

BASIC FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGY FOR GENDER TRAINING

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Gender training is the practical tool for analysing gender differentiation and provide adequate knowledge regarding major factors that influence and are responsible for maintaining or change the structure of gender differentiation. It is also a development intervention which aims to change awareness, knowledge, skill and behaviour in relation to gender. It concerns with developing skills, capacity to translate such awareness into very specific tools that can be used into practice. Gender training may be seen as methodology of consciousness raising and empowerment of women, individually or collectively, or as a way of making project design and implementation or service delivery more gender sensitive or as a means to effect institutional changes. With the knowledge, appropriate policy, intervention can be designed to enhance women's status enabling them to take an equal place with men and to participate equally in the development process.

Hence, gender training is a tool, a strategy, a space for reflection, a site of debate and possibly of struggle. Training is a transformative process, its aim to increase knowledge and to develop understanding as a way to change behaviour, and to offer new skills to do this.

Five fundamental questions – *why train, when to train, who provides training, who undergoes training and how to train* – provide the framework for addressing training issues. Gender training is a complex, sensitive and sophisticated field of work, conceptually, methodologically and, above all, in its practice.

Why Gender Training ?

Gender training is becoming increasingly popular with many institutions, as a way to improve the quality of relief and development work. The negative effects of ignoring gender issues are now widely acknowledged. However there is a difference between acknowledging the importance of gender issues and being able to put this into practice. Most people working for development agencies do not intentionally discriminate against, or intend to disadvantage, women, yet that is what may happen if they do not have the necessary awareness and skills. It is not enough to have good intentions.

The aims and objectives of the training

The aims and objectives need to be realistic in terms of what training can achieve, and what other changes are needed to support the aims. One way of deriving objectives is through learning-needs analysis. The basic assumption on which all training rests is that this is a powerful ‘transforming’ tool through which people learn new attitudes, knowledge or skills. Once acquired, this will make them become more effective at what they do (Anderson 1991). The results of gender training show a clear agreement that the long-term goal of training is to achieve a gender-equitable society. While many training courses combine a number of different objectives, it is useful, nevertheless, to start by distinguishing between four basic objectives.

First there is training in *sensitisation or awareness-raising* to the importance of women and development and gender and development issues. The objective of this type of training is to introduce participants, who can be identified as ‘gender-blind’, to both women and gender as variables in the development process. Most early gender training courses were pre-occupied with this objective.

Secondly, there is training in *skill transfer in gender analysis and diagnosis*. The objective is to impart the necessary skills to gender-aware participants to enable them to undertake gender analysis and diagnosis. While the specific tools may vary, their purpose is to enable participants to analyse a number of variables. These include the gender division of labour, access to and control over resources, gender needs assessment and the underlying policy approaches to WID. These tools can be used in gender diagnosis of concrete development context. They also can be used to appraise to evaluate the ongoing policies, programmes and

projects of many different agencies working in various sectors.

A third objective of training is *the translation of skills into planning practices*. This ensures that participants develop the capacity to translate their ‘theoretical’ apparatus into ‘practice’, through its implementation in ongoing work. It aims to achieve the integration of gender planning methodology into both the institutional structures and the operational procedures of the organisation in which participants work. By its very definition, gender planning training places greatest emphasis on this objective.

Finally, there is training in *motivational factors*. Its objective is to motivate participants to ‘do the job’. The extent to which this is necessary varies. It depends on whether constraints in gender planning relate to personal attitudes or lack of professional skills. In addition, approaches to training vary, depending on the extent to which confrontation is considered appropriate, depending on the extent to which confrontation is considered appropriate. Gender dynamics training identifies motivation as the primary constraint and focuses on this objectives.

Gender Analysis Training

The first, and by far the best-known and most extensively used, is gender analysis training. This originated in 1980 when the World Bank WID Adviser commissioned a team headed by James Austin, a well known case-method trainer at Harvard, to conduct a series of workshops for World Bank staff. Catherine Overholt, Mary Anderson and Kathleen Cloud – who formed what is known as the ‘Harvard Team’. The basis of the Harvard approach is gender analysis. This is identified as a diagnostic tool. It consists of a sequential, three-fold analytical framework to address the division of labour between men and women and their different access to and control of resources. The analytical framework developed for the analysis uses four interrelated components: actively profile; access and control profile; analysis of factors influencing activities, access and control; and project-cycle analysis.

Gender Planning Training

A second approach is *gender planning training*, which is linked to gender planning. In collaboration with colleagues at Gender and Planning Associates. Caroline O N Moser was responsible for the development of this approach. This began in 1984 with a course, ‘Planning with Women for Development’, initiated at the Development Planning Unit (DPU), University College, London, in collaboration with Caren Levy. She further developed gender planning procedures such as gender diagnosis and entry strategies. Finally, this methodology has been used to advise such institutions as FAO, ILO, UNIFEM and World Bank on the development of their training strategies.

The basis of this approach is planning, rather than analysis, and gender planning rather than planning for women in development. The purpose of the training is, therefore, to provide tools, not only for diagnosis, but also for translation into practice. These relate to the productive, reproductive and community managing roles of women, to decision making within the household and to the nature of women's subordination. The purpose of simplification is to translate these concerns into specific interventions in planning practice. Tools such as the triple role, gender needs assessment, the WID/GAD matrix and gendered participatory planning procedures help planners to undertake gender diagnosis, define gender objectives and identify gender-entry points. In addition, it assists them to recognise the constraints and opportunities in institutionalising and operationalizing gender planning within their own organisations.

Training in Gender Dynamics

Gender dynamics is a third, and very different, training approach. It differs fundamentally from the first two in that it comes mainly from the training experience of Third World grass-roots organisations, as against First World GAD researchers. In addition, its constituency is Third World practitioners, particularly women in NGOs, rather than government. To date this approach has not been well documented. It comprises several indigenous, highly participatory, innovative and flexible methodologies designed to 'empower' women to recognise, analyse and address gender issues at the grass roots level. Interpersonal skills, that engage 'not only the mind but the heart', provide the basic training technique.

In a recent description of this approach Theresa Balayon describes it as follows :

Gender dynamics is a consciousness-raising seminar that discusses questions relating to the nature, origins, extent, effects of, and alternatives to, gender bias... (to) identify gender bias at home, at work, and in society-at-large; interpret some experiences in the light of feminist values and principles; reconcile various points of view in the women's movement; correct sexist patterns of thinking, speaking and behaving; and integrate gender-fair values into one's personal and professional plan of action.

As the term suggests, 'gender dynamics' is based primarily on 'interactive' lectures, role play and interpersonal dynamics. In some context, additional tools have included the use of popular theatre.

The Learning Groups

This has to be considered together with the aims and objectives of the training, and learning needs analysis. Selection of participants is crucial to a successful training course or programme. Who should attend, who they represent, and how they will be encouraged to attend is one of the most important steps in the whole training strategy.

Training is easier if the group is as homogenous as possible, but in some cases, a group will require training together in order to build collective responsibility and unity. In this case the training should be designed to take into account the very different abilities, needs, responses, and receptivity of people with different abilities and experiences. As in any other project, disaggregated data should be obtained about the different roles and needs of men and women, and how these may be affected by age, class and ethnicity.

If training is not designed specifically for the group to be trained there is no guarantee that it will work. The chosen objectives of a particular training course are, thus, closely interrelated to, and dependent upon, who is undergoing the training. It follows that the organisation trained must define the target group. So as to provide clear objectives that relate to work practices, it is necessary to understand how gender relations have a bearing on such practices in the organisation concerned. This requires a knowledge of the power and decision-making processes within the organisation and an understanding of the procedures most requiring change. The persons responsible for the definition, development and implementation of the institution's policies, programmes and projects also have to be identified. So do the strategically important allies who can provide leverage in acceptance of training.

Once an organisation decides the most appropriate level to start training, and identifies the objectives for different groups, several further decisions have to be made relating to the composition of the staff trained. What are the common features, the criteria that bind them in training? Do they all work on the same sectoral concerns? Is it appropriate to mix staff from different sectors?

Size of the Group

The size of the group also depends on the training methodology. The experience of gender planning training has shown that 15-20 is the ideal number. Because of its highly participatory methodology, in larger groups there is less space for the participation of the whole group. This allows less interested participants to take a back seat. However this question also relates to the length of training. Practice has not borne out the rule that the more senior professionals are, the busier they are, and therefore, the shorter the training period should be. Commitment to spending time on training depends on how seriously the organisation takes training, and who has asked participants to attend. Short gender training courses vary from an hour or two with the aim of

sensitising and creating awareness, to seven to ten days in order to provide detailed skills. It is certainly true that the more time allocated to training the greater the skilling that can be provided.

Learning Needs Analysis

Trainer need to identify the learning needs of the group, in order to set specific objectives for the training, as well as general aims. It may be that the learning needs of a group are too diverse to be covered in one training. For employees of a hierarchical organisation, learning needs are best identified by collaboration between the trainer, the learner, and the manager. Then consider whether these needs can be met by training, and who other support or changes need to take place. Also consider the levels of responsibility and authority of the participants – do they have the power to effect change? Do they have the authority to implement action plans? If not, how much support do they have from their manager and the rest of the organisation? By considering these questions, there is a better change that the participants will be able to put-what they have learned into practice. Trainer also need to considered what the learning needs might be for the future, for example if the job changes, or someone is moved to a new job.

The Content of training

Obviously, the training methodology is the most critical determinant of the content of training. This then decides more specific details relating to such issues as the programming and format of the workshop, the structure of the content of each session and the materials requires for each session. To a large extent the objectives of training decide the answer. If the concern is to create awareness or increase ability in gender analysis, then training packages can be formalised for widespread use. If the objective of training is the translation of skills into planning practice then the working procedures of the organisation must be understood. Training must be designed to meet the needs of different organisational groups.

The course content consist of the topic areas, based on the objectives derived from the learning needs of the participants group. It can include :

- awareness (e.g. understanding gender and awareness of stereotypes)
- knowledge (e.g. about various forms of discrimination against women)
- skills (e.g. in analysing projects from a gender perspective)
- behavior (e.g. changes in the way of working with mixed groups)

It is important to include gender awareness at a personal as well as theoretical level in every training, to provide a firm basis for skill acquisition and behavior changes. Without this there may be a danger that development workers see gender as a dispensable issue outside themselves and their concerns. It is also important to include analysis and planning skills as well as awareness raising, so that the training has real impact.

Put the content in a logical order, and always start with introductions and activities to encourage trust and cohesion within the group and end with practical forward planning and evaluation of the course. Calculate, the approximate times needed and you have your draft programme.

Methods and Materials

Empowerment training has been extraordinarily creative and inventive in developing its own methods and materials. An overview of training methodologies shows that the life experiences of the training participants themselves is often the most important ‘material’ used in training. Women share their own life stories, their experiences of both subjugation and empowerment, and the analysis of gender, social structures and power is built out of this life material, so that learning is both intensely personal and simultaneously builds bonds with others in the group. Simulation games, discussions, case studies, learning-by-doing, field visits, composing songs, skits and plays – the range of methods and materials is rich and varied, limited only by the trainers’ imagination and sensitivity.

Most importantly, it is clear that there is little reliance on fixed, codified training design or materials. Rather, the methods and materials are developed on the following principles:

- The participants – both trainers and trainees – are the main resource, and their experiences are the main training material;
- Methods and materials are designed and developed as the training proceeds, drawing inspiration from the actual incidents, events, or insights emerging in the course of the training;
- Each training is designed afresh, based on past experience as well as the needs, situation and background of the group to be trained;
- Constantly upgrading, critically analysing and enhancing the sensitivity, skills, confidence and knowledge-base of the trainers; and

- Critical evaluation of each training by both trainers and trainees, including daily reviews, so that mid-course changes and modifications are built in.

With this broad framework, the methods and materials most widely used in empowerment training of activities and grassroots women can be broadly categorised.

Who provides the training?

To undertake gender training requires very specific skills, which are often not recognised. Two issues are important. First, training is not teaching. Just as the distinction between academic research on gender issues and gender planning is important, so the difference between teaching and training is equally important. The same pedagogic approaches are not necessarily appropriate. Training can be defined as the expansion or consolidation of technical skills to put knowledge into practice. It is not lecturing, with its emphasis on the transmission of theoretical knowledge and ideas. If teaching concerns the creating of an awareness, or consciousness, of the complexity of gender issues through an increased analytical capacity, training concerns development the skill capacity to translate such awareness into very specific tools that can be used in practice. Training relies on a diversity of pedagogic techniques, such as exercises, small-group discussions, brainstorm sessions and so on. All the designed both to reinforce the skill provided to ensure that the participants themselves work through the issues so that they emerge confident to use them.

The second issue is that teachers are not necessarily trainers and gender planners are often neither. Frequently, in identifying professionals to undertake training in gender planning the assumption is that a gender planner, or an academic with knowledge of gender issues, can train. As many problematic experiences have shown only too clearly, this is an incorrect assumption. Often trainers find it much easier to learn about gender planning, than gender planners or academics find it to learn how to train. The capacity of the trainers is one of the most crucial determinants of successful training. This therefore poses an important constraints that requires recognition at the outset in developing a training strategy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of training is essential and need to be considered at the beginning, together with the aims and objectives of the training. Before you do a monitoring or evaluation activity, explain to the participants what you are doing and why. Monitoring should be

done throughout the course to assess both task and maintenance functions of the group, as well as practical details. For courses that last more than one day, it is useful for small groups to meet at the end of each day to discuss the day's activities and report back to the facilitators. This enables trainer to assess levels of learning and keep the course pitched at the right level, and it allows participants some control over the process. It can also alert you to any difficulties in group dynamics, and help you to make changes to the programme if needed.

To date there have been few systematic attempts to evaluate gender training quantitatively, other than questionnaires that assess the 'happiness quotient'. This is the level of satisfaction with training, but not the impact of training on work practices. Nevertheless, organisations do monitor the impact of training in a number of ways. Gender planning training provides participants with several tools that allow practitioners from different disciplines, and of different persuasions and positions on WID/GAD issues, to communicate in a common language.

Anderson (1991) has outlined a potential evaluation approach to training through an input/output model that can reflect the variety of approaches taken to gender training. Inputs include the trainers, their materials, the content of training and the training methods, the time, the place and the group who are trainees. Anderson 1991 provides a very useful threefold categorization of the outputs of training, as participants changes, institutional changes and external impact. She claims that the impact of training on participants can be identified in terms of changed attitudes, increased skills and knowledge and changes behavior. The latter are the most difficult to assess. Institutional changes are easier to evaluate since they relate to changes in both institutional structures and operational procedures.

Follow Up

Training is not an-end in itself, it should have some connection with and impact on the lives of the participants. If the training is being carried out within an organisation, it should be supported by other efforts in relation to policy and practice. Examples of specific changes are altering the project application documents to include specific questions on gender related to the method of analysis learned in the gender training, using concept from the gender training.

You need to consider the impact of gender training on participants' lives and perhaps allow time for discussion of this within the workshop. There may be fears about conflict arising from working on gender issues. While some of these may be groundless (for example, that families will be broken up if women start talking about gender issues), other may reflect reality (for example, resistance shown to women's groups by community organisations, sabotaging of women's groups by individual men, hostility towards individual women from their male partner). Empowerment and change are often seen as threatening and thus it is not at all surprising for ideas about gender to be met with fear, resistance or hostility. However, there are ways of

reducing resistance and people can share experiences at a follow-up workshop.

Phased training is a good method of ensuring the relevance of the training. Here, training workshops are interspersed with period of working in the field, trying to put what has been learnt into practice. Even where phased training has not been planned, follow-up sessions or workshops are useful for sharing the successes and difficulties of putting the learning into practice and moving forward.

The role of training in empowerment

The entire process of empowerment as stated and Srilatha Batliwala, is essentially about changing power relations. And since it is the powerless – in our context, women who have the greatest stake in bringing about this change, they are ones who will have to mobilise, organise and gain analytical, strategic, and practical skills to lead the process or social transformation. Since this process requires both knowledge and skills, the traditional line between education and training becomes blurred in the empowerment context. In fact, the Indian experiences shows that the two components are functionally inseparable.

Nevertheless, making this theoretical distinction is important because some empowerment interventions stop with imparting empowering knowledge, believing that this alone will lead to action. But we know from experience that a wide gulf separates the two – changing our actions is a more difficult and complicated business than acquiring the knowledge that we should do so. Action requires skills, support, organisation and collective strength. It is therefore useful to return to Ruskin's definition, and make a theoretical distinction between the role of education and training, within the empowerment process;

- The *skills* required to bring about an empowering change have to be acquired through *training*, while the knowledge of why this is necessary, and why it hasn't happened before, is acquired through *empowerment education*. While empowering education imparts new knowledge, information and ideas, training is the component which equips people with both the analytical and practical skills with which to:
 - question and challenge the dominant ideology.
 - gain greater access and control over resources, and
 - struggle to transform the institutions and structures that reinforce their subordination.

Learning to apply knowledge to affect changes in real life situations, and acquiring the skills needed to do so, is the essence of training for empowerment. In the case of women, this is an even more important task, for simply raising awareness of the roots of their subordination is not enough as women have been trained from earliest childhood to behave in certain ways in all their social relationships. Knowledge alone is not enough to enable them to behave differently, or more assertively. Training must not only empower them to do so, but also impact tangible skills, which will support women in the process of change.

The Goals of Empowerment Training

The goals of empowerment training as described by Srilata Batliwala are :-

- The capacity to question traditional beliefs and practices, and develop a critical approach to one's environment;
- Developing a positive self-image and recognising one's strength, including valuing one's existing knowledge and skills.
- Exploding myths and misconceptions about women in society;
- Critically analysing structures of oppression and exploitation;
- Becoming aware of one's rights as an equal citizen;
- Defining and sharing one's strengths and weaknesses with other women;
- Building strong collectives through which individual and collective -problems are identified and prioritised;
- Learning to function as a collective, including collective decision-making, action, critical reflection and accountability;
- Changing one's attitudes and practices with one's own sons and daughters, including giving daughters opportunities for learning;
- Seeking access to new kinds of information and knowledge, relevant to critical issues of one's life, as well as for understanding the world beyond out horizons;

- Understanding and questioning prevailing notions of 'development'. Examining its gender and class biases, and evolving alternative agendas;
- Studying the resources available, physical, human and financial, including government/non-government services and schemes;
- Learning to access information independently, including by becoming literate and numerate;
- Learning to access resources and public schemes/services independently, demanding accountability, and lobbying for changes in schemes and programs which are inaccessible inappropriate;
- Learning to negotiate with public institutions and systems (banks, government departments, etc.) independently;
- Learning to set-up and collectively manage one's own services and programmes whenever needed.
- Understanding political structures and systems of governance and how to participate in these and demand accountability;
- Organising and building networks at local, regional, national and global levels, through which poor women can become a social economic and political force.

Making Gender Training Success

Following points may be kept in mind in order to make gender training a success.

1. There must be an explicit mandate for gender training from the top of the organisation, which must be clearly articulated to all the divisions of the institutions as being relevant to them.
2. Training is a process and requires sufficient time for effectiveness. A series of training courses may be the most effective system, with time to incorporate what has been learned into work practices.
3. Gender training must be managed and supported by strong qualified professionals whose

experience is respected within the organisation.

4. Someone, preferably full-time, from within the institution should have responsibility for training. External consultants may be used to do the training, but they need to work with someone from within the institutions to co-ordinate logistics and provide information on organisational culture, procedures and participants to the trainers.
5. Training is more effective and efficient when the same team, or at least members of that team, conducts the training over the initial training period when gender analysis is being introduced to the institutions.
6. Training of Trainers (TOT) is a critical element for achieving long-term integration of gender issues and analysis in an institution. Tot course can be conducted either within or outside the institutions.
7. Budgeting for a training must be comprehensive. Trainers require adequate resources and support personnel. Trainers need to give full attention to the process of training and thus need proper administrative and logistic support to enable them to do this. This should be budgeted for.
8. There is no single training, strategy that will fit all institutions. Each training strategy and each training workshop, must take into account the nature of the particular organisation and the social and political context in which it work.
9. Finally, it is important that the gender training programme is supported and not contradicted by other training in the organisation. This may mean making changes to courses on other topics, sometimes by including specific sessions on gender.

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