Revisiting studies and training in gender and development - the making and re-making of gender knowledge

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Franz Wong and Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay
Conference Coordinators

Executive Summary

This conference aimed to critically analyse gender training and understand its role in relation to other efforts to forward gender equality, offering an opportunity for reflection on what gender training has achieved and how best to take it forward. It was motivated in particular by a concern that attempting to build gender knowledge in development settings which generally privilege didactic learning models and often present knowledge as a set of skills to be acquired, has not always achieved the expected results in terms of changes in gender relations. This report highlights four themes which emerged and were elaborated in the course of the conference.

First, what 'gender' means has become contested because what concepts mean changes how they can be used to influence action. Contests over the meaning of gender terminology are evident in an increasing separation between 'gender' and its feminist roots, which has allowed the terminology of gender to be instrumentalized and emptied of its social transformatory implications. There are many aspects to this campaign: that feminist knowledge is incapable of objectivity and therefore illegitimate and 'gender' knowledge is hence better off without it; that the terminology of gender is not workable in some languages; that it should be rejected due to associations with the political dominance of the West. While various responses to such assertions are appropriate, including careful examination of issues in each context, we should be aware that contests over the meaning of concepts are important aspects of the politics of change, and continue to assert and establish those meanings which can be drivers of change.

Second, while there is enormous variation in how gender knowledge is communicated in different circumstances, the technical approaches to training which are currently most widespread have severe limitations. These short-format workshops, designed to avoid conflict and to fit into funder frameworks which barely seek to mitigate the structures producing inequality, are also based on a mistaken assumption that gender knowledge can be packaged, presented and transferred in a straightforward process. In setting out to make knowledge palatable, they also draw attention away from how trainers and trainees are located in relations of power mediated through gender, race, class and ethnicity. Other approaches to producing and communicating gender knowledge need to feed more explicitly into gender training processes: women's and other social movements where the local meanings of gender equality are explored and articulated; and education project formats which work with an explicit agenda for re-constituting individual and collective identities in a process of transforming social relations. Given that gender training seeks change at social and organisational as well as individual levels, flexibility and variety in approaches is essential.

Third, a range of structural influences are at play in the settings in which gender training takes place. These influences affect what kinds of knowledge are produced, which are considered legitimate, and how they are received. Closer attention should be paid to these, both to aid realistic assessments of what changes we can expect gender training to result it, and to facilitate the development of context-specific, fully 'located' training programmes. Important factors requiring assessment include the nature and role of dominant discourses of development; the effects of the globalisation of neo-liberal models of economic development; political structures which constrain the emergence of spaces for change; the politics of religion particularly as it engages with development processes; and the histories, structures and

cultures of organisations and meso-level social institutions which play important roles in reproducing gender relations.

Fourth, alongside these broad challenges, a number of specific difficulties were identified and discussed. Within development organisations, there is frequently a tension between the need for theoretical clarity capable of relating gender training to its context and connecting it with broader goals of social justice, and the need for 'practical' implementation strategies which can reduce the process to a technical exercise. There are also frequently 'accountability conflicts' where attempts to build structures for gender accountability contradict pre-existing accountability priorities and mechanisms. More generally, gender advocates may need to look closely at the role of conflict in change processes and develop skills in conflict management. Given the enormous variety of contexts in which gender training takes place, it is important that gender training models continue to diversify, drawing on promising methods and a thorough analysis of the particular features of each context.

Recommendations emerging during the conference process were concerned with three main areas: the need to take stock of what has been happening in gender training in different places; the need to generate new gender knowledge to drive gender training processes; and strategies for re-invigorating gender training and re-politicising gender knowledge.

Taking stock should include making regional and local meeting spaces for reflection on and adaptation of gender training work in different contexts, and an agenda for mapping, evaluating and disseminating current practice in research and training. It should proceed with a clear acknowledgement of the importance of properly 'located', contextualised gender training.

Generating new gender knowledge involves further work on contextualising knowledge by clarifying concepts for gender and development across different languages and assessing the role of globalisation processes and political structures in different circumstances, as well as facilitating the dissemination of such new knowledge. It also requires further attention to specific social institutions and organisations and how progress can be made within them. Alliances, collaborations and partnerships between actors within development organisations and social movements, and between sites of research and practice are likely to be rich sites for the generation of critical insights and strategies for taking change forwards.

Re-invigorating gender training will involve re-stating the connection between gender knowledge and its change implications. This will entail more explicit acknowledgement of the political – and therefore sometimes conflictual – nature of change processes, and of the configurations of power at work within them. It will also involve establishing diversity and flexibility in models of training, which should have roots in particular environments and incorporate strategies for relating gender analysis to individuals' lived experiences.

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Introduction

This conference aimed to critically analyse gender training and understand its role and relations with other efforts to forward gender equality both in the past – mainly gender mainstreaming – and in the future[1]. It brought together a diverse group of people from fifteen countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, North America and Europe and included prominent international researchers, activists, academics, policy makers and development practitioners[2]. While the range of disciplines, geographical contexts and institutional locations represented was very wide, what these people had in common was a professional and personal interest in the production, communication and dissemination of gender knowledge to promote gender equality. While few people in the group identified easily or mainly as 'gender trainers' in the sense of the bounded gender-training workshop experience, many people identified with having 'lost count' of the number of gender trainings they had been involved with, and all had long experience of gender education and studies in one of its various forms.

The conference offered an important opportunity to reflect critically on what gender training has achieved, and to assess how best to take it forward. As Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay said, the time is ripe to address what might be termed as an impasse in gender training, and the prevalent unease that it has not always achieved the expected results.

Taking up the challenge of this analysis is all the more critical given recent policy and strategy directions by development agencies, mainly in the North. Currently, some NGOs and bilateral and multilateral agencies are increasing their attention to women, particularly women's leadership, empowerment and rights. For some, this focus is being viewed as complementary to their gender mainstreaming efforts; for others, the implications are less certain. What is clear is that while such an imperative on women's status and rights is welcome, it needs to be pursued within the context of gender relations. It also needs to be pursued with a clearer understanding of how gender knowledge is produced, and of the factors influencing how it is communicated and reproduced in different settings. A primary motivation for the conference was to gain insights into the implications of building gender knowledge in settings that subscribe to hierarchical and didactic learning models and emphasise knowledge acquisition over processes of learning.

As explained by Catherine Hodgkin, KIT has a long association with gender training. It has been conducting trainings for eighteen years in both short and long formats, in Europe as well as in regional locations, and held Women in Development (WID) courses previous to that. The conference represented part of a wider process facilitated by KIT to engage with the issues facing gender training and education in contemporary contexts. It follows a lively electronic discussion group hosted through October and November 2006 and the publication in March 2007 of Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay and Franz Wong's edited volume *Revisiting Gender Training: The Making and Remaking of Gender Knowledge*.

[1] see Annex A for conference agenda
[2] see Annexes B and C for participant list and bios respectively

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It also more distantly follows, as Dorine Plantenga reminded us, two conferences on gender training which took place in Bergen, Norway and at KIT in the early 1990s. This conference was one of the first major attempts since that time to review and critically assess what gender training represents.

Four broad themes formed the backbone of the conference, which was divided into plenary panel sessions followed by small group discussions focusing on key questions identified during the plenary. The four plenary themes were: Gender/ed Knowledge; Gender Training as Metaphor; Gender Trainers and Advocates; and Future Prospects. Discussions proved to be wide-ranging and frequently cross-referential.

This report highlights recurrent themes that were central to the discussions of the conference and is organised into five sections. The *first* addresses some issues concerning the language of gender. The *second* discusses the wide range of practices and contexts constituting and framing the production and communication of gender knowledge. The *third* looks more closely at various components of structural features influencing the production of knowledge and its reception by different audiences. The *fourth* section raises some specific unresolved issues and challenges, elaborates on what has been achieved through gender training and makes several suggestions for re-invigorating the scene. Finally, the report presents implications and recommendations.

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1 'Gender' as contested terminology and gender training as contested practice

A clear and repeated theme of the conference referred to a set of problems around the terminology of gender and gender training, raising the question of whether the language of gender has itself been part of the 'problem' in taking gender equality forward.

The relationship between 'gender' and feminism, while at the heart of what gender training aims to achieve, in practice has provoked mixed and often contradictory responses. The relationship is criticised by some for being too close and by others for not being close enough. Also, some regard it as essential to work on gender issues while others consider it an unwelcome burden. For the latter, 'gender' as a set of practices is contested because of its association with feminism which tars it with the same brush that suspects feminism of being unscientific, unprofessional, and incapable of being 'objective', as discussed by Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay and Christine Verschuur. Josephine Ahikire commented that in some contexts a linguistic slippage has occurred, allowing people to refer to those promoting gender equality as 'the gender women' and their activities as 'doing gender', indicating perhaps that gender is widely seen as a set of skills required only for work that is of questionable legitimacy. Why, she asked, has the same slippage not occurred with reference to other analytic categories denoting structural inequalities such as race and class?

We have become the 'gender women' who 'do gender'.

Moreover, apparently in spite of the 'weaknesses' of feminist approaches, the relationship also provokes concerns that it might offer organisations more than they bargained for, in that it crucially questions structures producing inequalities in general, not only gender inequalities.

The resulting increased separation between 'gender' and 'feminism' – perhaps sometimes promoted as a strategy to raise gender issues – was widely seen as key to the instrumentalization of gender and the weakening of its transformatory potential. Josephine Ahikire spoke of how feminism and gender have become separate discourses, so that having an understanding of, or a personal commitment to, feminism is no longer required to perform gender-related work. Deborah Kasente added that this separation has also allowed academics beyond the 'gender women' to be more than comfortable in 'talking gender', without any concomitant pressure to 'do' it. Within organisations, separating 'gender' from 'feminism' has also facilitated what Kathleen Staudt referred to as the 'performance' of gender, devoid of its social transformatory implications, and has permitted 'donor organisations to preach one thing and do something else with their money', as Amal Sabbagh observed.

Pilar Trujillo Uribe observed that in Latin America, this same separation – and the de-politicisation that it implies – is an important reason why the terminology of gender is rejected in some situations, in favour of terminology that is explicitly political and clearly espouses feminist values. Kausar Khan added that the language of gender is sometimes rejected in Pakistan due to its associations with the West and with political dominance – an issue echoed by Isabel Rauber who emphasised how 'empowerment' models driven by the West and by Northern funding are being replaced in Latin America by locally-evolved models arising out of work in social movements, particularly around class issues.

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Another issue concerned difficulties in translating 'gender' both into different languages and into different cultures. In many languages, the term does not exist, and where it does, it often carries very different meanings and associations than the (politicised) English language notion. Hettie Walters, echoed by Christine Verschuur and Fenneke Reysoo, for example, pointed out that the phrase 'je fais le genre' in French produces considerable confusion over meaning, and working on gender in French implies a series of difficulties for conceptual clarity. The French Government, apparently in response to this difficulty, has recently decided to drop the terminology of gender, preferring to refer to the very differently weighted concept of 'sexe'.

Nevertheless, Kathleen Staudt observed, the use of the term has become more widespread in the last 20 years, and both Lina Abou Habib and Kausar Khan pointed out that in situations where the term does not translate, people have found and continue to find ways of working on and talking about or around the concept that resonate in local situations. Hettie Walters, for example, described the experience of a community development organisation in Tamil Nadu, India that never had any formal gender policy and had only recently begun a process of gender self-assessment. The organisation had not taken on the language of gender equality, more easily seeing itself in terms of community development or simply development. Nevertheless, the assessment process revealed that the organisation had achieved a major impact on the lives of around 60,000 women.

While the influence of language on how gender concepts can be and have been communicated is clearly a subject requiring further investigation and elaboration, these observations suggest that it is important to identify situations where rejection of the terminology of gender is more about avoiding the changes it implies, than about linguistic difficulties.

Shamim Meer suggested that gender training – particularly in its short, event-oriented, workshop-bounded form – may have been key to the process of instrumentalization, insofar as it has presented 'gender' as a set of skills which can be straightforwardly delivered and reproduced, rather than as a metaphor for social transformation. Bearing these concerns in mind, Andrea Cornwall asked whether the gender metaphor is in fact dying or dead, its evocative power irretrievably lost in training processes that have emphasised 'knowing that' rather than 'knowing how', and encouraged the parroting of slogans rooted in frameworks disembodied from lived experience.

This formulation resonated with a generalised concern that the terminology of gender has become increasingly controlled by those whose power may be undermined by the broad social change implied by gender equality goals. It thus acted as a reminder of the central role of the politics of naming in social transformation processes, as Ann Whitehead pointed out. This politics is one of contest: naming and meaning are continuously contested by different actors because what concepts mean changes how they can be used to influence action.

How do we protect against the warping of the powerful concepts produced by feminist epistemologies? Kausar Khan emphasised that it is important to be confident and clear about what we mean when we use gender terminology, but to be aware that there are different sources of meaning and of how others are using it. Isabel Rauber elaborated that it is also important to know who is producing different meanings, and to undertake the challenge of naming, because by naming a concept 'you make it your own'.

'By naming it, you make it your own'

Struggles over the meanings of 'gender'

- Separating 'gender' and 'feminism' has contributed to weakening the transformatory potential of gender knowledge.

- Training processes emphasising 'knowing that' over 'knowing why' and over the process of learning have contributed to disconnecting gender knowledge from its change implications.

- Translation difficulties around the terminology of gender exist in many languages, but we should be alert to situations where these difficulties are used to derail gender equality projects.

- Contests over the meaning of concepts are important aspects of the politics of change. We need to be aware of challenges to the meaning of gender concepts, while continuing to assert and establish those meanings which can be drivers of change.

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2 Communicating gender knowledge – a variety of practices in a variety of contexts

a) Diverse activities

A further clear red thread of the conference was that there is enormous variation in how gender knowledge is communicated in different circumstances. Communication projects range, for example, from short and sweetened workshops for bureaucrats required by project or programme funders to have 'received' gender training, to social movements that have sometimes been rich sites for both the production and communication of gender knowledge. Other projects spanning several years and concerned with the embedding of gender knowledge in personal identity have been explicitly concerned with the process of the social constitution of 'subjects' – individuals and the groups they are part of – who can carry social transformation forward.

Instrumental training

One way of instrumentalizing gender knowledge has been by limiting the amount of time available for communicating it. Experience with this kind of gender training was rich amongst conference participants. Jashodhara Dasgupta, for example, described the experience of conducting the gender component of a 3-4 day workshop on Sector Wide Approaches (SWAps) with senior officials in the Ministry of Health in India. While considerable preparation and planning had been undertaken to find ways of presenting gender

knowledge in ways that were meaningful to the trainees without underplaying the depth or breadth of its significance, the workshop was finally reduced to a single 45-minute session. Facilitators were specifically asked to make their information palatable and avoid upsetting people by focusing on frameworks and checklists that the trainees could easily 'apply' to their work. Similarly, Ayesha Imam described working in a large development agency that sees itself as at the vanguard of women's reproductive health and rights. The agency had asked for training to integrate a gender sensitive and culturally appropriate human rights approach into work on female genital mutilation. This workshop was eventually allocated only two hours to achieve this integration, and like in the above incident, requests were made for checklists to facilitate implementation.

Funder requirements for gender training, producing a demand for quick and easy workshops, appear to be writ large in these scenarios. However, these requirements are often accompanied by wider funder frameworks that at best seek to mitigate, rather than transform, the structures that produce inequality, as Christine Vershuur suggested. Training in these short, unchallenging formats, which can at the most communicate a few simplified points constituting a checklist, draws strongly on a 'banking' pedagogy, critiqued by Paolo Freire and others with a transformatory agenda. This pedagogy is underpinned by a model of learning in which those receiving education are

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seen as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge. This model also assumes that the subsequent reproduction of that knowledge is little affected by the life experience or the context of the trainee.

The instrumentalization of gender knowledge, however, is clearly not limited to the gender training workshop experience. Indeed, the proliferation of these kinds of trainings has been stimulated by a generalised technical approach to gender mainstreaming since Beijing that attempts to insert 'gender' into organisations despite their sometimes overwhelming contrary objectives, contradictory institutional frameworks and incentive structures, and overt resistance. This technical approach often appears to reflect a desire to change as little as possible through the process: Ayesha Imam described the most commonly adopted formula for gender mainstreaming as, 'Add a veneer of gender equality language, two women, and do NOT stir'.

'Add a veneer of gender equality language, two women, and do NOT stir'

Operationalising gender in NGO programmes and projects has often also been limited, as observed by Elisabeth Hoffman, to a focus on what should be done, – helping to creating the demand for 'practical' strategies and checklists – rather than on elaborating why work on gender equality is necessary, or how it should proceed in order to progress towards gender equality goals. It is, however, these latter that require the development of conceptual depth, commitment, and conviction. One result of these simplified processes of 'engendering' organisations is that work on gender equality can be reduced to ticking boxes: as Sriyani Perera noted, 'Gender is there; you tick.'

Donor-driven formulations for addressing gender inequality that focus on technical skills delivered in short and sweet sessions and avoid conflict, challenge, or anything personal are also disturbingly easy to amputate: Kathleen Staudt warned of how gender knowledge in this formulation can simply disappear once political pressure or budgets die.

Gender training as part of an ongoing process

Nevertheless, one-stop technical interventions to equip agency actors with the language of gender in order to respond appropriately to checklists are clearly far from the only model of 'gender training' in operation. Ruth Pearson articulated a widespread sentiment that gender training is and should be recognized as merely an entry point into institutions; a starting point from which broader structural and social change can be gradually addressed. Isabel Rauber emphasised the scale of this endeavour and protested that we cannot at this point talk of the failure of gender training because, 'We have not failed. We have only just begun', and 'Transformation takes thousands of years.'

The scale of this project is sometimes more directly reflected in longer-term strategies for gender education that have the potential to initiate processes of change with deeper roots. Such strategies have explicit objectives of facilitating (self) conscientization and building collective identity for change. This was the case, for example, for the project in several Latin American countries described by Isabel Rauber, which seeks to develop new multicultural, collective knowledge through the act of education.
Gender education can also take place beyond 'educational' settings, through life experience and political struggle – sometimes, it was suggested, more

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effectively than in the structured environments of workshops or curricula. Even in the absence of a specific agenda for women's equality or rights, political struggle and mobilisation can result in steps towards gender transformation. Jashodhara Dasgupta described the process through which women affected by the Union Carbide gas leak disaster in Bhopal, North India had developed both personal and political understandings of gender, without naming their analysis as such. These urban women, mostly Muslim and mostly illiterate, had developed their analysis – including how the tragedy and its aftermath had affected women and men differently for biological and social reasons – in the process of a long and bitter struggle for justice around which their identities had developed. She commented that these women had never been recipients of gender training or education, but gendered knowledge was nevertheless emerging from their experience.

How can gender training draw on the insights and successes of these other approaches to producing and operationalising gender knowledge? How can it use such insights to protect against the instrumentalization processes currently underway in many development contexts? One strategy emerged clearly during the conference: the gender advocates who facilitate training initiatives need to maintain strong connections to the women's and other social movements as these are the sites where the local meanings of gender relations are often explored and articulated.

The change processes required to achieve gender equality also cannot be envisaged as a single project. What constitutes change in women's interests is dependent on the contexts in which change is sought, as gender relations manifest themselves in a variety of ways. How gender relations are played out depends partly on the characteristics of the particular social institutions and organisations that reproduce them at local levels, and partly on their intersections with other social relations such as race and class. Women may be the common subjects of gender inequality, but what this means varies across contexts, and women are notably divided by structural inequalities that position them in different relations of power to each other. For this reason, there is also no homogeneous 'we' to constitute the actors of a universal gender equality project.

Within training scenarios, this means that trainers need to be fully aware of their own positionality, especially, but not only, in relation to trainees. Trainers are neither free from their own life experiences of gender relations – which are framed by the contexts in which they have lived, and influence what they identify as relevant issues or strategies for change. Nor are they free from the effects of other structures through which inequality is reproduced, such as race, class and ethnicity, and which place trainers in specific locations in configurations of power. In other words, trainers must be aware of their position within these structures and the implications of this.

Global economic inequalities figure large in this 'balance' of power. Group discussions referred to embedded assumptions that Northern trainers are more competent than those from the South. Class divisions also often structure the trainer / trainee relationship, influencing the presentation of gender knowledge, and the priority and legitimacy given to different experiences of gender relations.

Nevertheless, as Shamim Meer remarked, the rise of capitalism, and the individualism underpinning it, has tended to obscure structural differences such as race and class, and the ways in which they intersect, so that highlighting, acknowledging and responding to their implications now requires more explicit attention.

b) Diverse contexts

Models of change

Gender knowledge production and education takes place in a wide variety of contexts, and this was identified as a key factor in producing diverse approaches to the communication of this knowledge. Ann Whitehead pointed out that the dominant models of social change influence the approach taken: models of how society works influence assumptions and expressions of how change happens, and what needs to change. Advanced capitalist societies, which see people as individuals operating independently of each other and influenced only incidentally by their social relationships, draw on an understanding of self-society relations in which individuals take on values, including gender identities and relations, through a socialisation process which 'fills up empty vessels'. This model suggests approaches to change such as the 'banking' pedagogy in which people are assumed to absorb new knowledge and reproduce it in relatively straightforward ways, requiring essentially technical inputs.

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Other models of change, such as those influenced by Marxist thought, emphasise the constitution of individuals through the act of playing out identity – including gender identity – in the context of specific social relations. In this formulation, social relations are intrinsic to what the 'self' consists of, and not merely incidental. These narratives point to different objects of change as well as different processes to achieve it: transforming *social relations* cannot be achieved via a packet of knowledge but requires collective struggle and action in a process through which people are re-constituted in relation to each other. This re-constitution, since it explicitly has implications for all members of society, requires collective identity to be built and 'consciousness' to be developed that can recognize and challenge the inevitable resistance to this declared attempt to redistribute power.

Levels and sites of change

Context is not only important for influencing what is identified as needing change, and the appropriate approaches for achieving this, but also because it influences how gender knowledge is received. Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay observed that some contexts are receptive to particular formulations of knowledge and some are resistant or hostile. Importantly, the reception of knowledge depends partly on what kinds of knowledge are considered valid in particular environments.

Moreover, people working on the production and communication of gender knowledge work in a range of different environments, including social movements, government organisations, academic institutions, non-governmental organisations, in international and donor organisations, at community levels, and at the grassroots. Each of these sites has different criteria for what makes an item of knowledge acceptable or valid and therefore a legitimate basis for action.

The positive or negative reception of knowledge may also depend on individuals. Within one group there can be major differences in responses to gender training: Ann Whitehead gave the example of an OECD-DAC training, which had been thoroughly prepared and planned. A lengthy needs assessment had taken place, and good documentation prepared, but since all people involved had different ideas concerning what they wanted from the training, everyone was also in different ways disappointed. These different responses may derive from a variety of sources including personal experience, work identities and relationships, different 'comfort levels' with institutional objectives and ways of working.

There may also be variations in the stated reasons for inserting gender knowledge at these sites, therefore affecting how the knowledge is received. The purpose may be to influence policy, to change the mechanisms through which policy is implemented, to re-orientate people towards social justice objectives or to help build an analysis to stimulate or frame personal and political struggle.

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In addition, the values and structures of the organisation may influence how the individuals within it are inclined or able to respond. The presentation given by Penny Plowman clarified that what is referred to under the umbrella of gender training often entails change at different levels: society, organisations and the self. A single model of gender training cannot achieve change at all these levels and needs to remain flexible in form. At any one site, the key strategies for stimulating further change will be different and need to be identified. In organisational change processes, for example, a key step is often facilitating an analysis of how an organisation is itself specifically gendered. This may include identification and analysis of the actions and structures which maintain inclusion and exclusion in general – and for development organisations, what these mean for the delivery of development outcomes.

At other sites, alternative strategies may be necessary and appropriate: Abhijit Das gave examples of how gender training with 'grassroots' women for empowerment mainly expressed at the community level clearly requires different inputs than gender training for a group of privileged men such as Health Ministry bureaucrats to help insert gender knowledge into health policy and implementation. The latter constitutes in many ways the 'problem group': they are least likely to be aware of how social structures distribute power unequally, and themselves stand to lose privileges in the wider change processes being sought. It is appropriate that training across this range of circumstances should draw on a variety of approaches and tools.

Communicating gender knowledge takes many forms

- Gender training should be recognized as merely an entry point from which broader structural and social change can be gradually addressed.

- Technical approaches to gender knowledge dissemination have severe limitations, including that if gender knowledge is packaged as a set of technical skills it is easy to do away with in the face of competing priorities or shrinking budgets.

- Training initiatives and the gender advocates who facilitate them need to maintain strong connections to the women's and other social movements as these are the sites where the local meanings of gender equality are continuously explored and articulated.

- Gender advocates need to remain aware of their own location in relations of power, as mediated through gender, race, class and ethnicity, and of how this influences the kinds of gender knowledge emphasised and the legitimacy of the knowledge they communicate.

- Gender training sets out to bring change at different levels across societies, organisations and individuals. A single model of gender training cannot achieve change at all these levels and sites, so models of training need to remain flexible.

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3 Structural issues mediating the production and reception of gender knowledge

Some aspects of the structural influences creating differences between contexts in how gender knowledge is produced, how far it is considered valid, and how it is received were particularly highlighted during the conference. It was emphasised, for example, that the reception of gender knowledge is influenced partly by the objectives and practices of the development discourses into which it is inserted. Both gender relations and the spaces for changing them are also influenced by the spread of market economics, by changing political structures, by changing features of the socio-political landscape such as the role of religion, and by particular features of the organisations in which gender trainings take place.

Some of these influences appear to counter equality objectives and thus limit what gender training can achieve. Others suggest a need for careful identification of the spaces in which change could happen. Where configurations of power are changing in the current development scenario, gender advocates need to be particularly alert to the meaning of these changes for gender relations and for future work on gender equality, including gender training. Careful analysis of the structural influences in particular contexts can help to clarify how the content of training can be adapted, what forms training might take, and what results might be expected.

a) 'Development'

Early in the conference, the questions were asked: Have we been naïve in trying to insert gender knowledge into the context of development discourse and practice? Can feminist insights and epistemologies operate effectively in the development environment? Jashodhara Dasgupta commented that while we had thought working in development had the potential to take gender knowledge into places where change could happen – into organisations and communities, for example – we may have underestimated the extent to which development is specifically apolitical, seeks incremental change which presents few challenges to the status quo, and formulaic answers. Development organisations therefore need success in these terms. On the other hand, gender training ultimately represents a strongly contrasting model – it seeks political consciousness, real and substantial transformation, and highlights the significance of learning processes. Working within 'development' involves submitting at least notionally to its contrary requirements, and it is here that gender knowledge has been most visibly instrumentalized, stripped of its radical political content and put to the service of often very contradictory national and global projects.

Where development is conceived and played out in terms of programme and project cycles, there is a further problem with investing energy in this site, over and above alternative sites. Focusing only at this site may leave glaring gaps at other sites where gender knowledge faces crucial challenges: among ordinary people 'on the street', for example, or in the increasingly significant corporate environment.

Further, it may not be simply a question of the practices of development that create obstacles for the reception of gender knowledge: gender equality goals may also challenge the objectives of some conceptions of development. Although more attention is currently being paid to human development models

and rights based approaches in development discourses than was the case 20 years ago, these nevertheless remain confined within an overriding concern with economic growth. Where development is in practice played out in terms of building the institutions required by the globalisation of neo-liberal economic paradigms, gender knowledge faces the enormous challenge of being inserted into national projects to establish economic structures which may themselves exacerbate the inequalities gender training attempts to dismantle.

b) Neo-liberal globalisation

Globalisation has driven increasing global inequalities and in some contexts deepened poverty, re-invoking, as Ruth Pearson suggested, the salience of Kate Young's distinction between women's condition – denoting their practical needs many of which may be similar to those of men in a particular situation – and women's position (in relation to men). This situation presents two challenges for gender equality projects. First, increasing inequality as liberalisation offers economic opportunities to the relatively privileged minority strengthens the divisions between privileged women and poor women, and is likely to have the effect of strengthening dominant forms of knowledge, with implications for certain kinds of trainer / trainee relationship. Second, in contexts of widespread and deepening poverty and employment vulnerability, where there is little to go around among women *and* men we perhaps need to remember that working only on gender equality may not amount to much. As Ruth said, '50 percent of nothing is nothing'. What this means for gender equality projects is that in contexts of poverty and vulnerability, women's and men's common needs for more absolute resources and protection from vulnerability may be as urgent as redistributing scarce available resources equally. Gender training initiatives may have limited potential impact where they do not clearly articulate and effectively challenge the role of global-level as well as local-level economic inequalities and liberalisation processes that exacerbate them.

'50 percent of nothing is nothing.'

Ruth Pearson specifically stressed how neo-liberalism has undermined social reproduction. She reminded the conference participants that feminism started with a critique of the differentiated valorization of production and reproduction and she made a strong case for a return to this core of social difference as the basis for gender analysis and training.

Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay argued further that the undermining of social reproduction by neo-liberalism has a direct bearing on the way in which Northern agencies conceive of the empowerment of women. This conception is embedded in Northern structures that do protect women's reproduction, which obscures that social protection is a prerequisite for addressing women's strategic interests and position (in developing countries). Empowerment and agency is not driven by will but has a resource base: women need support and social protection.

Inequalities driven by globalisation have also provided the context for new manifestations of some features of gender relations that gender analysis and training need to take account of. These include some striking examples of violence against women. Kathleen Staudt spoke of the 370 murders of women and children that took place along the US/Mexico border areas between 1993 and 2003 – an area strongly defined by the international wage inequalities,

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which have drawn US production systems to Mexico to produce for the US market.

The rise of markets in the context of globalisation has also involved a process of commodification, including the commodification of gender knowledge. Gender training – like many other kinds of education subject to commercial drivers – in a sense offers knowledge as a something that can be bought, potentially by-passing the role of the learning process. As Christine Verschuur pointed out, in many contexts 'doing gender' has become a set of skills packaged as a new kind of job. Lina Abou Habib observed, for example, that economic and political trends in the Middle East since Beijing have influenced gender training and trainers, corporatising and commercialising both, structuring them in terms of per diems and costs, and encouraging sophisticated packaging to make training digestible to the resistant. This has contributed to a visible process of de-linking training from advocacy and isolating gender knowledge dissemination from the social movements – and from the feminist research – which generate it. Trainers need to be aware of their own positions in this scene. Making a career out of being a 'gender trainer' could obscure the motivation for stimulating change, as substantial change would also change the nature of the organisations in which trainers' careers are played out. Making a living out of gender training can also make us vulnerable to commercial demands, which may be contrary to long-term gender equality objectives, including preferences for short trainings, requests for sanitized and palatable approaches, and pay scales that sometimes vary according to whether we are from the South or the North. We may need to develop strategies – perhaps common strategies – for responding to these demands.

Ruth Pearson warned that the trajectory of globalisation is as yet incomplete, and its future pathways are not known. Signals taken from the huge economic changes in China, and the regional and global repercussions of these, should alert us to the possibility that future change may threaten the infrastructure on which steps towards women's rights have been built. China's economic expansion has been built in some cases explicitly on a strategy of 'asking no questions' concerning the status of rights or democracy in countries in which it invests. On the other hand, much work towards gender equality has been achieved in the context of work on democratisation, and for building systems of accountability including in corporate environments. If these features become irrelevant in globalisation processes, progress in these areas could rapidly be lost. Gender analysis, and the gender training initiatives that bring gender analysis into organisations, need to develop strategies to address these potential changes in the terms of engagement for work on gender equality.

c) Political structures

Political structures in different contexts also influence how and what work can be done towards gender equality. Progress towards democratisation has been an important opportunity for working on women's rights, but it remains unclear

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what the meaning of the apparent freedoms offered by democracy might mean for women in different contexts. At the same time, huge areas of the globe have made few gestures towards democracy. Marguerite Appel pointed out that alliances with social movements for work on gender depend on democratic space for social movements, of which for example, there is little in Egypt and the Middle East. In these circumstances, identifying good entry points for change remains an important challenge. Christine Verschuur added that in places where there is no grassroots movement to be accountable to, we need to address other publics to locate and contextualise gender training. Shamim Meer emphasised that the change in political contexts before and after apartheid in South Africa deeply influenced the meaning of work on gender: during apartheid the focus was on bringing feminist struggles into freedom struggles. While women's struggles remained barely visible, the groundswell of grassroots action did facilitate links between women at local and global levels. These links have been much harder to maintain in the democratic years, which have been defined by the divisive imperatives of the new market economics.

Gender training in contexts such as these where links to political action are weakened or absent may require focused and creative work alongside training to seek out or strengthen links, or to develop pressure for the extension of democratic space.

d) The politics of religion

Ruth Pearson's presentation also raised the issue of the rise of religion and the power of religious leaders in development in recent years, and the significance of this for work on gender. She commented that gender training has mainly proceeded as though religion doesn't matter. But the eagerness with which donor countries have courted religious leaders for support on various issues should alert us to the more powerful voices these figures are being endowed with in development discourses. Gender equality issues, such as work on child marriage or women's self-determination, are obvious and easy sacrifices in such negotiations. Women's reproductive rights have already been severely undermined.

The place of religion in the training context was also mentioned by some participants. Their assertion was that emphasis should be placed on those aspects of religion which offer space for change, in particular by not allowing a situation in which only traditionalist, male voices are consulted, and by working at representing a variety of religious voices to emphasise the plurality of religious expression.

e) Organisations

The histories, contexts and structures of organisations all mediate knowledge as it crosses epistemological contexts. Gender concepts, for example, have not translated easily into Francophone country contexts in part because of their different colonial histories. These histories have influenced the dynamics of civil society and embedded a different tradition of lobbying and

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advocacy, both of which have played a more central role in Anglophone contexts. Gender training initiatives directed at specific organisations may need to take better account both of how histories and structures have influenced the culture of the particular organisation in which training is taking place, as well as of how histories and structures have influenced the social institutions operating in that context. Analysis of the specific features of social institutions and organisations in particular contexts may then be key to achieving properly 'located' gender training.

Organisations are also influenced by the wider political environment, which affects the kinds and quality of gender knowledge they produce. Political considerations may, for example, cause them to change the frameworks for gender knowledge production: Kathleen Staudt elaborated how the UNDP – which once took a cutting edge position on inequality – has retreated from this position in recent years. While their framing of statistical information to

produce a Gender Development Index (GDI) and a Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) has provided a useful tool, these have been developed at the same time as attention to global inequalities cutting across gender has decreased within the organisation, even as those inequalities increase. As a result, they are weak in capturing intersectionality: there is no attempt to discern how women's empowerment fits into the schema of global inequalities, or to compare gender figures at the local level with a global level. Meanwhile, within the UNDP's measurement for the distribution of the control of wealth, which attempts to capture global inequalities, gender is almost invisible. For advocacy work including gender training in these and other organisations, this is significant firstly because if good information on intersectionality is not available, it is more difficult to foreground this issue in training initiatives. Secondly, and more broadly, trainers need to be alert to how the histories and current change directions of particular organisations will influence – and perhaps limit – responses to gender knowledge.

Institutions and organisations at the meso level are also important sites influencing both the reception and the production of gender knowledge. Attention to this level may be especially important in contexts undergoing decentralisation processes that create new configurations of power. Organisations at this level are often key components of systems organising the access and provisioning of resources for human reproduction, such as childcare, employment, and women's entitlements and responsibilities that can have a particularly powerful bearing on gender relations.

'Community' is one social institution at this level that has been a particular focus for gender knowledge production as well as dissemination. Participatory methods for local knowledge production, for example, have been heralded as opening up new sources/forms of gender knowledge. Elisabeth Hofmann commented, however, that the notion of community needs problematising, especially in the context of the promotion these methods, for it is at the level of community that many features of inequality are maintained and reproduced. Participatory methods with communities often do not work for women, and if they are the only tool in use, work on gender inequality can be difficult to operationalise at this level.

Specific organisations – such as government organisations, educational organisations and community development organisations – at the meso level also reproduce gender relations which, as Penny Plowman pointed out, are integral to their structure, function and practice. Both formal and informal strategies are used within such organisations to maintain gender and other hierarchies. Sites such as these may require particular attention in gender change initiatives. Strategies for change within them may include a process of recognizing and naming the formal and informal strategies used to reproduce gender relations.

Structures mediating change

- Careful analysis of structural influences in particular contexts can help to clarify how the content of training can be adapted; what form training should take; and what results might be expected.

- The discourses and practices of development pose particular challenges for gender knowledge reception because development usually requires a-political action, incremental change and formulaic answers. Currently, development objectives are also confined within a concern for economic growth.

- Economic liberalisation and the globalisation of markets have exacerbated some forms of inequality, contradicting the broader goals of gender equality projects.

- Spaces for change may be influenced by the politics of religion, particularly the growing relationship between religious leaders and development.

- Spaces for change are also influenced by political structures, especially the extent of democratisation in a particular context.

- The histories and structures of institutions and organisations mediate how and what gender knowledge is produced, as well as how it is received. Meso-level institutions and organisations may need particular attention as these are especially powerful in reproducing gender relations.

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4 Specific challenges and promising ways forward

As a result of these broad challenges facing gender knowledge projects, there was widespread caution around making claims for what gender training can achieve. Deborah Kasente spoke of the need to be modest: there has been some progress in mainstreaming gender in academic departments, for example, but also continued resistance to accepting gender knowledge as a 'core value'. Given that there are many types of gender training, and these are inserted into diverse contexts, we need to be clear of what outcome we are looking for in particular situations, and how this outcome relates to broader and longer-term goals. This may mean acknowledging that each step is very small. Ayesha Imam phrased this as 'needing to be humble'.

Nevertheless, while the distance still to be travelled to achieve the envisaged social transformation remains great, there is little doubt that several small steps have been made through gender training initiatives. Josephine Ahikire pointed out that gender training has popularised some feminist concepts amongst many people who would not otherwise have been exposed to them. Sriyani Perera described examples of how gender training frameworks can be used to address issues of sexuality in Asia, in contexts in which it is otherwise very difficult to raise such issues. Jeanette Kloosterman described how work on gender within Oxfam Novib has resulted in raising gender targets such that projects are now required to show that 70 percent of their budgets are spent on women.

A number of themes emerged that offer particular challenges to gender training, as well as opportunities for taking it forward. They thus represent both unresolved issues that require special attention and greater clarity, and also a series of ideas for working with gender training in new ways.

a) Negotiating the need for theory and the demand for the practical

Negotiating the tensions between theory and practice remains a particular challenge. Actors from within development cooperation organisations spoke of the pressures they face to undertake quick and dirty training for the sake of 'practical' concerns. Jeanette spoke of the difficulties of connecting theoretical clarity with the practicalities of implementation, and Manuela Jansen of the need to revisit how the need for practical strategies has contributed to making gender analysis a technical exercise in the context of some donor organisations.

"If you don't know where you are going then any road will do." **Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking Glass**

But theoretical clarity is necessary to put action into context and to relate it to the broader goals of social justice. Josephine commented that we need to be clear about the theory, or what happens is just 'noise' – out of context and without meaning. Similarly, Kausar Khan spoke of the need for more conceptual clarity on the meaning of gender for, as she said, 'If you don't know where you're going then any road will do'. But, expressing the tension between needing theoretical clarity while also needing practical implementation strategies, Kausar also warned against a tendency to 'search for depth but wanting it on the surface'. Conceptual clarity implies conceptual depth and cannot be communicated in sound-bite formulations. An important unresolved issue was how to respond to requests for gender training limited to practical tools and skills that separate these skills from the

knowledge and conceptual depth that grounds them and gives them their strength.

b) Working with resistance in organisations: working on accountability

The challenge of working on resistance in organisations also remains, particularly in organisations that have no transformatory agenda, such as national bureaucracies and UN organisations. Marguerite Appel spoke of the importance of gender training as an entry point for change and the difficulties of finding pathways to change that fall within the mandates of such organisations. Organisational culture can also block change: Penny Plowman pointed out that the culture of consensus, which organisations often strive to build, can prevent real engagement with diversity, difference and dissent that might bring about conceptual depth and commitment to change.

Setting up effective mechanisms within organisations to ensure accountability to gender equality goals was offered as an important step in maintaining change, but was also acknowledged to be fraught with problems. As Manuela Jansen pointed out, setting up accountability mechanisms that might work is a challenging task when the dominant criteria of an organisation work counter to them. Katrine Danielsen added that pre-existing accountability structures often block the effects of new ones, and there is a need to look more closely at exactly how institutional incentives and structures can be counterproductive to gender accountability. Accountability mechanisms, such as targets for the proportion of spending directed at women, as are in place in HIVOS and Oxfam Novib, can sometimes (but need not necessarily) lead to further bureaucratization. Franz Wong observed that this can have the effect of limiting the creative space necessary for change, rather than increasing it, because such well meaning initiatives can become ends in themselves thereby encouraging 'blind' implementation without meaning or understanding.

Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay spoke of a need to explore ways of crossing organisational boundaries. This might involve large-scale advocacy to push for the reform of institutional mandates where these hamper change for gender equality. It might also involve networking and collaborating beyond organisational limits, and putting greater and more focused effort into working with civil society organisations and movements. Where civil society organisations are weak, collaboration may need to be preceded by much more direct support.

c) Confronting power and conflict

Demands for sanitized versions of gender analysis, packaged in palatable ways, has caused some aspects to be obscured, which may need now to be brought out of the shadows once more. Hettie Walters spoke of the need for more clarity and outspokenness on the political nature of gender training, and of the centrality of power relations both between individuals and between groups.

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Several calls were made to re-state the connections between the personal and the political, and for trainers to take more account of their own locations within configurations of power. Jashodhara Dasgupta called for 'more radical critical approaches', and more political processes of struggle.

We may also need to acknowledge more clearly that working on gender involves conflict, and Elisabeth Hofmann suggested that gender trainers need to develop skills in conflict management rather than conflict avoidance, especially when working in mixed groups. Ayesha Imam clarified that gender trainings do not themselves cause conflict but can sometimes bring existing conflict into focus. Dorine Plantenga described a series of relatively confrontational methods, such as the use of theatre and shocks, designed to provoke engagement. While there was some worry that confrontational methods can be counter-productive by causing people to close down, Lina Abou Habib argued that avoiding confrontations means leaving important issues unaddressed, and this is a disservice to those who could speak up and to those who could act differently.

d) Embracing diversity

At the same time, it was widely acknowledged that there is no one-size-fits-all version of gender training and that training needs to continue to develop definitions and frameworks appropriate for the contexts in which it takes place. Indeed, models of training may need to become even more diverse than the current experience in order to adapt appropriately to different sites and levels at which change is sought. Andrea Cornwall's presentation called for developing a toolkit of problem-posing methods to engage with lived experience in people's personal and work lives. Abhijit Das suggested that adaptation to different contexts involves being comfortable with many different ideas about gender and its meanings. It was agreed that it is important to continue to develop and adapt available tools creatively, but in order to retain their transformatory potential, the trainer's own sense of commitment and responsibility are critical.

e) Focusing on how we learn

Raising the question of how we – and others – learn prompted a series of suggestions. Many of these draw on a pedagogical model that frames the learning experience as one in which new information is processed by an individual through a series of pre-existing life experiences. Suggestions included emphasising the need for reflection, making connections to personal experience, reflecting on trainees' locations in the work environment, and focusing on the process of learning.

Andrea Cornwall spoke of the need to start from people's everyday experiences of lived social relations, to 'surface' theories from reflection on actual day-to-day experience rather than imposing them in the abstract. Dorine Plantenga also spoke of the learning moment when 'what someone says triggers something inside', which is not necessarily directly related to what has been said, but is an insight that sheds light on or gives meaning to an aspect of pre-existing life experience.

f) Promising methods

The discussion on how people learn also connected to a series of suggestions and descriptions of methods and methodologies for gender training in different contexts. Penny Plowman's presentation described an Action–Reflection–Learning process for facilitating change within organisations, which provides space for individual reflection as well as group dialogue and organisation-wide sharing. Useful tools to stimulate reflection and dialogue are, for example, diary keeping by participants, and photography by participants to illustrate or represent specific aspects of the organisation where change is sought, such as photographs of symbols of inclusion and exclusion.

Dorine described a 'boundaries' exercise to relate the concepts of gender to everyday experience. Participants stand inside a chalked square representing the limits of acceptable behaviour for their gender, and write down outside the square all the things they can think of that they are unable to do due to their gender. She commented that women often find this exercise relatively easy, being already aware of the behaviour restrictions required of them, but men often find it more difficult to identify the limits put on them as men. For this reason it can be particularly useful to bring into focus the limits imposed by male identity.

Methods such the boundaries exercise can be used to explore the complexity of gender relations both across and within contexts. As Andrea Cornwall observed, the social rules that set these boundaries are often broken and are sometimes easier to break for people to whom different social rules also apply – for example, for elite women in some contexts. Andrea also described a similar 'gender life-lines' tool, which involves identifying and analysing the points and events in participants' own lives at which some change occurred in their relations as gendered beings – such as a woman cutting her long hair short or starting to play football – and using this to explore how gender identity is relational, changes over the course of life and is something we all play a part in shaping.

Abhijit Das offered 'privilege analysis' as a useful tool when working with groups whose locations within structures of inequality such as class, race or gender offer them some advantages. Privilege analysis can be used instead of or together with the customary focus on subordination and offers the possibility

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of approaching power creatively, and in ways that relate directly to the experiences of certain kinds of trainees. It may also help people unfamiliar with analysing personal power to articulate male gender boundaries, and to problematise the apparent related 'advantages'.

Both Pilar Trujillo Uribe and Isabel Rauber described methodologies for learning and change with roots in Latin American popular education approaches. Pilar

gave a presentation on the 'Neighbourhoods of the World: Urban Stories' (BDM) project, a multicultural initiative working with young people in nine countries. The project methodology draws strongly on Participative-Action-Research (RAP), an approach that holds that knowledge is transforming only when it relates to a social 'praxis'. The approach aims to facilitate the process through which young people[3], conceived individually and collectively, become key actors of analysis of their own lives. Importantly, the project accounts for the fact that immediate results are not the ultimate end, and the broad objectives of cultural, social, and political transformations do not come about clearly as a direct result of immediate or short term actions.

Isabel described a project developing and using distance learning tools such as education modules produced for TV and DVD to broaden the reach of popular education-based methodologies. These modules use a Participative-Action-Research approach to reach, amongst other groups, indigenous groups in Argentina. The project's approach is firmly rooted in a notion of the social constitution of subjects and sees its current task as 'To form, to know how to think, to know how to do, to know how to govern to transform…' Specifically, it recognizes participants' needs to become professionally and technically qualified but aims to strengthen their capacities in an integral manner so they can transform their situations in terms of lived realities, such as access to work, education and politics.

In working with approaches such as these, Pilar said it is important not to think of them as a panacea, but to take account of the challenges that arise when using them. Problems encountered in the BDM project include difficulties derived from the participants' internalisation and assimilation of dominant points of view, from the exercise of power within the groups, and from the tensions between individual and collective roles and between participation and representation. But these are challenges that can be addressed. Pilar also called for ideas and advocacy to bring these approaches to mainstream development organisations.

There are similarities between these approaches and peer-based gender training recommended by Andrea Cornwall. Peer-based learning shifts the emphasis away from professionalized gender training to mutual exchange at all levels. Ayesha Imam also spoke of the experience of an NGO learning cooperative that had taken on a process of mutual training on different issues over a series of meetings, after which participants reported that they understood more deeply about how to be aware and how to think. Peer-based learning offers an opportunity to explore and analyse problems and articulate

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[3] RAP is not confined to young people, but was used in relation to young people for the purposes of the BDM project.

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solutions beyond the power-implicated trainer/trainee relationship and has the potential to stimulate collaboration beyond the learning scenario.

g) Drawing more strongly on social movements and alliances

Echoed in much of the discussion on methods and challenges was a persistent call for focusing more attention on women's and other social movements and their struggles to bring about change. This should be directed at supporting movements with resources and at making alliances with movements operating beyond the boundaries of development organisations. This focus would somewhat redress the imbalance established over the last decade, in which gender mainstreaming has framed development institutions as the relevant sites for change. Mainstreaming has also emphasised the need for gender to be operationalised across the board, at the expense of women's organisations in civil society which can produce new knowledge and nurture specific kinds of critical consciousness. Alliances between actors in development organisations and actors in social movements can also help 'root' the former in a broader politics of change. As Ruth Pearson commented, we cannot afford an either/or strategy: 'We need to be greedy. We need both.'

Networking and organising across organisational boundaries can help generate both insider and outsider activism, as Kathleen Staudt emphasised, as well as generate critical insights into the work that is conducted in each organisation. Partnerships between actors in research, theory and practice can also produce new gender knowledge by drawing on the different knowledge production processes associated with each site. Several discussions called for more attention to these important interfaces.

h) Assessing impact; documentation and communication

While there was general agreement on the need, as trainers, to be accountable to the outcomes of training, this raised the issue of how we can know what the outcomes actually are. Kathleen asked how we know which methods or processes are really transformative when there are so few studies on the medium or long term impact of different forms of gender training. Ayesha Imam pointed out that evaluations, such as they exist, are usually completed immediately after the training, at which point only short-term effects can be assessed.

Lina Abou Habib also called for a much more concerted effort to document, publicise and disseminate the more radical methods that have been effective in disturbing the status quo within agencies, and which have consistently existed alongside the more popular and sanitized methods. Successful training stories need to reach a wider audience to enable creative and critical thinking about how to take successful strategies forward.

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> ### *Issues requiring further attention*
>
> - More work is required bringing theoretical clarity to bear on implementation processes and other practical concerns.
>
> - Strategies are needed to respond to requests for quick and dirty gender trainings.
>
> - Setting up new accountability mechanisms for gender equality goals in organisations requires detailed analysis of how these are likely to interact with existing accountability mechanisms.
>
> - The political nature of gender training needs to be more explicitly acknowledged, and strategies developed for effectively handling the latent conflict it can bring to the surface.
>
> - Models of gender training need to become even more diverse to adapt appropriately to the different sites and levels at which change is sought.
>
> - Training methods need to focus more consistently on the life experiences of participants and to create adequate spaces for a process of reflection.
>
> - Alliances and collaborations between actors working on gender equality within development organisations and women's movements and other social movements need to be more actively sought, developed and maintained.
>
>   - More partnerships are also needed between actors in research and in practice, to generate new critical insights and new gender knowledge.
>
>   - Promising methods need to be more actively evaluated, collated and disseminated.

5 Implications and recommendations

Taking stock of the gender training landscape

- Current practice in research and training should be thoroughly mapped, so that a clear picture of the diversity of forms and methods for training can be produced.

- Clearer acknowledgement is needed of the importance of properly 'located', contextualised gender training.

- More spaces for are needed for reflection on and adaptation of gender training work in different contexts, including regional, local and global meeting spaces for re thinking what we are doing, and to enable different actors to build on this process.

- Promising methods need to be more actively evaluated, collated and disseminated.

Generating new knowledge to feed into gender training processes

Contextualised knowledge

- Action Research is urgently needed on the different hybrids forms and shapes of gender training taking place, to contribute to new, fresh knowledge of contextualised gender training.

- The role played by language in influencing how training is carried out needs further elaboration. Efforts are needed to clarify concepts for gender and development across different languages in a systematic review related to particular contexts.

- How entry points for work on gender are shaped by contexts needs further attention, for instance where and how issues such as HIV/AIDS or violence against women are appropriate and useful for bringing gender knowledge into different environments.

- Attention is needed to how globalisation processes and political structures affect gender relations and limit the effectiveness of gender change initiatives, as well as the new spaces for change they may offer in different contexts.

- The generation of local knowledge should be encouraged and supported with resources, for instance by organising write-shops[4] instead of workshops, at which NGO practitioners are provided space and time to reflect on and communicate their experience.

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[4] A workshop or workshop process intended and designed to produce a written document or documents, either during the workshop or subsequently. Writing may be preceded by discussion and analysis, and sometimes by the teaching of writing skills.

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Analysis of organisations and institutions

Attention is needed to how the histories and structures of institutions and organisations mediate how and what gender knowledge is produced, as well as how it is received.

Meso-level institutions and organisations need particular attention as these are especially powerful in reproducing gender relations as well as, in some contexts, in distributing resources for development and for social reproduction.

Setting up new accountability mechanisms for gender equality goals in organisations requires detailed analysis of how these are likely to interact with existing accountability mechanisms.

More work is required to bring theoretical clarity to bear on implementation processes and other practical concerns in particular organisations.

Alliances and collaboration

Alliances and collaborations between actors working on gender equality within development organisations and women's movements and other social movements need to be more actively sought, developed and maintained as these are the sites where the local meanings of gender equality are continuously explored and articulated.

There is a need to build partnerships between theory, research and practice by promoting face to face meetings in which ideas, strategies and structures for collaborative action can be built, and stronger links between research and social change can be developed. These groups need to come together more often, in particular because their interface is a key site for generating the critical insights to drive change.

Strategies for taking gender training forwards

Re-politicising gender knowledge

- The connection between gender knowledge and its change implications needs to be re-stated in the face of competing interpretations.

- The relationship between 'gender' and 'feminism' needs to be asserted, as does the political nature of gender training. Strategies for effectively handling the latent conflict gender training can bring to the surface need to be further developed.

- Gender advocates need to remain aware of and responsive to their own locations in configurations of power as it is mediated through race, class and ethnicity as well as gender.

- Technical approaches to gender knowledge dissemination have severe limitations and should be avoided. Strategies are needed to respond to requests for quick and dirty gender trainings.

Establishing diversity, flexibility and commitment

- Gender training sets out to bring change into a range of organisations and institutions, and at different levels. A single model of gender training cannot achieve change at all these levels and sites, and models of training need to remain flexible.

- Revisions of tools and methods should have roots in particular environments for which emerging strategies will be most appropriate.

- Training methods need to focus more consistently on the life experiences of participants and to create adequate spaces for a process of reflection.

- Those working in the field of gender knowledge production and communication need to be careful to make spaces for young women to come forward, and to address the power dynamics which hamper them.

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Annex A: Conference Agenda

Revisiting studies and training in gender and development – the making and remaking of gender knowledge

Mauritszaal, Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Amsterdam
May 14-16, 2007

Conference Aim
To critically analyse gender training and understand its role and relations with other efforts to forward gender equality both in the past, mainly gender mainstreaming, and in the future.

Monday, May 14

Opening	
10:30 - 11:00	Registration
11:00 - 12:00	• Welcome • Objectives and Agenda • Introduction
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch

Theme: Gender(ed) knowledge Gender training has been instrumental in popularising gender concepts and, some would argue, forwarding the gender and development agenda. Ironically, it is also held as the main reason behind the depoliticisation and instrumentalization of the agenda. This theme will explore the tensions between gender training and feminist epistemologies required for engendering attitudes and practice.	
1:00 - 2:30	Presentations and Plenary Discussion
2:30 - 3:00	Break
3:00 - 4:30	Small Group Discussions
4:30 - 5:00	Plenary Discussion
6:00 - 9:00	Official Dinner (Café Restaurant Soeterijn, KIT)

Conference sponsors
We wish to thank the following for their financial support:

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Tuesday, May 15

Theme: Gender training as metaphor

In this strict sense, gender training is about a bounded learning intervention, usually in a workshop setting. It can be seen as one of many approaches to affect and develop skills, attitudes and knowledge. Many recognize that other processes and interventions are required – organisational, especially cultural, change; leadership and accountability; resources such as tools and guidelines – apart from training. This theme explores gender training as a microcosm of the challenges faced with these other processes and interventions.

9:00 - 10:30	Presentations and Plenary Discussion
10:30 - 11:00	Break
11:00 - 12:00	Small Group Discussions
12:00 - 12:30	Plenary Discussion
12:30 - 1:30	Lunch

Theme: Gender trainers and advocates

There is widespread recognition that gender trainers and advocates have different perspectives, approaches and motivations. This is, however, not scrutinised, often with the concern for maintaining feminist solidarity. There is little reflection of gender trainers as gendered individuals operating within particular spatial, historical and institutional contexts who derive their livelihoods from gender inequity. This theme explores gender trainers as a diverse group of technicians, development professionals, advocates and/or feminists situated in different gendered, spatial and temporal contexts that give rise to both strengths as a collective but also tensions and contradictions.

1:30 - 3:00	Presentations and Plenary Discussion
3:00 - 3:30	Break
3:30 - 4:30	Small Group Discussions
4:30 - 5:00	Plenary Discussion
6:00 - 7:00	Boat tour of Amsterdam (meeting place to be confirmed)
7:00 -	Informal Dinner (meet there or go with boat tour) (Zeedijk 4-8, Tel. 020-4270551)

Wednesday, May 16

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">

Theme: Future prospects

This theme explores the implications for gender training given recent new directions in women's leadership and rights and asks if similar epistemological issues experienced with gender training are present as development practitioners and gender advocates struggle with recent developments.

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<tr><td>9:00 - 10:30</td><td>Presentations and Plenary Discussion</td></tr>
<tr><td>10:30 - 11:00</td><td>Break</td></tr>
<tr><td>11:00 - 12:00</td><td>Small Group Discussions</td></tr>
<tr><td>12:00 - 12:30</td><td>Plenary Discussion and Closing</td></tr>
<tr><td>12:30 - 1:30</td><td>Lunch</td></tr>
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Theme: Implications for Dutch Development Assistance

The aim of this short session is to analyse the outcomes of the conference for Dutch development assistance and make recommendations.

</td></tr>
<tr><td>1:30 - 3:00</td><td>Plenary Discussion</td></tr>
<tr><td>3:00 - 3:30</td><td>Break</td></tr>
<tr><td>3:30 - 4:00</td><td>Conclusion</td></tr>
</table>

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Annex B: Participant List

Revisiting studies and training in gender and development – the making and remaking of gender knowledge

Mauritszaal, Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Amsterdam
May 14-16, 2007

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Annex C: Participant Bios

Revisiting studies and training in gender and development – the making and remaking of gender knowledge

Mauritszaal, Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Amsterdam
May 14-16, 2007

Abhijit Das
Abhijit Das is the Director of Centre for Health and Social Justice, a policy research and advocacy institution in India. He has been a long term consultant with UNFPA India, developing gender and VAW training curriculum for the health sector. Abhijit is founder member of an alliance on men and gender equality called MASVAW. He is also Clinical Assistant Professor of the School of Public Health and Community Medicine at the University of Washington, Seattle, USA.

Amal Adib Sabbagh
Amal Sabbagh is an experienced practitioner-researcher of gender, policy and political reform in Jordan and the Arab world. She has focused on governance, social equity issues, economic and political participation in the region, and has been working closely with national, regional and international organisations for nearly three decades. Among her current interests/activities, as a consultant and researcher, are institutional and programmatic gender analysis, national women machineries, political participation of women, CEDAW report writing, and election observation.

Andrea Cornwall
Andrea Cornwall is a research fellow at the Institute of Development Studies, and director of the DFID-funded Research Programme Consortium Pathways of Women's Empowerment. Her work includes ethnographic research and writing on gender identities and relationships, men and masculinities, and gender and participatory development.

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Ann Whitehead

Ann Whitehead is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sussex, where for many years she has also researched and taught on gender and development issues. A contributor to foundational debates on feminist engagement with development and on theorising gender, she has had a wide engagement with national and international feminist politics. Building on research on agrarian transformation and changes in rural social and gender relations in Northern Ghana, she has written extensively on economic change and changing gender relations in rural Africa and on gender, poverty and macroeconomic policy.

Ayesha Imam

Ayesha Imam has worked extensively on research, advocacy, training and education to protect and extend women's human rights under customary, secular and religious laws, on human rights generally, and, on democracy and sustainable development. She is a networker with Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) and BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights. The co-initiator of the first Gender Institute in Africa, Ayesha was also Gender Policy Advisor at United Nations Institute for Economic Development and Planning, Dakar and the Head, Department of Culture, Gender and Human Rights at UNFPA.

Bjorg Skotnes

Bjorg Skotnes recently started working as the senior gender adviser in Norad. Previously, she was the Executive Director of Forum for Women and Development in Norway, a secretariat on international women's issues. Bjorg has also been working as a national expert on gender equality in the European Commission. She holds a Masters in gender and development – human geography and is also educated in agriculture and management.

Clare Castillejo

Clare Castillejo is a Social Development Adviser at DFID, working on gender policy issues. She is currently developing gender training for DFID staff, as part of DFID's commitment to strengthen its work on gender. Before joining DFID, Clare worked for Amnesty International, carrying out research on human rights abuses in South Asia, and for UNDP, designing and managing HIV/AIDS capacity building programmes in the Asia Pacific region.

Christine Verschuur

Christine Verschuur, PhD in socio-economy of development, is a teacher and researcher on gender and development issues focusing more specifically on urban social movements and gender relations. She also runs, together with Fenneke Reysoo, the Gender and Development Pole of IUED, which conducts training and publishing activities on gender and development and organises the IUED gender conferences.

Deborah Kasente

Deborah Kasente is a Senior Lecturer at Makerere University in Uganda in the department of Women and Gender Studies. She is also a Senior Research Associate at Makerere Institute of Social Research. Deborah is an educationalist and has worked on issues of gender in the social sectors, gender and development and gender training for varied audiences for over two decades. She is currently coordinating an action research project for improving the quality of basic and higher education in Uganda.

Denise Parmentier

Since 1982 Denise Parmentier has been a gender activist within Oxfam Novib. From 1996, she has been working within the Southern African Bureau, as a Programme Officer for South Africa and then for Zimbabwe. Her main focus areas are gender, gender mainstreaming, gender based violence, HIV/AIDS from a gender perspective, female/feminist leadership. Previously, Denise worked in Bolivia with CIPCA as gender officer focusing on gender mainstreaming within the organisation.

Dorine Plantenga

Dorine Plantenga is an international facilitator, trainer, personal coach and consultant in gender, identity, violent conflict and development issues. She has 25 years of experience in participatory, process-oriented training and teaching. Dorine is also an adult educator, university lecturer and secondary school teacher in language and literature. Previously, she was the director of the Gender and Development Training Section of the Women and Autonomy Centre at Leiden University and a founding member and director of the Gender and Development Training Centre in Haarlem. Dorine holds an MA in Socio- and Psycho-Linguistics.

Elisabeth Hofmann

Elisabeth Hofmann is a Coordinator of the francophone network 'Genre en Action', and was the main organiser of the conference on gender training ('Genre et développement: quels enjeux pour la formation?') in Bordeaux in February 2006 (a summary of the conference results are included in the KIT publication Revisiting Gender Training). She is a trained development economist with diverse experiences in Africa and the Mahgreb region, namely as a trainer (PCM and gender), evaluator, university lecturer and researcher.

Emmanuelle Chauvet

Emmanuelle Chauvet works for the Gender and Development Pole of IUED, which conducts training and publishing activities on gender and development and organises the IUED gender conferences.

Evelien Kamminga

Evelien Kamminga is a social scientist with 20 years of experience in development. Her academic background is in human geography and cultural anthropology. Evelien worked for twelve years in Somalia, Kenya, Mali and Namibia with a wide range of development organisations. She was active in project implementation, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, action research and policy development. She has also worked in the Netherlands as a university researcher, freelance consultant and NGO policy adviser. Currently Evelien is a Development and Gender Equity Advisor at KIT.

Fenneke Reysoo

Fenneke Reysoo, PhD Anthropology, is the Deputy Director of the Graduate Institute of Development Studies in Geneva where she is in charge (with Christine Verschuur) of the Gender and Development teaching and research activities. In the early 1980s she conducted anthropological research on 'Women and Cultural Dominance in Morocco', especially in the arena of local forms of Islam. Fenneke has also conducted applied and action-oriented research concerned with the cultural construction of health and illness, reproductive and sexual health and rights (Morocco, Bangladesh, Mexico, Mali, Burkina Faso).

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Franz Wong

Franz Wong is a gender specialist working at present as the Social Development and Gender Advisor at the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam. He has many years of experience in training, advisory support, research and programme development in gender and development in Asia, the Middle East and Africa. He is on sabbatical as the East Asia Gender Advisor for Oxfam GB and is currently undertaking his PhD at the University of Sussex. (Franz Wong left KIT in September 2007 and returned to Oxfam GB as the East Asia Gender Advisor based in Cambodia).

Hettie Walters

Hettie Walters has been active in the field of gender equality and women's empowerment in development since 1987. Previously she worked on integrating a 'women's/ feminist' perspective in psychiatric and community health care in the Netherlands. Since then she been working as a policy officer, trainer and facilitator, and in methodology development (Participatory Gender Audit) shifting her attention from gender aware programming to organisational and institutional learning and change processes required for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Isabel Rauber

Isabel Rauber, PhD from Habana University, is a researcher focusing on popular education, social movements in urban and rural areas, formal-unionized and informal workers, and indigenous and women movements. She is a member of the 'Foro Mundial de Alternativas' (Global Forum for Alternatives) and Director of the magazine Pasado y Presente XXI (Past and Present XXI).

Janet Rodenburg

Janet Rodenburg recently started as Advisor, Partner Policy and Gender at the Research & Development Department of ICCO (Interchurch organisation for development cooperation), based in Utrecht, the Netherlands. She is an anthropologist by training with extensive field experience in Southeast Asia. Prior to joining ICCO, Janet worked at the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims in Copenhagen, Denmark, and at the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Jeanette Kloosterman

Jeanette Kloosterman is working as a Policy Advisor Gender and Diversity at Oxfam Novib. Before that she worked for the European Union in a rural development programme on gender and indigenous women and also for the FAO on gender in the context of Community Forestry. Jeanette is a cultural anthropologist with a PhD concerning the cultural interpretation of the collective rights of indigenous peoples.

Jashodhara Dasgupta

Jashodhara Dasgupta is an activist and researcher having worked in northern India for over two decades. She heads the organisation SAHAYOG working on gender equality and women's health, using a human rights framework. Jashodhara is involved with civil society groups that monitor and advocate for sexual and reproductive rights, and attempts to bring in the voices of those directly affected, such as rural women or young people, into the arena of policy advocacy.

Josephine Ahikire

Josephine. Ahikire is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere University. She has conducted extensive research in the area of gender and politics relating to governance, labour and popular culture. Her recent publication is a forthcoming book on Localized or Localizing Democracy: Gender and the Politics of Decentralization in Contemporary Uganda.

Kathleen Staudt

Kathleen Staudt, PhD (University of Wisconsin, 1976) is Professor of Political Science at the University of Texas at El Paso. She teaches courses on public policy, borders, democracy, and women. Kathy's twelve books include Women, International Development and Politics: The Bureaucratic Mire (1997). Her latest book is Violence and Activism at the Border: Gender, Fear, and Everyday Life in Cd. Juárez (University of Texas Press, 2008). Kathy is also a social justice community activist.

Katrine Danielson

Katrine Danielsen is a Development and Gender Equity Advisor at KIT. She has ten years of experience in development work in several South Asian and African countries with a wide range of stakeholders including the UN, bilateral agencies, research institutions, international NGOs, and community-based organisations. She worked with the ILO on women workers' rights and gender policy formation and with CARE on civil society strengthening in Niger and Nepal. Her most recent assignment was for DANIDA in Nepal as the Socio-Economic Advisor to the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation.

Kausar Saeed Khan

Kausar Saeed Khan has over 20 years experience in health system development and community development. She is a faculty member of the Department of Community Health Sciences and the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan. Kausar teaches undergraduate medical students, nursing students and graduate students. She has also trained government and non-government national and regional participants on health policy, management, community based social development, and primary health care. For four years, she was a visiting faculty at KIT for its gender and development course.

Kirsty Milward

Kirsty Milward has been working for the last decade on community development with gender equality objectives and primary education methods for first generation literacy with marginalised populations where she lives in rural West Bengal, India. She also works as a freelance consultant, providing research support, writing and editing services in social and rural development and gender issues to a range of research institutions and development organisations. She has an MA in Gender and Development.

Lina Abou Habib

Lina Abou Habib is currently the director of the Collective for Research and Training–Action based in Beirut. She has collaborated in designing and managing programmes in the Middle East and North Africa region on issues related to Gender and Citizenship; Gender, Economy and Trade; and Gender and Leadership. Lina has collaborated with a number of regional and international agencies as well as public institutions in mainstreaming gender in development policies and practices and in building capacities for gender mainstreaming. Previously, Lina was the Programme Coordinator for Oxfam GB in Lebanon as well as a member of the Oxfam GB Gender Team in the UK.

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Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay
Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay, PhD, is a social anthropologist specialised in social development with a focus on gender and development. At present, she is the Area Leader for Social Development and Gender Equity, the Department of Development Policy and Practice at KIT. She has worked in the field of development for over three decades in South Asia, the Middle East and southern Africa. Specialising in gender, citizenship and development research, training and education, she has several publications in her fields of expertise

Manuela Jansen
Manuela Jansen has an MSc in Tropical Crop Science majoring in 'women studies' and 'law and agrarian reform'. She has worked for over nine years with NGOs and farmers' organisations, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, in organisational development and gender and development. Since 2000, Manuela has worked for Cordaid as programme officer and relation manager for West Africa, presently in 'sector entrepreneurship' with a special assignment of linking and learning on gender and economic development and gender mainstreaming.

Marguerite Appel
Marguerite Appel is a trained psychologist and development practitioner specialising in social development and gender equality including women's participation in the labour market, gender justice, citizenship, governance and rights-based approaches. She has experience in social and industrial analysis, strategy development, training, action research, policy and programme development, planning, monitoring and evaluation. Currently based in Cairo as a project leader of a regional programme on women in economic life, Marguerite works with 30 partner organisations covering ten countries in the MENA region.

Maria Jose Barney Gonzalez
Maria Jose Barney Gonzalez is a social development specialist with an MA in Rural Social Development and over 24 years of experience in development work in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. She has expertise in gender and economic rights, sustainable livelihoods, enterprise development, market access, business audits, planning, implementation and evaluation of sustainable development programmes, management, organisational development and institutional change. Maria Jose is a Senior Development and Gender Equity Advisor at KIT.

Marijke Mooij
Marijke Mooij has been working to advance women's rights. She started with Hivos in 2000 after working as gender advisor for Africa with the World Food Programme. At present, Marijke is a Programme Officer for Gender, Women and Development where she manages a portfolio of Hivos financially supported women's rights organisations in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Sri Lanka. Her other responsibilities include mainstreaming gender in the other Hivos thematic policies and practice, capacity building of partner organisations, policy making, and fund raising.

Marit Tjomsland
Marit Tjomsland is a sociologist working as an Associate Professor for the international Masters Programme in Gender and Development at the University of Bergen. She defended her PhD on political Islam as an element in individual life projects in Tunisia in 2000. Recently Marit has focused on issues related to education and knowledge production as well as development and globalisation issues. She is currently involved in a research project on youth and cultural

globalisation in Tunisia and the Czech Republic together with a colleague at University of Bergen.

Pilar Trujillo Uribe

Pilar Trujillo Uribe is a sociologist and educator and Director of Enda America Latina, which belongs to Enda Third World. She has devoted over 30 years working with grassroots communities in various Latin American countries. In Colombia she is an activist of ecology and women's and human rights movements. Pilar has developed initiatives on sensitisation and non-academic training on gender. At present, she is the gender referent in a multicultural process in nine cities of Africa, Europe and Latin America.

Penny Plowman

Penny Plowman has worked in the field of gender and development with international donor agencies and NGOs for the past fifteen years. She is particularly interested in gender and organisational change and has recently completed a participatory, ethnographic organisational case study addressing gender and organisational change for her PhD (University of East Anglia, School of Development Studies). Penny lives in Johannesburg and works as an independent consultant in the field of women's rights, gender and development.

Ruth Pearson

Ruth Pearson has been active in advocacy, research, writing and training in the field of development studies since the mid 1970s. Co-author of the path-breaking Nimble Fingers make Cheap Workers (1981) and the authoritative Feminist Visions, Gender, Development and Policy (1998), her research has focused on women's work in the international economy, mainly in central America but currently on the Thai-Burmese border and in the UK. She has delivered gender training in South and Central America, the Caribbean, sub-Sahrara Africa and East and South East Asia. Formerly Professor of Women and Development at ISS, the Hague, she now directs the Centre of Development Studies at the University of Leeds and is also a trustee of the Women's Employment, Enterprise and Training Unit and of Homeworkers Worldwide.

Sriyani Perera

Sriyani Perera is a Sri Lankan working in ActionAid International as the Women's Rights Coordinator of Asia region. Her work involves coordination and capacity building of the women's rights coordinators of twelve Asian countries, lobbying and advocacy on selected issues and networking with the women's movement in Asia in particular and in Africa and the Americas in general. Her specialisation includes organisational assessments from a gender perspective, gender budgeting, political participation of women and economic governance, and research on violence against women. Sriyani has worked with SNV, UNIFEM, and ADB and has undertaken long term consultancies in many South and South East Asian countries both as a gender trainer and as a strategy developer.

Shamim Meer

Shamim Meer is a feminist activist who has worked as a researcher, writer and organisational development practitioner in South Africa and internationally since mid 1994. Her work has been with NGOs in rural development, urban development and human rights with women's organisations and trade unions. Prior to 1994, she worked as a political and feminist activist within organisations challenging apartheid, and was co-founder of feminist publications SPEAK and Agenda.

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Annex C

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