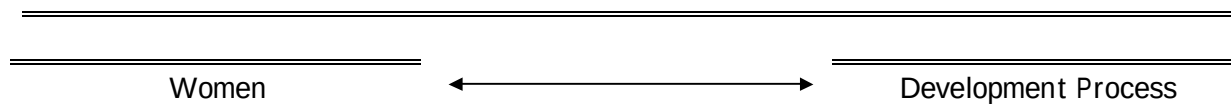


WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

NOTES FROM THE DPTP WORKSHOP HELD AT U.T.C. BANGALORE
ON SEPTEMBER 22, 1988



Do we understand
FULLY & SYSTEMATICALLY
the **INVOLVEMENT & IMPACT**
of the one on the other?

Mr.Fernandez initiated the workshop with the above question.

For example : Have we stopped to think what proportion of contribution the women make to the rural economy through their involvement in agricultural production, livestock management, etc.?

Similarly, have we stopped to think when we motivate a poor family to go in for a crossbred cow or a new variety of seed, of what impact this programme will have on the woman in the family?

To stop and reflect on these questions every time we initiate a new programme or evaluate an ongoing programme is important for some very simple and basic reasons :

For example : If women spend more time with livestock than men do, then who should we be involving in our Animal Husbandry training programmes, and are we doing it or not?

When we enthusiastically involve women in learning a new skill for a village industries programme are we providing her with a source of livelihood or are we increasing the work-load on an already overburdened person?

If we upgrade agricultural technology to reduce the quantum of work done by women in the fields are we doing her a favour or are we taking away her only opportunity to get out of the house and interact with other women?

There are no set answers to these questions. The outcomes may differ from situation to situation. To assume a fixed ideological position of 'this only' or 'that only' would be impractical. **BUT THE QUESTIONS WILL HAVE TO BE ASKED AND THE ANSWERS WILL HAVE TO BE GIVEN DUE CONSIDERATION WHILE UNDERTAKING ANY DEVELOPMENT MEASURE.**

An effort must be made to calculate the likely economic and non-economic opportunity costs to women from any programme intended to result in development.

What are some of the obstacles to a fuller understanding of women in development ?

- * Tradition : a woman's position has always been secondary and her views/ opinions/etc. are assumed to be of little consequence in any kind of decision-making.
- * Prejudices : Based on one's own experiences or based on what one has heard from others, certain assumptions are made regarding women, certain stereo-typing is made regarding their roles, which assigns them some fixed positions or capacities and denies them the possibility of change.
- * Poor vision : Examples would be :

Poor Development planning

- (i) Assuming that women-headed projects focus inadequately on women and are based on a real understanding of their requirements (whereas they may also be equally influenced by prejudices, biases, etc.)
- (ii) Making programmes for women only in health & nutrition, tailoring, etc., and leaving them out completely when it comes to agriculture, animal husbandry and other such areas even though their contribution accounts for much of the productivity of such programmes.

The above are some of the factors that inhibit the understanding of women in development and result in unfair and biased development planning.

The need for understanding women's involvement fully is because on it depends:

economic
growth

social justice
(equity)

project
efficiency

WE MUST :

Involving women only in certain types of programmes to the exclusion of others.

Move away from

Man versus woman syndrome.

Looking at the family as a comprehensive unit.

Move towards

Looking at women in the context of the family's social, economic and other activities.

While every field worker has at some time or the other complained that "Women do not attend meetings regularly", "Women do not show any interest in the programmes we suggest for their improvement" and so on, have we stopped to consider whether women have any time to incorporate a new programme into their daily schedule?

Both in order to understand who in the family should be the target of what kinds of development programmes, and to analyse who are the actual beneficiaries of any development effort, a framework for analysis was presented and discussed, attempting to take into account some non-quantifiable economic activities also, which add to human capital.

The Framework for Analysis is attached to this Note as Annexure I. Please see it at this point.
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Following the presentation, a case study was taken up for discussion in small groups (the Ulla-Ulla case study, available on request). An attempt was made to analyse the case study within the above framework. The case study clearly demonstrated how even top-level development planning failed to recognise women's role in the production system; consequently women's programmes followed the usual pattern and track, delinked from both need and practical considerations and reduced almost to an appendage, a ritual, a "necessary evil" if money had to be obtained for other programmes.

Next, there were presentations from Holalkere and Talavadi Projects.

Holalkere's paper - RMS-7 : The pains of processes (available on request) - had earlier been circulated to all participants. The project staff spoke about their initial difficulties in involving women, their present problems of keeping men from interfering in women's Sangha Meetings, and some of the strategies that they were using to overcome both the above. A major fact that emerged was the amount of time the staff spent in house visits and individual counselling sessions with the families - usually husbands - of women sangha members experiencing difficulty in persuading them to let them attend meetings or where the male members tended to accompany the women to sangha meetings.

Talavadi's paper (available on request) reflected some of our own prejudices and assumptions regarding women, and one main reaction (criticism to the paper was that while it had already been written up and circulated, atleast its oral presentation could have been modified to reflect some of the mornings discussions.)

The workshop ended with taking the following decisions :

- i) That the participants would go back and share the workshop proceedings and learnings with other staff on their projects.
- ii) That the framework for analysis would be used by each participant to analyse atleast two or three comprehensive activities on their projects. Eg. the sericulture programme from egg purchase to sale of cocoons and use of money earned, etc.
- iii) That future programmes planned on the projects would incorporate a sincere attempt to understand women's contributions, reflect women's priorities, secure women's involvement in appropriate areas and give women an equal access to the benefits accruing from the programmes.

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

ACTIVITY / TASK			PROPORTION OF TIME SPENT ON TASK BY						
Example			MALE ELDER	FEMALE ELDER	MALE ADULT	FEMALE ADULT	MALE CHILD	FEMALE CHILD	
<u>PRODUCTION RELATED :</u>									
Agriculture									
Land Preparation									
Seeding									
Weeding									
Harvesting									
Processing									
Other									
AND SO ON FOR EACH PRODUCTION RELATED ACTIVITY									
<u>MAINTENANCE & REPRODUCTION RELATED :</u>									
Fuel Collection									
Fetching Water									
Food Preparation									
Yard & House Cleaning									
Washing Clothes									
Kitchen Garden Maintenance									
Childcare									
Health care									
Other									
AND SO ON FOR EVERY SUCH ACTIVITY									
ACCESS TO		RESOURCES	CONTROL OVER		ACCESS TO		BENEFITS	CONTROL OVER	
MALE ADULT	FEMALE ADULT	EXAMPLE	MALE ADULT	FEMALE ADULT	MALE ADULT	FEMALE ADULT	EXAMPLE	MALE ADULT	FEMALE ADULT
		Land					Income		
		House					Education		
		Credit					Health Services		
		Etc.					Political Decision Making		
							Etc.		