5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The realization that past conventional development strategies have not only failed to meet expectations but have also negatively affected women in the developing countries, has stepped up the search for appropriate and responsive development interventions. As discussed in the paper, the shifts from the traditional perception of women, the diagnosis of and prescriptions for their needs have deepened our understanding of the factors and trends that influence the direction of development.

The reviews of activities initiated and promoted under the rubric of WID since the UN Decade for Women have provided much needed lessons not only into women’s practical gender needs and what constitute ‘universal’ strategic interests but also the importance of addressing both simultaneously. Similarly, it should be acknowledged that research findings and the work of grassroots activists have helped to fill the void that faced agencies and individuals who seek to move beyond gender awareness. Gender analysis framework, gender policy levels and process of empowerment are valuable tools provided by development agencies which could be refined through inter-agency collaboration, through feedback and exchange of experience. Equipped with these tools for gender analysis and incorporation of gender concerns at all cycles of project/program life, it is possible to avoid repeating past mistakes emanating from gender-blind, isolated and top-down interventions.

It is further recommended that efforts be stepped up to institutionalize gender through adoption of gender policy and training of agency staff. Support of women’s own initiatives to organize and empower themselves for participation and make a difference in the current wave of democratization and development of civil society would enable them to share in the decisions and actions for the creation of an equitable system. In this process, the role of social scientists in synchronizing intellectual pursuit and action-oriented, hands-on research and feedback for re-articulation of development issues cannot be over emphasized.
NOTES


2. Refer to issues and inter-relationships in the ensuing international conferences of Rio de Janeiro on Environment, Cairo on Population, Vienna on Human Rights, Kampala and Johannesburg on Peace, Copenhagen on Social Summit.

3. Personal observations and evaluation consultations on women’s projects, particularly income-generating activities in Africa during the 1980s.


5. Ibid.


8. Suzanne Williams et al. (1994). The OXFAM Gender Training Manual, Oxfam Publications, Oxford. Personal notes on NGO support to settlements and refugees. Until recently, UNHCR used to demand that women refugees be represented by male household heads and did not register women refugees.


11. Reference is made to the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; and DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) position papers on World Order and Gender Equity.

12. Note that these need to emanate from individuals, and groups of women during and after gender-awareness training, in which case the list may be longer.


25. Knowledge of forest products (indigenous plants) for processing hides and skins by a woman entrepreneur in Somaliland, elderly women’s knowledge of traditional medicines from leaves, roots, etc., for humans and animals are examples of opportunities that would be lost if women’s knowledge is ignored in development planning.

Fetenu Bekele: The Gender Dimension in Development Projects

29. Personal notes from field experience in Ethiopian projects.
REFERENCES


Fetenu Bekele: The Gender Dimension in Development Projects


ANNEX

Collection of Socio-economic Data on Rural Households:
Intra-household Gender Relations
of Production and Consumption

There is a need to collect general information on women's and men's roles and responsibilities within the various target groups: on-farm, off-farm and in the homestead. Both women and men need to be consulted on their respective water related tasks. Access and control, and gender relations of production (productive resources) and consumption, need to be looked into and used as a basis for planning interventions. Some of the key questions to ask (which need adjustment for specific farming systems and livelihood styles), adapted from an FAO document, could include the following:

Do women and men grow separate crops on separate fields, simultaneously or in rotation, or do they have complementary roles for the same crops?

Who traditionally owns or has use rights of the land? What are the inheritance laws and customs with respect to land ownership and use right?

Who is responsible for the provision of the production inputs (seeds, fertilizers, etc.) and who has control over the income obtained from the various crops? What are the norms and practices in establishing priorities for expenditure? How are decisions made about expenditure and/or savings?

Who has major responsibility for the following tasks per crop: land clearing, land preparation, choice of seeds, sowing and transplanting, choice of fertilizers and their application, weeding, choice of herbicides and their application, harvesting, threshing, transporting, storing, processing and marketing?

Who is responsible for the various tasks in and around the homestead, such as carrying water and fuelwood, caring for domestic animals, feeding and caring for the family, house construction and maintenance, construction of latrines, etc.?

Who is responsible for the provision of basic household requirements: food, clothing, housing, school expenses, medical expenses, ceremonial expenses (marriage, funerals, etc.)?

Who contributes to the family income, including off-farm employment, family farm labour, agricultural wage labour?

What percentage of households are de jure and de facto headed by women?
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