles on the Economic and Socio Cultural Rights (Handout 5.1.3).
5. In the large group ask participants to revisit the consolidated list of incidences, and analyse what rights are violated in each incident using the handouts on Civil and Political Rights and Economic and Socio Cultural Rights. Ensure that each participant gets a chance to express his/her views.
6. Facilitate analysis of how the violations of rights affect our well being, and point to the link between protection of rights of women and development of women.
7. End by pointing that the concept of human rights are not just relevant to the poor and marginalised.

## Essential reading for facilitators

Ravindran J, (2001) *Human Rights Praxis: A resource book for Study, Action and Reflection*, Earthworm Books, Chennai.  
WHO, *Transforming Health Systems: Gender and Rights in Reproductive Health*, WHO, Geneva,

## HUMAN RIGHTS - AN INTRODUCTION

1. The contemporary development of international human rights law is closely linked to the establishment and evolution of the United Nations in 1945. Till then, international law mainly governed the conduct between states and rights of states, and not the rights of individuals.
2. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted by the UN General assembly in 1948 proclaims that human rights are based on the 'inherent dignity' of every human person. The right to freedom and equality that are derived from the inherent dignity of the human person are inalienable and superior to the powers of the state. Human rights are also indivisible and of intrinsic value\*.
3. The UDHR asserts the principle that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms without any distinction such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
4. The UDHR affirms the fundamental right to life, to liberty and security of the person.
5. Based on the Universal Declaration,
  - The International Covenant (Covenants being more binding than Declarations) on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was adopted in 1966 and came into force in 1976.
  - The International Covenant on Economic and Socio Cultural Rights (ICESR) was adopted in 1966.
6. The civil and political rights and economic and socio-cultural rights are often violated within/by the family, religious and caste based institutions, market, state, and supra-state institutions and are relevant for the well being of women and other marginalised groups, including us as individuals.

\* The term inalienable in the context of human rights means that the rights of one individual are incapable of being repudiated or transferred to another. The principle of indivisibility means that all rights are interrelated, equal in importance, and only if all the rights are guaranteed that an individual can live decently and in dignity. When one says that human rights are intrinsic in nature, it means that it is of value by itself, and not just for achieving some other goals. Adapted from <http://www.hrsolidarity.net/mainfile.php/1995vol05no02/92/>



## INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS (ICCPR)



- Right to life (art 6)
- Prohibition against torture (art 7)
- Prohibition against slavery (art 8)
- Prohibition against arbitrary arrest (art 10)
- Prohibition against imprisonment for not fulfilling a contract (art 11)
- Freedom of movement and residence (art 12)
- Limitations on expulsion of aliens legally residing (art 13)
- Equality before courts and tribunals (art 14)
- Prohibition against use of retroactive penal laws (art 15)
- Right to be recognized as a person before law (art 16)
- Prohibition against arbitrary or unlawful interference in family, one's honour (art 17)
- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (art 18)
- Freedom of opinion and expression (art 19)
- Prohibition by law of any propaganda for war or any national, racial or religious hatred (art 20)
- The right of peaceful assembly (art 23)
- The protection of the family (art 23)
- The rights of children (art 24)
- The right of every citizen to take part in the conduct of public affairs, to vote and to be elected, to access public service (art 25)
- Equality before law and equal protection of the law (art 26)
- Protection of the rights of ethnic, religious and ethnic minorities (art 27)

Source: <http://beta.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties/1980/23.html>

## INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS (ICESCR)

Besides the preamble, the Covenant contains five parts. Part 1, contains Article 1, dealing with the right of self determination. This article is identical to Article 1, of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Part II, contains articles 2-5 that are applicable to all the substantive provision of the covenant. Part III contains Articles 6-15 dealing with specific rights. These rights are:

- The right to work (art 6)
- The right to fair conditions of employment (art 7)
- The right to join and form trade unions (art 8)
- The right to social security (art 9)
- The right to protection of the family (art 10)
- The right to an adequate standard of living (art 11)
- The right to health (art 12)
- The right to education (art 13)
- The right to culture (art 15)
- Part IV and V deal with a system of supervision and modalities concerning ratification and entry into the force of the Covenant.

129 State parties have ratified the Covenant upto 1995. Thus, despite the scepticism surrounding its content, universal recognition has been accorded to it.

Source: [http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a\\_ceschr.htm](http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ceschr.htm)



### Objectives

- To explore different forms of violations of rights of women.
- To familiarise the participants with the articles of CEDAW.
- To explore the relationship between violations faced by women and the articles of the CEDAW and the Declaration on Elimination of Violence against women.
- To ascertain the bearing which violations of women's rights have on their well-being.

### Materials

- Charts/transparent sheets
- Handout 5.2.1 on the CEDAW.
- Handout 5.2.2 on the Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women.
- Case studies - 2.2.2, 3,4 and 2.2.5 of Module 2, Session 2.
- 7-8 desks and hammers.

### Time

Three hours

### Methodology

1. Explain the need for a separate Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1981. That is, while the ICCPR, and ICESCR affirm that there should not be discrimination on grounds of sex in the enforcement of human rights, it was realized that ending discrimination against women calls for a separate women's convention.
2. The CEDAW contains 16 substantive articles and 14 institutional and procedural articles.
3. Distribute the Handout 5.2.1 on the first 16 substantive articles of the CEDAW, and ask each participant to read one article and clarify doubts if any.
4. Explain that the CEDAW does not deal with violence against women in a substantive manner, and hence the Declaration on Violence Against Women was framed in 1993 in the International Human Rights Conference held in Vienna. Distribute handout 5.2.2 on the Declaration.
5. Ask each participant to read one article of the Declaration and then clarify doubts if any in the large group if necessary.
6. Divide the participants into 7-8 teams of three each. Give each team a desk and a hammer.
7. Read out extracts- *one at a time*- from lives of Dalit women, caste women, Muslim women, and adivasi women from the North East, which illustrate different kinds of violations on marginalised women (same as used in session 2.2 alternative 2). Alternatively ask a cultural team to enact the different stories, one at a time.
8. After each extract is read out, ask the teams to identify which article or articles of the CEDAW and Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women are violated in the story. The team that beats the hammer first gets the first chance. The team is also asked to explain the consequence of violation on the well being of the woman/women in the case study.
9. If it is a wrong answer or incomplete answer (in case the violation also pertains to another article) give a chance to other teams.
10. Carry out the game till all the extracts of life stories have been covered.  
Sum up stating that all women experience violations of their rights, but the forms vary. Women from marginalised economic and social backgrounds however find it more difficult to access legal redress.

## THE UN CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

CEDAW (1979) is an international law which sets out in detail both what is seen as discrimination against women and what has to be done to eliminate the discrimination. Women's rights are human rights and if a woman is denied the same right as a man, the women's rights are violated.

### PART I

*Defines what discrimination is and what needs to be done*

#### Article 1

*Definition of Discrimination Against Women:* Any distinction, exclusion or restriction – intentional or unintentional – made on the basis of sex is discrimination.

#### Article 2

*Obligations of State Parties to the Convention:* States are required to guarantee equality via the constitution and administrative and legal measures.

#### Article 3

*Obligation to Take Measures for Ensuring Equality Between Women and Men:* State parties have to develop programmes and measures to advance the status of women.

#### Article 4

*Obligation to Take Positive Measures:* State parties should make more use of positive action to promote equality. Examples of positive action are preferential treatment of women or quotas for women to make women more involved in education, in economic and political life and in employment.

#### Article 5

*Eliminate Prejudices and Stereotyping of Sex Roles:* State Parties should work to change cultural patterns of conduct which places either of the sexes as inferior or superior.

#### Article 6

*Stop All Forms of Trafficking and Exploitation of Women:* This article obligates State parties to suppress all forms of trafficking in women. For example sex tourism, the recruitment of labour from developing countries to work in developed countries, organised marriage between women from developing countries and foreign nationals.

### PART II

*Obligations of the State regarding the protection of women's rights in political life and public life*

#### Article 7

*Elimination of Discrimination in Political and Public Life:* Women have the right to participate in public and political life at 11 levels. This includes the right to vote and contest in all elections and to decide upon governmental programmes and policies.

#### *Article 8*

*Equal Participation of Women at the International Level:* Women have the right to represent their government and participate in the work of international organisations.

#### *Article 9*

*Equal Right to Nationality:* Women have the right acquire, change or keep their nationality. A woman's nationality shall not be affected due to marriage or change in the husband's nationality during marriage.

### **PART III**

#### *Elimination of discrimination against women in specific fields*

#### *Article 10*

*Elimination of Discrimination in Education:* Girls have the same opportunities as boys to go to school. Those girls and women who have dropped out of school should be offered special programmes instead.

#### *Article 11*

*Equal Right to Employment and Elimination of Discrimination in Employment:* Women have equal right to employment as men. Discrimination in employment has to be eliminated. For example is it not allowed to pay women less than men if they do the same work or equal work or to discriminate a women on the basis of marriage or maternity.

#### *Article 12*

*Equal Access to Health Care:* Women have equal right as men to access health care services. This also includes family planning services

and advice. Women should also have special service in connection with pregnancy and childbirth.

#### *Article 13*

*Elimination of Discrimination in Social and Economic Benefits:* Women have the right to family benefits, to bank loans, to take part in sports and all aspects of cultural life.

#### *Article 14*

*Protection of Rural Women:* Women have the right to access land, credits, education and training, to health and social services. Rural women also have the right to participate in public and political life and in development planning.

### **PART IV**

#### *Equality before the law*

#### *Article 15*

*Equality With Men Before the Law and in Civil Matters:* Women and men have equality before the law. Areas where women traditionally have been discriminated against – conclusion of contracts in their names, handling of property, freedom to travel and to choose a home – are important to monitor.

*Article 16 : Elimination of Discrimination in Matters Relating to Marriage and Family Relations:* Women have the right to choose a spouse, to marry voluntary, to decide freely the number and spacing of children and to get family planning advice.



## UTILISATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

### METHODOLOGY

#### Objectives

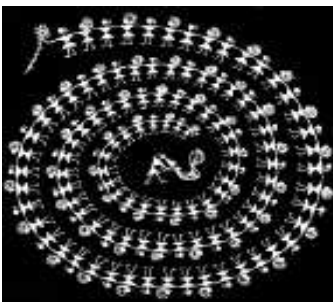
- To familiarise the participants with key human rights terminologies.
- To acquaint the participants with the treaties the Indian government has acceded, signed and ratified.
- To familiarise the participants with mechanisms for redressal using human rights treaties.
- To explore role of NGOs in making national governments accountable using human rights instruments.

#### Materials

- Charts/transparent sheets
- Hand outs 5.3.1 to 5.3.7
- Questions for group discussion

#### Time

Two hours



#### Alternative 1

1. Ask a team of eight participants to volunteer (before the session) for facilitating a session on key human rights terminologies including treaty adoption, coming into force, ratification, signature, accession, succession, reservation/declaration and optional protocols.
2. Give them Handout 5.3.1 to facilitate preparation, and request them to prepare a chart on the same.
3. Invite the team to facilitate the session on clarification of terminologies using any method that they choose. Ask the eight members to wrap up by putting up a chart on each of the term in big letters that can be read by all.
5. Divide the participants into three groups and give them Handouts 5.3.2 to 5.3.6.
6. The task of each group is to analyse:
  - Whether the Indian government has signed, ratified or acceded/succeeded ICCPR, ICESCR and the CEDAW (Handout 5.3.2, 5.3.3 and 5.3.6).
  - Whether the Indian government has signed, ratified or acceded/succeeded the optional protocols as relevant to that treaty (Handout 5.3.5 and 5.3.6).
  - The reservations and declarations the Indian government has placed on ICCPR, ICESCR and the CEDAW (5.3.4 and 5.3.7).
  - The implications of the Indian government's response for human rights and women's rights.
  - The role that NGOs and other civil society groups can play at the international and national level to strengthen accountability of Indian government to these treaties.
7. Ask each group to present their findings on one Convention and the others to comment on additional points and disagreements.
8. Sum up key points on Indian government and international treaties (Handout 5.3.8, section 2), international treaties and officially accorded role of NGOs (Handout 5.3.8, section 1), and what NGOs can do to use and expand the space available to further women's rights (Hand out 5.3.8, section 3).

### Materials

- *Charts/transparent sheets*
- *Handouts 5.3.1 to 5.3.8*
- *Questions for group discussion*
- *Three computers with internet connection*

### Time

*Two hours 30 Minutes*



### *Alternative 2*

*Step 1 to 4 same as in Alternative 1.*

5. Divide the participants into three groups, and ask each group looking into only one of the three treaties: ICCPR, ICESCR and the CEDAW. Given them the relevant websites, and three computers with internet connections. Their task is to download information from the website, and answer the same questions as in step 5 of Alternative 1.
6. Following the presentation by the participants, the resource person adds any points missed, and summarises the key discussion points. Handouts are given to the participants in the end with the caution that the information on the position of each country vis a vis the treaties may change with time, and they check the relevant websites periodically.
7. Ask each group to present their findings, and request others to comment on additional points and disagreements.
8. Sum up key points on Indian government and international treaties (Handout 5.3.8, section 2), international treaties and officially accorded role of NGOs (Handout 5.3.8, section 1), and what NGOs can do to use and expand the space available to further women's rights (Handout 5.3.8, section 3).

## KEY HUMAN RIGHTS TERMINOLOGIES

*Treaties:* Treaties are agreements signed between states defining their mandate for the protection of human rights. These agreements are normally called Covenants (e.g ICCPR, ICESCR) or Conventions (e.g Women's CEDAW). The United Nations and its specialised agencies provide the forum for drafting most multilateral treaties. Representatives of (need not be all) governments or expert bodies appointed for that purpose prepare drafts of treaties.

*Adoption of treaty.* A treaty is adopted when the representatives of the government appointed for drafting the treaty arrive at a consensus.

*Coming into force of a treaty:* Most treaties do not come into force immediately after their adoption. Treaties stipulate when they will come into force, called 'entry into force'.

*Ratification of a treaty:* The ratification of a treaty is the expression of the acceptance of the government of the obligation of the treaty; i.e. if the state has become party to the treaty. A government may ratify a treaty only after it has modified its law to bring them in conformity with the treaty.

*Signature of a treaty:* The signature of a treaty is an expression of the intention to ratify the treaty.

*Accede to a treaty:* A state is said to accede to a treaty when it becomes party to a treaty (ratified) that has already come into force.

*Reservation to a treaty:* While signing, ratifying or acceding to a treaty a state may express 'reservations' about certain provisions of that treaty, provided the reservation is overall compatible with the object and purpose of the treaty.

*Treaty succession:* The principle of automatic succession to treaties applies to new governments that have come into power, in instances where previous governments have signed, ratified or acceded to treaties.

*Optional protocol:* The optional protocol is a document that deals with subsidiary matters relating to a treaty. States are given an option not to subject themselves to the optional protocol. However, at times signing and ratifying optional protocols is essential to hold governments accountable.

- The ICCPR contains an optional protocol that allows the Human Rights Committee to consider complaints from individuals claiming violations of rights contained in the Covenant. It contains a second optional protocol to that aims at abolition of the death penalty.
- There is a proposal for drafting of an optional protocol on Covenant on ICESCR making it possible for instituting a complaint mechanism by which individuals and groups can file a complaint when states violate rights contained in the Covenant. It is not as yet approved.
- The CEDAW contains an optional protocol that allows the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

Against Women to receive and consider applications from individuals or groups in the jurisdiction of the state that has ratified the optional protocol.

*Treaty bodies:* Treaty bodies monitor the implementation of treaty obligations by state parties. The Human Rights Committees monitors the implementation of ICCPR, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights monitors the implementation of ICESCR, and the Committee on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women monitors the implementation of treaty obligations under the CEDAW.

Source: Ravindran, D. J (1998), *Human Rights Praxis: A Resource Book for Study, Action and Reflection*, Chennai: Earthworm Books.

### **Essential Reading for Facilitators**

*Division for the Advancement of Women, Declarations, Reservations and Objections to CEDAW, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations*  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reservations-country.htm>.

<http://www.dhchr.org/english/countries/ratification/3.htm>,

Ravindran, D. J (1998), *Human Rights Praxis: A Resource Book for Study, Action and Reflection*, Chennai: Earthworm Books.



**INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS (ICCPR)****New York, 16 December 1966:**

Signature, ratification, accession and succession status

**Last update:** 15 September 2005.**Entry into force:** 23 March 1976, in accordance with article 49 , for all provisions except those of article 41; 28 March 1979 for the provisions of article 41 (Human Rights Committee), in accordance with paragraph 2 of the said article 41.**Registration:** 23 March 1976, No. 14668.**Status:** Signatories: 67 ,Parties: 154.**Text:** United Nations, *Treaty Series* , vol. 999, p. 171 and vol. 1057, p. 407 (procès-verbal of rectification of the authentic Spanish text); depositary notification C.N.782.2001.TREATIES-6 of 5 October 2001 [Proposal of correction to the original of the Covenant (Chinese authentic text)] and C.N.8.2002.TREATIES-1 of 3 January 2002 [Rectification of the original of the Covenant (Chinese authentic text)].**Note:** The Covenant was opened for signature at New York on 19 December 1966.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Ratification, Accession (a), Succession (d)</b>
Afghanistan		24 Jan 1983 a
Bangladesh		6 Sep 2000 a
India		10 Apr 1979 a
Nepal		14 May 1991 a
Sri Lanka		11 Jun 1980 a

Source: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries/ratification/4.htm> Downloaded October 7th, 2005

**INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS****New York 16 December 1966-****Signature, Ratification, Accession, Succession Status**

**Last update:** 15 September 2005  
**Entry into force:** 3 January 1976, in accordance with article 27.  
**Registration:** 3 January 1976, No. 14531.  
**Status:** Signatories: 66, Parties: 151.  
**Text:** United Nations, *Treaty Series* , vol. 993, p. 3 ; depositary notification C.N.781.2001.TREATIES-6 of 5 October 2001 [Proposal of correction to the original of the Covenant (Chinese authentic text) and C.N.7.2002.TREATIES-1 of 3 January 2002 [Rectification of the original of the Covenant (Chinese authentic text)].

**Note:** The Covenant was opened for signature at New York on 19 December 1966.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Ratification, Accession (a), Succession (d)</b>
Afghanistan		24 Jan 1983 a
Bangladesh		5 Oct 1998 a
India		10 Apr 1979 a
Nepal		14 May 1991 a
Pakistan		3 Nov 2004 .
Sri Lanka		11 Jun 1980 a
Thailand		5 Sep 1999 a

Source: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries/ratification/3.htm> downloaded October 7th, 2005

**DECLARATIONS - INDIA ON ICESCR AND ICCPR:**

- I. With reference to Article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Government of the Republic of India declares that the words 'the right of self-determination' appearing in [this article] apply only to the peoples under foreign domination and that these words do not apply to sovereign independent States or to a section of a people or nation—which is the essence of national integrity.
- II. With reference to Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Government of the Republic of India takes the position that the provisions of the article shall be so applied as to be in consonance with the provisions of clauses (3) to (7) of article 22 of the Constitution of India. Further under the Indian Legal System, there is no enforceable right to compensation for persons claiming to be victims of unlawful arrest or detention against the State.
- III. With respect to article 13 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Government of the Republic of India reserves its right to apply its law relating to foreigners.
- IV. With reference to Articles 4 and 8 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Government of the Republic of India declares that the provisions of the said [article] shall be so applied as to be in

conformity with the provisions of article 19 of the Constitution of India.

- V. With reference to Article 7 (c) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Government of the Republic of India declares that the provisions of the said article shall be so applied as to be in conformity with the provisions of article 16(4) of the Constitution of India.”

Source: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries/ratification/3.htm>. Downloaded October 7th, 2005



**CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN  
NEW YORK, 18 DECEMBER 1979: SIGNATURE, RATIFICATION, ACCESSION AND SUCCESSION**

**Last update:** 15 September 2005.  
**Entry into force:** 3 September 1981, in accordance with article 27 (1).  
**Registration:** 3 September 1981, No. 20378.  
**Status:** Signatories: 98 ,Parties: 180.  
**Text:** United Nations, *Treaty Series* , vol. 1249, p. 13 .

**Note:** The Convention was opened for signature at the United Nations Headquarters on 1 March 1980.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Ratification, Accession (a), Succession (d)</b>
Afghanistan	14 Aug 1980	5 Mar 2003
Bangladesh		6 Nov 1984 a
Bhutan	17 Jul 1980	31 Aug 1981
India	30 Jul 1980	9 Jul 1993
Indonesia	29 Jul 1980	13 Sep 1984
Malaysia		5 Jul 1995 a
Nepal	5 Feb 1991	22 Apr 1991
Pakistan		12 Mar 1996 a
Philippines	15 Jul 1980	5 Aug 1981
Sri Lanka	17 Jul 1980	5 Oct 1981
Thailand		9 Aug 1985 a



## INDIA - DECLARATIONS AND RESERVATION

Made upon signature and confirmed upon ratification of the CEDAW

### *Declarations:*

- i) With regard to articles 5 (a) and 16 (1) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Government of the Republic of India declares that it shall abide by and ensure these provisions in conformity with its policy of non-interference in the personal affairs of any Community without its initiative and consent.
- ii) With regard to article 16 (2) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Government of the Republic of India declares that though in principle it fully supports the principle of compulsory registration of marriages, it is not practical in a vast country like India with its variety of customs, religions and level of literacy.

### **Reservation:**

With regard to article 29 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Government of the Republic of India declares that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of this article.

Source: [http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries/ratification/8\\_1.htm](http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries/ratification/8_1.htm)  
Downloaded October 7th, 2005



## INDIAN GOVERNMENT, NGOs, AND TREATIES

### Indian government, and ICCPR, ICESCR, and Women's Convention

1. The Indian government has ratified the ICESCR and acceded the ICCPR on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1979, and it has ratified the CEDAW on the 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1993. However, it has not signed any of the optional protocols pertaining to ICCPR or Women's Convention. Which means that treaty bodies cannot consider complaints from individuals, NGOs or women's groups that a particular article has been violated
2. The Indian government has declared that it cannot abide by Article 5 (a) and 16 (1) of the CEDAW (pertaining to modification of socio cultural practices and marriage and family matters) as it clashes with its principle of non-interference in personal affairs of a community without its consent. It has also declared that it cannot abide by Article 16 (2) on compulsory registration of marriage stating that it cannot be implemented. Without endorsing compulsory registration of marriages, issues like struggles against bigamy and polygamy become difficult. Lastly, it has placed a reservation against Article 29, paragraph 1 which empowers the International Court of Justice to pass judgments in the case of two states not agreeing upon interpretation or application of the Women's Convention
3. The Indian government has declared that it cannot abide by Article 1 of the ICCPR (right to self determination of citizens), Article 9 (prohibition against arbitrary arrest or detention, compensation for persons claiming to be victims of unlawful arrest or detention) which may go against part of its Constitution and the Indian legal

system, and Article 13 (prohibition of arbitrary expulsion of aliens) as it reserves its rights to apply its laws relating to foreigners.

4. The Indian government has declared that it cannot abide by Article 1 of the ICESCR (right to self determination of citizens), and it can apply 4, 7c (just and favourable conditions of work) and 8 (right to form trade unions and right to strike) only to the extent that it is in conformity with the Constitution of India

### NGOs and their official space

1. NGOs, ICCPR and Women's Convention: There is no formal procedure for NGOs to submit reports to Human Rights Committee (ICCPR) or the Women's Convention. However, informally NGOs can and do produce shadow reports whenever the treaty monitoring bodies meet and submit it to the monitoring bodies or individual members. Based on both government reports and these informal reports, the treaty monitoring bodies pass general comments. They can admit complaints from another state or through individual communications only when the country has not placed reservation on Articles permitting this and signed optional protocols respectively.
2. NGOs and ICESCR: Since the eighth session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the first afternoon of each of the Committee's sessions is set aside to hear the views of NGOs on the reports under consideration during that session. In reality only handful of NGOs participate in this session.

### **Possible NGO strategies for accountability to women's human rights**

1. At the national level, press for removal of reservations and declarations placed by Indian government on the CEDAW, the ICESCR and the ICCPR.
2. At the national level, press for signing by the Indian government of optional protocols for the ICCPR and the CEDAW.
3. At the national level advocate for reconstituting laws in conformity with above treaties.
4. At an international level, press for the passing of optional protocol for the ICESCR by the United Nations by which individuals and groups can file a complaint when states violate rights contained in the Covenant.
5. Prepare alternative reports for submitting to Human Rights Committee, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Division for the Advancement of women, *Declarations, Reservations and Objections to CEDAW*, Department of Economic and social Affairs, United Nations <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reservations-country.htm>. Downloaded March 8th, 2005

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights, *Status of Ratifications of The Principal International Human Rights Treaties: As of 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2004*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, Geneva

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* New York 16 December 1966, (section on Declarations and Reservations),

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, Geneva, <http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries/ratification/3.htm>, downloaded March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005





What vision should inspire gender relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? A new world order that would embrace full equality of opportunity between women and men as a basic concept. It would also eliminate the prevailing disparities between men and women and create an enabling environment for the full flowering of the productive and creative potential of both the sexes.

This new world order would promote more sharing of work and experience between women and men in the workplace as well as in the household. It would respect women as essential agents of change and development and open many more doors to women to participate more equally in economic and political opportunities. And it would value the work and contribution of women in all fields on par with those of men, solely on merit, without making any distinction.

The new world order would thus put people-both women and men-clearly at the centre of all development process. Only then can human development become fully engendered.

Human Development Report 1995



MODULE 6

# GENDER, POVERTY AND RIGHTS



## Methodology

### Objectives

- To familiarise the participants with the two positions on whether attention to gender and poverty takes attention away from women's rights, and
- To enable the participants to arrive at their own position.

### Materials

- Chairs and bell for jury
- Charts
- Hand out 6.1.1

### Time

One hour



#### Alternative 1

1. Introduce the objective of the session.
2. Elaborate on the two positions listed below on the inter-linkages between gender, poverty and rights (use Handout 6.1.1)
  - The first is that poverty is feminised in much of the developing countries, and that donors and development agencies should focus on the inter-linkages between gender, women and poverty.
  - The second is that evidence on feminisation of poverty is weak, and that reducing gender issues to gender and poverty takes attention away from the broader issue of women's rights.
3. Divide the participants into three groups
  - The first group defending the first position in the context of India,
  - The second group defending the second position in the context of India, and
  - The third group comprising a jury<sup>1</sup> which will give its verdict after hearing both sides
4. The facilitator may share her position - that if the gender-specific causes of poverty are addressed, rather than symptoms, it is well possible to address gender and poverty issues, without compromising on women's rights.

#### Alternative 2

All steps same as Alternative 1. However, in Step 3, give leads to the debating groups (discussion points 2 or 3 Handout 6.1.1), and the jury (discussion point 4 of Handout 6.1.1).

#### Essential Reading for facilitator

- Jackson C. (1995), 'Rescuing Gender from the poverty Trap', *Gender Analysis in Development Series*, No. 10, Norwich: University of East Anglia School of Development Studies.
- Lockwood, M. and S. Baden (1995), 'Beyond the feminisation of poverty: gender aware poverty reduction', *Development and Gender in Brief*, Issue 2: Poverty Reduction Strategies.
- Murthy R.K. and L. Sankaran (2004), *Denial and Distress: Gender and Poverty in Asia*, Zed Books.

<sup>1</sup> The jury team will prepare a skit on any topic or come with a game to entertain the team when the other two groups are discussing.

**GENDER, POVERTY AND RIGHTS**

1. A key debate is whether conflating gender issues with poverty, deviates attention from women's rights.
2. One group argues, yes, conflating gender issues with poverty deviates attention from women's rights because:
  - This ignores the gender issues being faced by non-poor women, who also face violations of their rights.
  - The evidence that poverty is feminised is weak, in particular that a majority of women in the world are poor and that all women headed households are poorer than all male-headed households.
  - The World Bank and governments use the gender and poverty agenda in an instrumental way to target poor women and make use of their labour for economic growth, and this does not lead to their empowerment.
  - Policy makers have addressed only symptoms of women's poverty and not their causes.
  - There is a need for 'rescuing gender from the poverty trap'<sup>2</sup>.
3. The other group argues that it is important to address gender and poverty issues as:
  - A majority of women in developing countries are indeed poor.
  - Poverty is undeniably feminised as
    - Amongst poor, women headed households are poorer than male headed households,
    - There are more females in poor households than males,
    - Poverty is faced more acutely by women than men.
  - There are gender specific ways in which women slip into poverty like through divorce and desertion.
  - There are gender specific causes of poverty like lack of rights to land and housing, unequal wages, gender division of labour, unequal distribution of food, health and education, lack of control of women over their fertility, violence against women.
4. A possible consensus in the Indian context could be that conflating gender and poverty issues can deviate attention from women's rights only if the symptoms of women's poverty are addressed. If however the gender specific causes of women's poverty are addressed from a rights or empowerment perspective, and such campaigns are extended to women who are not presently poor, the gender and poverty agenda need not deflate attention from women's rights. At the grass roots level organisational strategies would have to be different so as to include non-poor women in campaigns and struggles on gender-specific causes of poverty, but only poor women (including those in non poor households facing discrimination in access to food and health care) in programmes on access to resources (like micro credit).

**Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup> Prepared using the three essential readings for facilitators for this session.

<sup>2</sup> Jackson, C., 1995. 'Rescuing gender from the poverty trap,' Gender Analysis in Development Series, no 10, University of East Anglia School of Development Studies, Norwich.





## BEYOND THE FEMINISATION OF POVERTY: GENDER-AWARE POVERTY REDUCTION

The importance of poverty reduction as a goal of development policy raises questions about the relationship between poverty and gender disadvantage. Some approaches to poverty reduction are ‘gender blind’; others confuse gender and poverty concerns. What is needed is gender awareness and institutional change in projects and programmes addressing poverty.

The World Bank’s New Poverty Agenda, presented in the 1990 **World Development Report** has come under considerable criticism, in part because of its gender-blindness. The promotion of labour-intensive employment ignores the fact that women already have too much work and often do not receive direct benefits from their long hours of labour. Public expenditure reviews tend to assume that, by redirecting spending towards basic services for the poor - e.g. primary education or reformed agricultural extension - men and women will benefit equally. This overlooks gender biases in the delivery of services. Where labour intensive growth has occurred, as in East and Southeast Asia, there have been significant reductions in poverty but the impact on gender equity is less clear. Labour markets remain highly discriminatory and women often get trapped in low-wage forms of work (Heyzer and Sen, 1994).

In contrast to this gender-neutral approach, is the widely held view that a ‘feminisation of poverty’ is underway, linked to a perceived rise in the incidence of female household headship (Buvinic, 1993). On this basis, it has been argued that: ‘Governments that wish to implement anti-poverty programmes with constrained budgets should seriously consider targeting female-maintained families’ (Buvinic and Gupta, 1994). Proposed measures include social assistance and child-

centred interventions, as well as public works programmes which target women, such as the PAIT programme in Peru and the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme in India. To date, few development programmes exclusively target female-headed households. One exception is a new scheme in Chile, providing urban female heads of household with employment training, housing, health care, childcare and legal aid services (Ibid).

While there does appear to be a rise in female headship in some countries, systematic data to verify this trend are not yet available and evidence of its association with poverty is inconsistent. Causes of female headship are political, economic, social and demographic - including conflict, migration, divorce, teenage pregnancy and widowhood - and the relative importance of different factors varies with the context. This shows that female-headed households are a very mixed category and underlines the danger of making a simple association between female headship and poverty. In most countries, specific sub-groups of female-headed households do tend to be concentrated among the very poor, but the character of these groups differs. In Latin America, female-headed households with dependent children are among the poorest while in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, widows appear particularly vulnerable.

*“‘Talking up’ the feminisation of poverty has limitations as a strategy for addressing gender inequality”*

‘Talking up’ the feminisation of poverty may be an effective way to attract more resources for women but has limitations as a strategy for

addressing gender inequality (Jackson, 1995). In some instances, resources targeted at women are ‘hijacked’ by men, as in credit schemes in Ghana and Bangladesh. Targeting resources at poor women may help project beneficiaries but the underlying causes of female poverty - deep-rooted inequalities in control over assets, pervasive gender discrimination in labour markets, and lack of voice in the power structures controlling resource allocation - remain unaddressed. More fundamentally, if only poor women are ‘deserving’, then gender discrimination in non-poor households may be overlooked. Discrimination against women and girls in India is often most extreme in wealthy households. This does not imply that poor women are ‘better off’. It does, however, caution against viewing gender issues solely through the lens of poverty.

An alternative view is that poverty means different things for men and women, i.e., that poverty is gendered. For example, land ownership is often taken as a measure of wealth, but in North India, where women move to their husband’s village on marriage, mobile property such as gold or enamel bowls is a more relevant measure of wealth for women (Jackson, 1995). Women and men also become impoverished through different routes. Divorce presents particular problems for women, even when it is sought as an escape from cruelty, since, unlike men, women gain access to many resources through marriage. Escaping poverty is also harder for women, due to gender inequalities from the household to the market, which reduce their range of income-earning options and the returns to their labour and education (Kabeer, 1995).

*“Poverty reduction initiatives provide an opportunity to push back the boundaries of what is permissible for women to do”*

The implication of this approach is that anti-poverty interventions should be gender-aware, both in needs identification and project design. Beyond the basic needs which form the focus of many anti-poverty interventions are a further set of ‘needs’ which arise from gender-specific constraints and which require innovative institutional practices to bridge the gap (Kabeer, 1995). For example, credit schemes which fail to recognise barriers to women’s participation, such as lack of collateral, inflexible procedures, and physical and social distance, usually fail to reach poor women. Improved outreach, the replacement of physical with social collateral through group formation and simplified procedures are examples of mechanisms to overcome these barriers (Ibid).

As Kabeer (1995) points out, simply providing resources is not enough. Poverty reduction initiatives provide an opportunity to push back the boundaries of what is permissible for women to do and for the transfer and acquisition of skills, such as literacy or financial management. There is also scope for building collective relationships which strengthen women’s bargaining power and for support to community action such as challenging corrupt local officials, or protesting against alcoholism and domestic violence (Ibid).

Institutional reforms to enable women’s participation and gender-aware planning are also needed at higher levels, where key economic policy decisions are made. Until policy-makers become accountable to poor women, gender equity in poverty reduction will remain elusive.

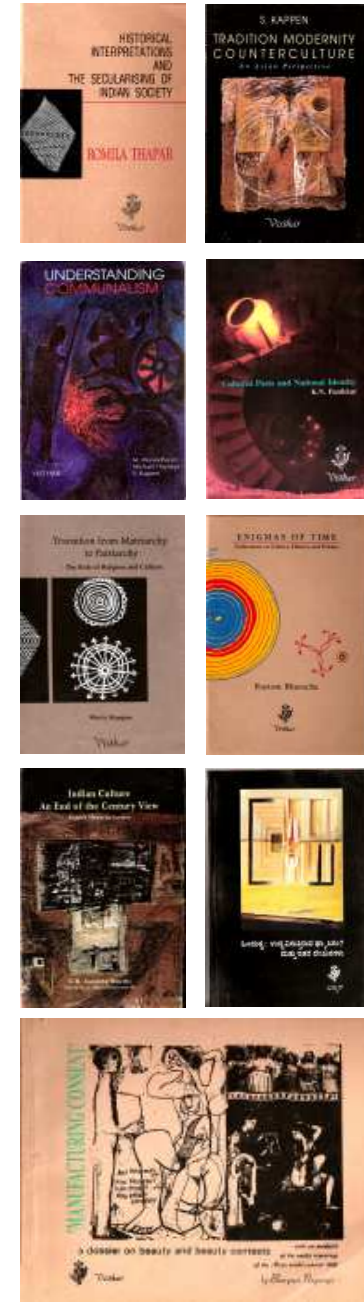
Source: Matthew Lockwood, University of Sussex Sally Baden, Institute of Development Studies, (1995) *Development and Gender in Brief*, Issue 2.

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- *Enigmas of Time: Reflections on Culture, History and Politics*, Rustom Barucha, 2000
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- *Rethinking Development*, Shobha Raghuram, 1996
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...And so a time will come when women and men all over the world  
will bring their gifts to the fire and look into each other's faces unafraid ...

*Quilt 2, AWHRC*