

# DEVELOPMENT THEORY AND GENDERED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

# BACKGROUND

- The development debate has advanced considerably since the United Nation's First Development Decade in the 1960s, which emphasized economic growth and the "trickle-down" approach as key to reducing poverty.
- The end of the 1970s ushered in the concern with gender relations in development.
- Since the mid 1980s there has been a growing consensus that sustainable development requires an understanding of both women's and men's roles and responsibilities within the community and their relations to each other. This has come to be known as the Gender and Development (GAD) approach.
- Mainstreaming women's needs and perspectives into all activities is one of the primary objectives of GAD.

# CONT.

- Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and relationships between women and men.
- Gender Equality refers to equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men. This involves the removal of discrimination and structural inequalities in access to resources, opportunities and resources, and the promotion of equal rights.
- Equality does not mean that women should be the same as men. Promoting equality recognizes that men and women have different roles and needs and takes these into account in development and planning and programming.

# THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT

- Three major theoretical approaches to development have dominated development thinking in the Third World countries from the 1950s.
  - 1) *Modernization theory* dominated in the 1950s and 1960s.
  - 2) *Underdevelopment and dependency theory* became the alternative during the late 1960s and 1970s.
  - 3) *Neo-liberalism*, which while not strictly a variant of development theory has had a strong and wide impact on both analysis and policy, most marked during the 1980s.

# CONT.

- ❖ Feminist movements in the West and in the Third World societies have been responsive to different issues facing women. Economic and Social issues have been of primary concern to feminists in the Third World societies.
- ❖ Beginning from the first-wave feminists during the first two decades of the twentieth century was largely the result of white middle class educated women (the suffragists won the vote for white women in most Western countries ).

# CONT.

- ❖ In the 1960s and 1970s, in the women's movement in the West, the term feminism came to symbolize the efforts to forge a collective identity of women (universalize) supposedly sharing similar experiences of oppression.
- ❖ Since 1980s, there is a talk of a third wave of feminism, which is given the name of postfeminism (This new feminism is more sensitive to local and diverse voices of feminism and rejects a universalistic perspective on a single feminist standpoint).

# CRITICS TO WESTERN FEMINISM

Western feminism's preoccupation with oppression poses two dilemmas for non-western women:

- 1) First, it asserts that the oppression of women cannot be eradicated by other political struggles; this oppression must be attacked on its own grounds by a women's movement (It places women first, and while not placing men necessarily in opposition to women, places their interests and demands outside the space of its own activity)
- 2) Second, although analysis of sexuality and oppression have sought to explain workplace sex - segmentation, unequal access to education and other material goods; its recent focus has been on issues like the representation of the body in pornography and films, the phallocentric (privileging the masculine) nature of western knowledge, the violence to and invasion of women's bodies in the family, in workplace and on the street, control of women bodies by the medical, scientific and legal profession.

# UN AGENCIES & THIRD WORLD

- ❖ A number of UN agencies, like World Bank Group, International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), which have emerged during post second world-war period are dictating and determining the development policies and programmes directly or indirectly in the Third World Countries.
- ❖ Although most of the countries of the world are members of IMF, voting power in the IMF is determined by the size of a member's contribution with the United States casting about one-fourth of the total.
- ❖ The main problems facing the fund have been persistent deficit in the balance of payment of most Third World Countries. The situation is critical because many countries especially the Third World Countries usually borrow the money from the IMF to make their annual payments to private and public banks and loan agencies on the principal and interest owed on outstanding loans.

## **WID (WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT)**

- In recent years, much ILO activity has been directed towards the underdeveloped areas of the developing countries of the world for improving working and living condition for millions of workers and competitive disadvantage as far as labour costs are concerned.
- Out of all these bodies of UN, the World Bank Group in particular have been paying increasing attention to gender issues in their work plan of regions, **WID** (Women in Development) being included among areas of special emphasis in the Third World Countries.
- Within the various bodies of the UN, Women in Development sought to make ‘women’ visible (*from being invisible workforce*) as a category in development research and policy.

# CONT.

- The ‘welfare’ approach was the earliest (Pre-Women in Development) approach to be concerned with women in developing countries during the 1950s and 1960s.
- This approach, mainly, focused on the ‘reproductive’ role of women and thus sought to meet the practical gender needs through food aid, supplementary nutrition and family planning etc. [Even today, this approach is the most popular one in the Third World Countries, though theoretically it is claimed that they have moved from ‘welfare’ to ‘development’ to ‘empowerment’]

## **“WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT” & “GENDER”**

- WID was applied to actions designed to ensure that women benefited, or at least did not suffer, from development efforts (to take a broader view of the differences in behaviour expected of women and men, seeking their causes and their consequences for economic and human resource development).
- The first working group of the Bank’s Staff Association, formed in 1972, focused on the status of women in the Bank (To discuss the concerns of female staff, the group met periodically).

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- During the second half of the 1980s, the Bank formally increased its resources and attention devoted to gender-related issues. Basic themes already established (like mainstreaming, efficiency, poverty alleviation, equity choice of key sectors, and educations link to fertility).
- Recent developments on participatory approaches to development and on the use of social assessments: 1) Promotion of participatory approaches to involve women as well as men in project design and implementation, in poverty assessments, and in proposed social assessments; 2) Increased attention to gender in the financial services, natural resource management, water and sanitation, and urban sectors.

# MODERNIZATION THEORY AND FEMINIST AGENDA

- In the transition from ‘tradition’ to ‘modern’ societies, it was believed that modernization would be emancipatory for women as industrialization, technology and modern values would undermine the patriarchy of traditional society giving women increased access to economic resources (Jaquette, 1982).
- In general, modernization theory emphasizes and approves of the trend towards Western capitalist modernity. It is argued that if modernization theory were followed in the Third World, Third World societies would catch up with the West.

# CONT.

- Between the 1960s and 1970s, the feminist movements gained momentum and the research done by women scholars clearly pointed out that the so called modernization theory of development promoted by the development agencies had not benefited the women and in some cases had adverse effect on the women in the Third World.
- Women had not been given access to new productive opportunities; technology had not liberated them from domestic drudgery; gender-neutral outcomes had not been led by market forces; in spite of the forces of modernization, prejudice and preconceptions about women persisted in society (Kabeer, 1996:19).

# CRITIQUE OF MODERNISATION

- ❖ Development Project largely benefited men, often at the expense of women, displacing women from their traditional productive functions and diminishing the power, status and income they had previously enjoyed (Moser, 1993) (*they are merely a house-wife*).
- ❖ Development planners ignored women's productive activities partly because national accounting ignored much of women's work within the household and subsistence economy, assuming them to be housewives, credit and other forms of assistance to men (Rogers, 1980).
- By the modernization model, the modern economy being promoted by development planners had brought new resources and opportunities to men, but left women on the margin of development with the result that the productivity, attitude and outlook of men and women begin to diverge - men become familiar with modern equipment and learn to adapt themselves to modern ways of life, while women continue in the old ways (Boserup, 1970).

## CONT.

- ❖ It was argued that the process of economic modernization marginalized women economically and socially and increased their dependence on men (Boserup, 1970).
- ❖ Women's development projects were often ghettoized leaving the majority to cater for men (Waylen, 1996:38).
- ❖ The failure of modernization to benefit women was attributed to a variety of factors reflecting this different cultural context.
- ❖ For example, in female farming systems in the Third World, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, women had been deprived of access to training, land rights, education and technology by colonial and post-colonial administrators whose biased perceptions led them to favor male farmers.

## POLICY PROPOSALS EMERGED FROM THE WID CRITICS

- ❖ The solution to equality was observed as widening access to factors such as tools, technology and education.
- ❖ Women had to be integrated into development more effectively and not allow it to pass them by. This has been characterized as an “equity approach”.
- ❖ The ‘*equity approach*’ acknowledged women’s productive as well as reproductive role (Buvinic, 1983).
- It argued that women had to be brought into the development process through access to employment and the market place (mainstreaming them).
- This approach placed great emphasis on the wider question of equity and on the need to reduce inequality between men and women (it required a redistribution of resources throughout the development process ).

## GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN UNDERDEVELOPMENT THEORY

- ❖ Underdevelopment theory was developed, in part as a direct challenge to modernization theory.  
Underdevelopment theory arose as much as reaction to classical Marxism as from deeply held objections to modernization theory.
- ❖ Towards the end of 1970s an “anti-poverty” emphasis emerged as the second WID approach - This was mainly, because the existing projects had ignored their needs and women generally played the important role in fulfilling basic needs within the household.

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- ❖ This anti-poverty approach stressed income generating projects for poor women often ignoring their reproductive roles and their interconnection with productive roles and without the emphasis on increasing women's autonomy which was implied in the “equity approach” (Waylen, 1996).
  
- ❖ Feminist academics writing from a dependency theory (differed fundamentally with the WID critics of liberal feminists ): They argued that the process of modernization and the spread of capitalism was not an inherently beneficial one; rather, on the contrary, it involved widespread exploitation and the exploitation of women, within this, took on particular forms.

## GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (GAD).

- ❖ In the Third World context, concept of reproduction and domestic labor were observed to take on particular meaning: Greater emphasis was placed on the household, the role of gender relations within it and the link between the household as an economic unit and the global economy. This approach has become known as gender and development (GAD).
- ❖ GAD tackles the question of inequalities in power and looks to empowerment of all fields.
- ❖ The green revolution in India (with the introduction of new technique such as high yielding seeds and fertilizers) altered the class position of different peasant households and the amount of productive labor undertaken by different groups of women both as unpaid labor within the household and as paid labor outside of it (Agarwal, 1986).

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- The GAD approach acknowledges that to address women's concerns and needs, development assistance must take account of both women's and men's roles and responsibilities within the community and their relationship to each other. It requires the active participation of men as well as women in order to raise the status of women and bring about sustainable development.
- The GAD approach is both strategic and practical, and starts with an examination of issues of power, decision making, work allocation and ownership and control of resources.

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- ❖ Women's participation was crucial to the success of manufacturing industry, the “engine” of Korea's economic development (Park, 1993: 132).
- ❖ MNCs employ female labor, capitalizing on particular notions of skill with the payment of lower wages to women as well as transforming systems of outworking and household production (Elson and Pearson, 1981).
- ❖ Women's labor has played a crucial role in the new international division of labor and the global accumulation of capital.

## **NEO-LIBERALISM AND THE EFFICIENCY APPROACH OF WID**

- ❖ Neo-liberalism and the policy prescriptions has eclipsed both modernization and underdevelopment theory and dominated development thinking since the early 1980s for widespread implementation of free market policies and the nature of much industrial production in the Third World countries.
- ❖ While appearing gender neutral, the theories have implicit within them an assumption of certain gender relations and particular roles for women (Waylen, 1986).
- ❖ Despite talking of gender free individuals as the basic unit of analysis, the assumption is that women are subsumed within the household providing important reproductive services, leaving men to be the individuals and head of households who enter the free market and the public sphere.

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- ❖ The major policy prescription following from this kind of analysis is the implementation of free market policies and structural adjustment.
- ❖ Structural adjustment programs have particular implications for different groups of women in the Third World countries, because, among others, privatization of state enterprises and the reduction in the size of state bureaucracies often make a reduction in employment opportunities for many middle class professional women who often form a large portion of teachers, social workers and nurses.

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- With the predominance of the third variant of WID, the '*efficiency approach*' - attention has shifted towards development, ensuring that development plans are made more efficient and effective through women's economic contribution - It is argued that there is now a new equation: *Women + Production = efficiency* (Kabeer, 1996).
- In view of growing economic crisis in the Third World, Rogers (1980) suggested that continued neglect of women's productivity was a costly mistake that planners could no longer afford to make.
- Gender-specific occupational segregation with concentration of men in higher-level jobs and women in lower ones is regarded as a stable and rigid phenomenon that exists in traditional as well as modern societies.
- Various studies underline the persistence of gender-segregated labour markets globally - Even within the same occupation, women are paid lower wages relative to men and male-female earnings are not well explained by gender differences in human capital endowments with the result that gender discrimination could be the possible explanation (Coppin, 1995; Hotchkiss and Moore, 1996).

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Although WID advocacy shifted the grounds for investing development resources in women from welfare to efficiency, or from need to merit, Boserup (1970) spoke directly to a market conception of merit claims:

- In its broader meaning, development can carry both negative as well as positive connotations - enriching a few, impoverishing the many.
- Development should not be measured by the volume of marketed goods or services alone but by the extent to which *human well being* is assured.
- Development plans and projects would not succeed unless women's potential and actual productive roles were recognized - the improvement of women's life was seen as a mechanism to achieve other development goals, such as population control rather than as a valuable end in it.

# GENDERED ANALYSIS BY A NEW SET OF FEMINIST ACADEMICS

- ❑ There is now a growing feeling that there is need to develop a Third World focus to understand the gender problem, like gender subordination, value of women's work, empowerment, feminist ideology, identity of women and others - with locally relevant concepts and theories taking into consideration the specification of different regions.
- ❑ By the NGO'85 conference at Nairobi in July 1985, about 22 activists, researchers and policy-makers prepared a document enunciating a Third World women's perspective on development, described as DAWN (Development Alternatives for a New Era)

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- DAWN pointed out that even within the first world there had always been those who had been marginalized in the process of market-led growth and whose dissonant voices had not been heard in the mainstream of the western feminist movement
- DAWN was of the view that equality with men who themselves suffered unemployment, poor work conditions, low wages and racism within the existing socio-economic structures did not seem an adequate or worthy goal (Kabeer, 1996:32).

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- Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD), a network of African researchers - They rejected the analysis and strategies of western women ‘who insisted on prioritizing problems of equality between the sexes as the fundamental issue facing all women and argued that the interests of men and women were opposed and mutually exclusive’ (AAWORD, 1982).
- The DAWN report suggests that they go beyond the discussion of empowerment as good for women to the discussion of empowerment as critical for building accountability into the functioning of the public realm - both and the state the institutions of civil society - thereby the possibility of their transformation along with the transformation of gender relations (DAWN, 1991).

# CONT.

DAWN, which have laid out their gendered analysis in a wider process of development and social change for the third world societies (Sen and Grown, 1987) - have criticized much of the WID and early GAD literature on several grounds.

- ❑ *First*, they homogenize women, treating them as a single unitary category ignoring difference.
- ❑ *Second*, Third World women are seen as the passive objects of policy, not agents of change in their own right (Mohanty, 1988).
- ❑ *Third*, as a corollary of the second, many of the policy prescriptions and projects are seen as primarily top-down ones imposed from above.

# CONT.

- DAWN, emphasize that development plans and project would be more efficient and effective through women's economic contribution - '*efficiency approach*' of WID: but there must be the “bottom-up” development approach through **active participation and leadership of women** in a rejection of the top-down imposition of development schemes.

## **IMPLICATION OF ‘EFFICIENCY APPROACH’ OF WID**

- Raising women’s education increases their efficiency as producers, by increasing their adoption of new technologies and their efficiency in using resources. It also shows the benefits of increasing women farmers’ access to agricultural extension, credit services and other productive inputs. (Saito et al., 1994)
- More equitable distribution of opportunities and resources between men and women leads more directly to higher economic growth and productivity (World Development Bank, 2000: 199).
- A progress report on the World Bank’s initiative for WID, which started during 1980s, focuses on increasing women productivity and income, because this is considered the best way to help women help themselves and contribute to economic performance, poverty reduction, slower population growth and environmental sustainability (World Bank, 1990 : 61)

- A new operation Policy directive, issued in April 1994, states that it is Bank's intention to reduce gender disparities and enhance women's participation in economic development by integrating gender issues into country specific strategies (World Bank, 1994 : 37).
- It was difficult for women to benefit from such programs since custom dictated that men were the head of the household. More direct efforts to ensure women's access to productive resources include recent land tilling programs to grant land rights to women.
- A study of the effect of networking schemes, such as group-based **micro credit**, suggests that these schemes have enormous potentials for reducing poverty and empowerment of women.
- The global movements of micro credit programmers (such as Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) have focused mostly on women through economic route with the “bottom up” approach of women's active involvement in the program.

# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT

- Women are seen as being closer to nature for their natural procreative function (Ortner, 1974 : 71); women are more dependent on nature by the virtue of sexual division of labor (gathering of fuel, fodder and wild foods and the growing of subsistence crops).
- Women are seen as being the most appropriate participants in environmental conservation as the main victims of environmental degradation and degradation of natural resources destroys the material basis on which women's indigenous knowledge of resources and processes is found and kept alive (Fernandes and Menon, 1987; Shiva, 1988; Kelkar and Nathan, 1991).
- The Rio Declaration (The UN Conference on Environment and Development at Rio 1992) at the Earth Summit also acknowledges that women have a vital role to play in environment management and development from which they have been historically excluded (Sharma, 2000).

# SUMMING UP

- In the last two decades, conflict over the alternative uses of local resources - water, land, river waters, marine resources and minor forest products - have given rise to a variety of community initiatives.
- Initiatives and proliferation of NGOs - poor peasant women are motivated for group action (such as JFM) as they regard these organizations as one of the only protection against their vulnerabilities as individuals at home, at work and in society.
- New directions have emerged in both analysis and policy of development plans and projects, particularly, by the Third World government with the predominance of the “efficiency approach” of WID through active involvement of Women’s into development plans and projects.
- New areas and forms of analysis are being explored. The “bottom-up” development schemes have entailed a vibrant civil society created through grassroots collective organization.

# **GENDER, ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

# BACKGROUND

- In 1985, the second UN Decade for Women Conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya.
- One of the recommendations of these workshops was to give more visibility to the practical relationships between women and their physical environment.
- Since the late 1980s, a myriad of studies has been published describing the role that women play in specific environmental sectors, such as water, energy, forests, human settlements and nature conservation.
- *Rachel Masika Gender, development and climate change (2002).*

## CONT.

- Several writers such as Braidotti et al (1994) and Agarwal (1998) argue that women are not a single homogenous group and that it is important to address the actual material relationships of different groups of women with nature and the environment.
- Determining factors are class and caste, ethnicity, kinship, age, country and socio-cultural affiliation.
- The current Gender, Environment and Development (GED) approach is not only concerned with women, but with the social construction of gender and the assignment of specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations to women and men.
- Gender was found to be a distinguishing factor in determining human relationships with the physical environment and sustainable development.

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- Access to and effective control over natural resources of good quality, such as land, water and forests, are important indicators of gender position. [The use and management of these resources is also differentiated by gender.]
- GED is an important coalition theme that can build bridges between the different movements and schools, and can develop into a major countervailing power (Braidotti et al 1994). This is also becoming clear at global level. In the preparatory processes for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 26 August-4 September 2002, women's organizations from all regions worked together to determine the 'Women's Action Agenda for a Peaceful and Healthy Planet'.

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- Women have less access to resources that would enhance their capacity to adapt to climate change—including land, credit, education etc. - making them vulnerable
- Vulnerability depends in large part on access to resources and assets (physical, financial, human, social, and natural) “The more assets, the less vulnerability”
- Gender inequality intersects with climate risks and vulnerabilities (HDR, 2007)
- It is widely acknowledged that the negative effects of climate change are likely to hit the poor/poorest the most. 60 % of the world’s poorest one billion people are women and girls. (*UNFPA 2008. State of World Population 2008*)

# CLIMATE CHANGE IS NOT GENDER NEUTRAL

- Climate change is a social issue - a social justice issue-and climate change is not gender neutral. It is well documented now that climate change exacerbates existing inequalities. This is both the case in times of so-called “natural” disaster—when immediate, widespread devastation sweeps a community, or a country, or a region, as the case may be—or when a climate process gradually alters the productivity of soil, the pattern of rainfall, generally the community’s ability to rely upon its natural resources. So existing social conditions are amplified by a change in the natural environment.

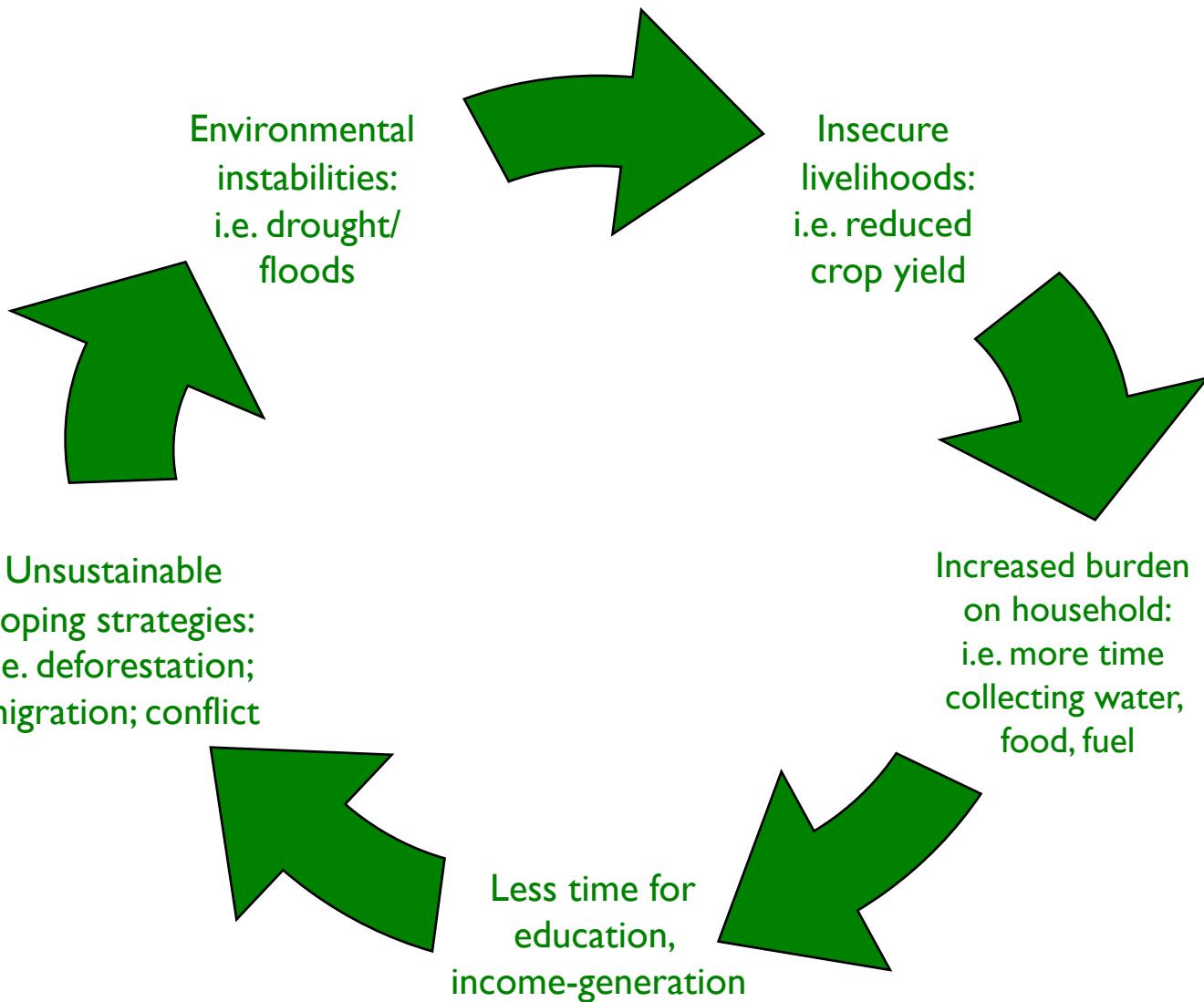
# GENDER INEQUALITIES REMAIN PERVERSIVE IN MOST OF THE WORLD

- ⦿ Of the 1.3 billion people living in the deepest levels poverty worldwide, the majority are women (~70%)
- ⦿ Women work 2/3<sup>rd</sup>'s of the world's hours
- ⦿ Women produce 1/2 the world's food; in rural areas, women produce 60-80% of staple crops
- ⦿ And yet, women earn only 10% of the world's income and own less than 2% of property

# CLIMATE CHANGE WORSENS GENDER INEQUITIES

- ◉ Feminization of poverty and gendered divisions of labor →  
clear differences in how climate change impacts women and men, and their respective capacities for coping
- ◉ Existing conditions and existing discrimination determine who is most impacted by “natural” disasters  
[And now, climate change threatens to worsen the state of gender equality]

# Climate Change Exacerbates Poverty



# CONT.

- Climate change only exacerbates the cycle of poverty with women.
- For example, women, who already spend hours collecting clean water and fuel and vegetation for their households are spending even more time doing these household tasks and are unable to further their education or have formal wage-earning jobs.
- These climate change impacts are also lessening women's coping ability.

# WOMEN'S ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

- Women have been adapting to swift environmental changes for decades.
- Climate change introduces a new constraint on their capacity to adapt.
- Women's coping ability is often a measure of their community's capacity to adapt.

# WHY GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

## ○ The human rights perspective

- Women have as much right to participate in the production of knowledge in Africa, and right to be part of that knowledge
- The power to know and power to have one's knowledge influence mainstream knowledge should be considered as part of human rights
- Global development of technology and finance has been based on what is termed as a “sexist definition”
- We cannot afford to waste human resource - right to intellectual input in re-conceptualizing new future development models

## ○ Environmental rational

- Women have knowledge, users and consumers of environmental products, active caretakers need cleaner efficient technologies

## ○ The economic rationale

- The intellectual and labor input of men and women is important to realize “meaningful” development
- Women projects are on the average sustainable

# GENDER THE MISSING LINK??

- Absent from decision making processes
- Institutional absence if present not vocal
- Semantic absence
- Financial absence
- Information related absent
- Gender - low priority or dismissed
- ✓ When women are leaders they can address the specific needs of the women and their families.

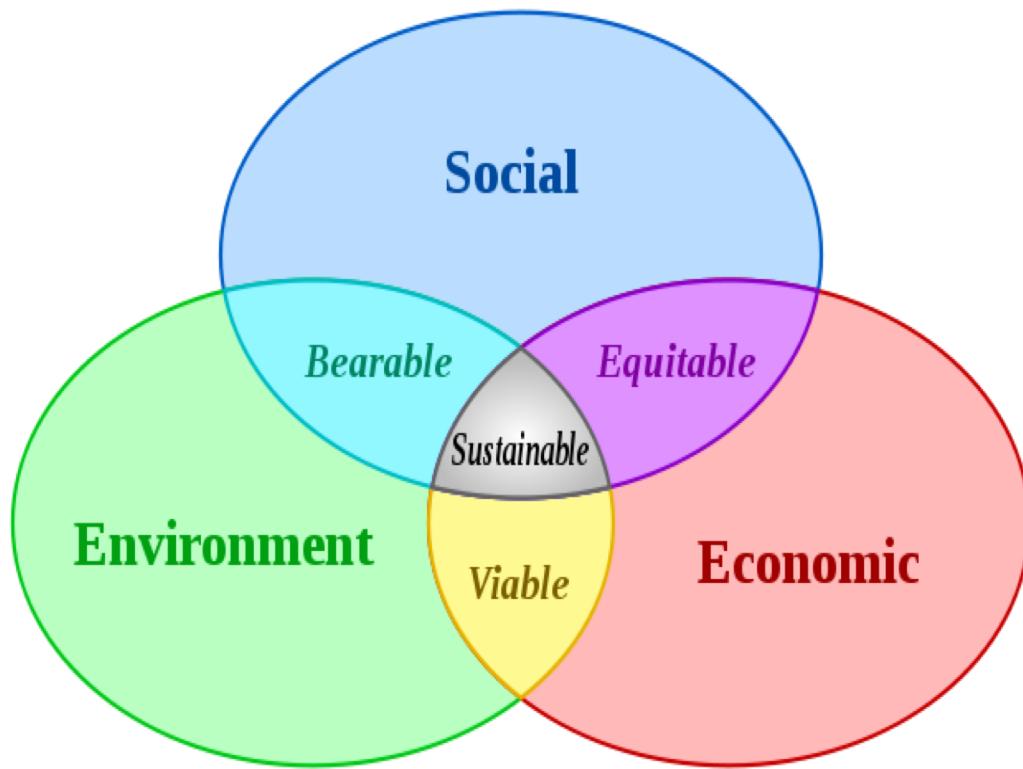
# CONT.

- As stated in Principle 20 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, “women have a vital role in environmental management and development ... and are therefore essential to achieve sustainable development.”
- The role of women in confronting and adapting to climate change should be increased in order to draw on a wider range of mitigation actions and better targeting of adaptation strategies.
- The present lack of women’s participation in most policy-making signals a gap in the resources devoted to the climate challenge.

# WHY INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN AND MEN

- Efficiency
- Equity
- Sustainability
- Seeking a rights-based, gender-sensitive approach to climate change decision-making, financing and implementation of activities; challenging market-based “solutions” and mobilizing women as leaders.

# ADOPTING GENDER APPROACH FOR HOLISTIC SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



# WOMAN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- On 25 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the agreed framework for international development.
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is more ambitious envisaging the eradication of poverty, the systematic tack-ling of climate change and building peaceful, resilient, equitable and inclusive societies.
- The Agenda, unlike the MDGs, has a stand-alone Goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. In addition, there are gender equality targets in other Goals, and a more consistent call for sex disaggregation of data across many indicators.

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- The end of poverty can only be achieved with the end of gender-based discrimination. All over the world, gender inequality makes and keeps women poor, depriving them of basic rights and opportunities for well-being. Women make significant contributions every day from bringing an income to her household as an employed wage earner, to creating jobs as an entrepreneur, to taking care of her family and elders.
- Poor girls face potentially life-threatening risks from early pregnancy, and often lost hopes for an education and a better income. Women have a right to equal access to all avenues to end poverty, from social protection safety nets to use of the latest technology.

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- Fully realizing that right will be key to achieving the first SDG. UN Women acts to end poverty through programmes to provide training, loans and practical skills to empower poor women economically, give them a voice, strengthen social services and increase awareness of women's rights.
- Women prepare up to 90 per cent of meals in households around the world, yet when times are tough, women and girls may be the first to eat less. Households headed by women may not eat enough simply because women earn at lower levels, and are less prepared to cope with sudden crisis. Nourishment is not just about the quantity of food, but its quality. In poor households, women can be less likely to get the nutrients they need, including to manage the physical demands of pregnancy and breastfeeding.

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- Gender inequality intersects with inadequate health care, insufficient education and limited income to drive these deprivations. Inequities in food consumption stand in contrast to women's significant role in agricultural production.
- UN Women acts to stop hunger by supporting women's role in food security, as the cornerstones of food production and utilization.
- The sustainable development goals seek to change the course of the 21st century, addressing key challenges such as poverty, inequality, and violence against women. Women's empowerment is a pre-condition for this. Women have a critical role to play in all of the SDGs, with many targets specifically recognizing women's equality and empowerment as both the objective, and as part of the solution.

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- SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- When economies are geared towards achieving women's rights and gender equality, the benefits, such as fairer societies and greater economic dynamism, accrue to everyone.
- Women must have equal access to decent work, productive resources and financial services, as well as an equal voice in economic decisions.

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- UN Women prioritizes economic rights and growth for all. This includes advocating for legislation on equal pay for equal work, better access to employment opportunities, safety from sexual harassment in the workplace, and other critical rights.
- The organization promotes women's ability to secure decent jobs, accumulate assets, and influence institutions and public policies determining growth and development.
- It seeks to measure and redistribute women's unpaid care work, and to take actions so women and men can more readily combine it with paid employment.

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- Women in consumption and production must have equal access to means such as land and technology that can boost their standard of living. Women at large must assume equal leadership in striking a better balance—in parliaments and boardrooms, in their communities and families.
- UN Women acts to redress imbalanced consumption and production by advocating for policy reforms that back equitable ownership and use of property and resources. Property titles are one area of focus, since these remain out of reach for many women, due to legal or social barriers.

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- SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- As stewards of many natural resources, women can offer valuable insights into better managing the climate and its risks. They also have a right to all capacities needed to protect themselves, and to participate in decisions with profound implications for people and the planet.
- UN Women works to combat climate change by advocating for gender equality and women's empowerment in mitigating and adapting to climate change, against the backdrop of achieving equitable and inclusive sustainable development.

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- In global climate change negotiations, UN Women actively promotes commitments to gender equality and women's rights as well as women's contributions to all aspects of mitigation and adaptation.
- Women also earn approximately 64 per cent of men's wages for the same work in aquaculture. Women face the risks of ocean degradation with fewer assets and alternatives for livelihoods, and less resilience against the loss of natural resources. All strategies for conservation and sustainable use need to respond to these vulnerabilities. [Women's limited representation in marine science must be corrected towards tapping all perspectives for fair and durable solutions.]

## CONT.

- Globally, forests have been cut at devastatingly fast rates, often for profits that bypass local communities. The felling of trees reduces carbon dioxide absorption and biodiversity, cutting links in the intricate web of life. Land use practices have led to land degradation and desertification, as have droughts, including those linked to climate change. [All of these patterns undercut resources that sustain environmental health and human well-being.]
- Women can be among the first and most affected, often charged with making up shortfalls in food and fuel. Their limited ownership of land reduces their capacity to adapt to losses or make decisions about how land is used—for the benefit of themselves and the environment. [Despite these constraints, women play a critical role as stewards of the land, comprising much of the agricultural labour force in developing countries.]

## CONT.

- Women are primary collectors of resources such as wood for fuel, as well as wild foods and herbs for medicines. Their knowledge about traditional practices that are inherently sustainable, however, is often excluded from decisions about sustainable ecosystems.
- This is a loss in terms of prospects for sustainable ecosystem use, which also depends on gender equality in all other dimensions—access to land, livelihoods and natural resources, and a say in how they are shared. [Women, and indigenous women in particular, need to be included in decision-making on ecosystem use at all levels, as essential players in preserving our planet.]
- SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

## CONT.

- Gender equality is central to all of the SDGs, but often, women end up on the short end of the means of implementation, in whatever form.
- UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action, and peace and security.
- Placing women's rights at the centre of all its efforts, UN Women leads and coordinates United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action throughout the world.