BRIDGE

development - gender

GENDER AND CULTURAL CHANGE

Supporting Resources Collection

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1. Introduction

What has gender and development got to do with culture? Is gender and development (henceforth GAD) an interference in people's cultures? How can these issues be tackled on a practical level? This booklet introduces a variety of resources that provide answers to these questions, in the form of summaries and extracts from:

- Key resources, including findings and recommendations for policy makers and practitioners
- Case studies which challenge cultural norms both within societies and in the development industry
- Examples of training manuals, guides and bibliographies useful to those wishing to implement work on cultural change in development

This collection forms part of the BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack 'Gender and Cultural Change' which includes an *in brief* bulletin and an overview report on the same theme. It can be used on its own as an introduction to relevant resources, key ideas and experiences, or as a complement to other parts of the pack.

Further resources on gender and culture can be found on the Siyanda website at www.siyanda.org.

2. Key Concepts

What does culture have to do with development? The texts presented in section 2.1 look at the relationship from two angles: Firstly, the development industry interacts with the cultures of the communities with which they engage; Secondly, the development process itself is laden with cultural values. Both these angles are considered in Sweetman, 1995 and in Schech and Haggis, 2000.

The texts presented in section 2.2 address the question: Is gender and development an interference in other people's cultures? Chandra Mohanty argues that western feminist development research imposes western cultural values. The DAC (Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD) sourcebook gives five arguments as to why GAD need not be an imposition.

2.1   Culture and Development: Key Connections

2.1.1 Schech, S. and Haggis, J., 2000, *Culture and Development: A critical introduction*, Blackwell Publishers

This book views culture as constructed and changed by multiple influences. Whether these influences come from inside or outside the culture may not be definable if, as argued in this book, cultures are fluid and interactive rather than distinct from each other. Points of contact between culture and development are discussed and challenged, for example the implicit assumption sometimes made that through development, a culture will become modernised, westernised, and better. The contrasting idea that through development a culture will become modernised and lost, is also unpacked. If culture is viewed as constructed and changing then there is no original, authentic culture to be lost, and traditional becomes a relative term.

The most important intersection between culture and development, the authors argue, is that neither can be understood without the other: people can only see development (or anything else) through their cultural lens; development is not simply an activity, but an approach which brings with it a whole system of knowledge and power. Gender is a theme throughout the book, and one chapter looks specifically at how feminist approaches to development have opened up the above debates. Other themes are: human rights, traditions and nationalism, and information and the media.

The gender-focussed chapter: 'Feminism, development, culture' covers gender approaches to development from Women in Development, to Gender and Development, to postcolonial feminism. These different approaches all challenge the idea that development is primarily about economic growth, and bring in the importance of culture as well as economics. This challenge comes in part because women have been associated with culture. However, at the same the association of women with culture has also been questioned.

The distinction between sex and gender is discussed, and how viewing gender as a cultural construct ties in with the viewing of development ideologies as constructed. New arguments are presented that sex, like gender, is a social construct rather than a biological fact. Such arguments make the case that the way people understand human bodies is an interpretation, and the categorising of humans into male and female is part of that interpretation. So sex does not describe the reality of human bodies, but instead provides a framework for our understanding of our bodies.

The chapter concludes that the most important contribution of 'Cutting edge feminist thinking' (page 114) to development is to bring together a) the perspective of gender (and sex) as constructed, b) the importance of power and difference (eg.

north-south, differences between women), and c) the need to build an international feminist politics which addresses the needs of poor women. This combination generates new possibilities for development.

The contribution of cutting edge feminist development thinking

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  │ Perspectives│   │  Importance │   │ Internationalising│
  │ of gender as│   │  of power   │   │ of feminist politics│
  │  constructed│   │and difference│  │  to address the  │
  └─────────────┘   └─────────────┘   │  needs of the poor│
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New possibilities for
participatory development
starting from the realities and
priorities of third world women
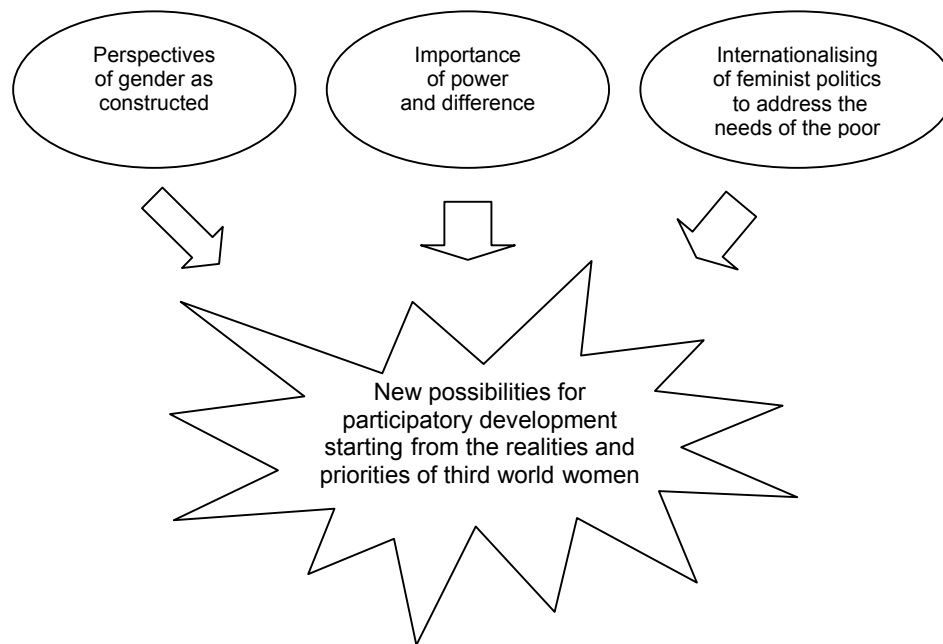
2.1.2 Sweetman, C. (ed.), 1995, Oxfam *Gender and Development* on 'Women and Culture', Vol 3, No 1

In the introduction to this journal, Sweetman argues that development is itself imbued with cultural values:

> *The concept of development is laden with the cultural values of post-colonialism, of Northern countries, and of economists. Over the last 30 years, development has been synonymous with a Northern-based notion of 'modernisation' – economic progress from a 'traditional' to a 'modern' society. Therefore when we consider the issue of culture this involves us in questioning assumptions about the sort of development which is currently being promoted, and the vision of the world which motivates it* (page 1).

Culture is also an issue for societies in which development agencies work. Culture has material effects, influencing power relations within society, women's and men's access to economic resources, and decision making power in the family and beyond.

Women are seen as having a particular association with culture. They are seen as the guardians and transmitters of culture, passing on societal values to their children. They may be required to conform more visibly to cultural customs. Constraints on women are often defended by men, women, and state institutions such as police and the courts, as part of local cultures. Women's conformity to traditional roles is enforced by social censure, and at times by physical and mental violence, including rape and domestic violence, which are accepted as the norm in many cultures.

In spite of pressures to conform, there are also dissenting voices, such as in the personal testimonies included in this collection. Rehana Khatun Adeer explains how, through working with a social organisation in Uttar Pradesh, India, she challenged her seclusion and stopped wearing a *bourkha* (a kind of veil). Alzira Rufino tells of the black women's cultural centre she founded in Brazil which tries to strengthen aspects of culture and tradition which benefit the whole society, not just those with more power. The centre celebrates and teaches the African heritage of Brazil: Yorumba songs, capoeira dance, and Afro-Brazilian food, clothes and decorations.

Northern development agencies however, often ignore local forms of resistance to gender and other cultural norms because these do not relate to their own experiences (Mukhopadhyay, page 4 in this journal). There is a failure to seek out and listen to a diversity of views, meaning only dominant voices are heard, and oppressed groups, such as certain groups of women, remain silenced.

Practical and policy recommendations are included, put together by Seble Dawit and Aben Busia. They state 'While acknowledging that gender oppression is universal, it is imperative to avoid what Gayatri Spivak terms the spectacle of "White women saving Brown women from Brown men"' (page 7). To this end, they recommend:

- Enabling women to raise their own status in societies, and tackle their own cultural constraints
- Local agenda setting and capacity building
- Long term investment and research as 'altering culture is by definition a long-term process' (page 10).

2.2   Is Gender and Development interfering with other people's cultures?

Mohanty takes the view that western feminist research imposes its own cultural viewpoint on third world women. Blinded by colonial preconceptions, these researchers are unable to see the real experiences of the people they study. While Mohanty focusses on research, there are implications for GAD. If driven by western values such as those described by Mohanty, GAD risks victimising rather than empowering third world women. Instead, those who are the targets of GAD activities must themselves guide the process. In contrast to Mohanty, the DAC sourcebook provides five arguments as to why GAD need not be an interference in other peoples cultures.

2.2.1 Mohanty, C.T., 1991, 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse', in C. Mohanty, A. Russo and L. Torres (eds) *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism,* Bloomington: Indiana University Press

Western feminist research portrays third world women as victims. This is the critique made in this article, which although written over ten years ago still has a big impact in academia, and is still relevant to gender and development today. Mohanty charges western feminist research with producing an image of a homogenous 'third world woman' as victim without agency, oppressed by family, culture and religion. Such research 'colonise[s] the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the third world' to construct a singular image of 'an "average third world woman"…[who] leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and her being "third world" (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family oriented, victimized etc.), in contrast to the liberated western woman' (page 56).

Mohanty looks at representations of 'third world' in writings by 'first world' feminists on subjects such as female genital mutilation and Women in Development. The texts she looks at consistently define women as objects of what is done to them, rather than as actors with any agency, and as victims of either 'male violence', 'the colonial process', 'the Arab familial system', 'the economic development process', or 'the Islamic code'.

Rather than starting from lived experiences, this body of feminist writing tends to begin with the assumption of certain differences between first and third world women, and between women and men in the third world, and analyse material realities on this basis. At the same time, within the third world, the same meaning and content are assumed to apply throughout, for example to the sexual division of labour, reproduction, the family, marriage, household, patriarchy, and the veil. For instance, the difference in meaning of the veil at different times and places are ignored, and a correspondence between the number of women wearing veils and the extent of oppression is assumed. Mohanty gives the example of different meanings of veiling in pre and post- revolution Iran. Iranian middle-class women veiled themselves during the 1979 revolution to express solidarity with their working class sisters in opposition to the Shah and western cultural colonisation, while in Iran at the time of Mohanty's writing, the law dictated that all women must wear veils.

Mohanty says her critiques can also apply to third world scholars writing about their own cultures, particularly urban middle class scholars who take their own position as the norm in writing about rural or working class sisters. Her argument holds for anyone who tries to set up their own standards as the yardstick by which to 'encode and create cultural others' (page 55). However, it is possible to escape this trap. Some researchers, including westerners, have avoided colonising the subjects of their research by focusing on local particularities and by deconstructing, rather than starting from colonial preconceptions.

2.2.2 Schalkwyk, Johanna and Woroniuk, Beth , 1997, *DAC source book on concepts and approaches linked to gender equality,* DAC Expert Group on Women in Development, http://www1.oecd.org/dac/htm/sourcebk.htm
(DAC is the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development)
The DAC sourcebook provides five arguments as to why GAD need not be interfering in other peoples' cultures, as quoted below.

In responding to the assertion that support for efforts to achieve equality between women and men is culturally inappropriate, five principle counter-arguments can be mobilised:

1. Almost all development co-operation is about change of one sort or another: changing economic structures, changing farming practices, changing access to media, changing human rights practices. These all have an impact on culture.

2. Development co-operation focuses on helping governments implement international commitments to gender equality they have already made (such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women – CEDAW).

3. There are growing demands for change from women in developing countries. The last decade has seen an explosion of women's organisations and gender equality advocates. These women are articulating clear demands for change. It is no longer possible to argue that calls for equality come only from northern countries. Unfortunately, their voices are not always heard, by representatives of development co-operation agencies who do not seek these women out, or by the mainstream media of their own countries or by officials and politicians.

4. There are many influences on culture. With an increasingly global economy and the international flow of products, media images, and cultural images, almost all cultures are in a state of change. Images shaping changes in gender identities flow not just from development programmes but from other sources as well such as imported soap operas, Hollywood movies, pop music, and Coca-Cola commercials. Cultural images are also manipulated by religious and political movements. Whose culture are people referring to? Who has defined these elements as the crucial elements to be protected?

5. A basic principle of development co-operation strategies on gender equality is to broaden decision-making processes so that women, as well as men, have full input into the definition of what is important and what needs should have priority. All too often the 'cultural argument' is mobilised by men (both northern and southern) who are opposed to that basic goal.

3. Case studies: Challenging cultural norms in societies

Oppressive cultural norms need to be challenged, both in societies and in development institutions and practice. Such challenges can be constructive and practical, leading to concrete improvements for those marginalised by dominant cultural norms. On the other hand, cultural change is a complex process and insensitive efforts instigated by outsiders can be a source of trouble in themselves. It is important to work, where possible, with existing cultural currents and traditions, perhaps revive or give prominence to gender-equitable practices that have been neglected over time, or support already existing alternatives to dominant, unequal gender norms. Opening spaces for voices to be heard of those marginalised by, or contesting norms within their own cultures, is also key.

Activities which take such approaches are described in this section. These case studies are drawn from a range of initiatives, some that seek to span nations and regions, others that work more locally at a grassroots level. They engage with cultures of gender, sexuality, dis/ability and race. Some projects such as Solidez in Nicaragua do not necessarily start out with a focus on culture, but discover in their work that attention only to material and economic activities fails to address key questions of stereotyping, prejudice and self-esteem. The range of experiences presented below testify both to the difficulties of working for cultural change, and to the possibilities of success in this area.

3.1   SPEECH in Southern India: Women initiate change

SPEECH is an NGO working in Tamil Nadu (Southern India). This NGO has generated changes in cultures of gender, with some women taking the lead in SPEECH supported activities, in spite of opposition from other members of the community. SPEECH is characterised by a long-term gradual approach, and first spent many months building trust, and gradually setting up 'sangams', or non-formal learning centres in each community, before introducing economic projects. Started in 1987, SPEECH has explicit commitments to gender equity and work with marginalised people which includes confronting negative stereotypes. The majority of SPEECH staff are themselves from villages in the area, and community members often act as facilitators and develop tools themselves.

For some women, SPEECH was a resource that could be mobilised to improve the lot of their village, but also to change their own situation in relation to men. In one village after months of rapport building, SPEECH initiated problem solving literacy sessions. Due to conflict between men, and lower female literacy levels, only women took part in these. Some men ridiculed them, asking 'why do you want to learn to read and write? Do you think you will become a government officer?' (Jones, 2001: 14). Nevertheless, two young women educated to primary school level agreed to teach the other women. Karupae, an older woman who took part explained:

> They used to turn off the light, and disrupt the lesson in any way they could…the men carried on with their disruption. But we [women] grew closer. It felt good that we were learning together. We talked about the community needs and how we could solve problems. We knew that our husbands did not see the sense in us attending the meetings, but we wanted to continue (Jones, 2001: 15).

Initially, challenging cultural expectations of women provoked hostility, but there came a turning point which altered attitudes. Paciyam, a village woman, with the agreement of the other women describes:

> The work with SPEECH gave us a lot of information and ideas. We [women] took the responsibility to convince the men [of their benefit]. One event made them change their view: When they saw our good work with the

hand-pump. We talked about this problem, and SPEECH helped us clear the old soil and place fresh soil. This made the men see that we women were doing good for the community. Then they stopped teasing, and some of the men started to help (Jones, 2001: 15).

This turning point still fell within realm of traditional gender roles – women's responsibility for collecting water, but gradually women pushed changes further. Representatives from the women's sangam, accompanied by the men, went to the local government office and tapped into government programmes to provide/subsidise electricity for the village, a public television set and the building of public houses. It was unheard of for villagers, let alone women, to go to government directly, but, with information and facilitation provided by SPEECH, and impressed that the Sangam had prepared their own case, the government official agreed.

Women became active facilitators, and women reported an increased engagement in traditional men's arenas such as watershed development projects, and maintenance of streetlights. With control over loans from SPEECH, and goats bought by loans, women's purchasing power of jewellery and household implements increased. Other aspects however were not affected, such as decision making power over land and seed purchases, but women did report more respect and dignity.

Source: Jones, Emma and SPEECH, 2001, '"Of other spaces" Situating Participatory Practices: A Case study from South India' , IDS Working Paper *137, May 2001*

3.2   Men's organising and gender dialogue with African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)

FEMNET has sought to bring together a regional African movement of men for gender equality with their 'Men Against Gender Based Violence' strategy. FEMNET sought out men's groups committed to ending violence against women and brought these together initially in a regional consultation in December 2001 in Nairobi. Certain cultures were seen as obstacles to ending violence including 'strong cultural beliefs even among women and acceptance of violence as a normal way of life' (Okumba, 2001: 6) and the cultures of violence generated by South Africa's apartheid legacy. The objectives of this meeting were phrased in terms of cultural change, including 'to identify critical issues to change African male attitudes and behaviour and to create a culture of gender equality, development and peace' (Okumba,2001: 6). An associated women's meeting proposed that the men should 'organise men only forums to dismantle masculinity and redefine new male values' (2001: 6).

The men's organisations who participated had been involved in a activities ranging from attending funerals of victims of violence, and voicing concern on the issue, to media campaigns, social evenings for boys in school, and networking with churches and political parties. Some initiatives contested gender norms, while others started with and sometimes stayed with such norms, for example a husband support group which started as a lunchtime talk forum focusing on stereotypes such as 'wives are thankless' and allowing men to vent anger (Okumba, 2001: 14).

Ways forward proposed include:

- Developing a long-term programme for male advocacy for gender equality in six to ten countries in the region, building on FEMNET's gender training programme experience and the new experience working with men on gender based violence (GBV). This will seek for men to reach men through their business, political, professional, religious and social networks to sensitise them on GBV and gender equality.

- Equipping men with the concepts, knowledge and skills for gender sensitisation and advocacy in order to transform their own attitudes, behaviours and influence among their peers and their communities.

- Creating a critical mass of males who believe in gender equality and will influence communities, organisations, and the public to embrace gender equality.

Source: Okumba, Miruka, 2001,' Men against Gender Based Violence', Regional Consultation, Femnet Report, and from correspondence with FEMNET

3.3   Intersex activism in Bangladesh

Throughout South Asia, communities of 'hijras' are formed by intersex people, and by transgender people who were born male, but do not identify as such, many of whom opt for castration[1]. Traditionally and today, hijras are channelled into sex work and entertaining. Recently international funding for AIDS prevention has become more accessible to such communities. Such funding has encouraged hijras to become more visible and organised.

'Where Are We?' This question asks what spaces there are for hijras' existence and visibility in the system of male and female sexes.

(Poster by Bondhon, courtesy of Shonghoti)

In Bangladesh in 2000, a group of hijras, most of whom are sex workers, formed Bondhon, ('bond' in Bengali). This organisation engages in a range of activities including HIV/AIDS prevention work, supported by international funding, and campaigning for the human rights of sex workers. They are also allying with other organisations in a lobby for inclusion of the identity intersex on voter identity cards for future elections, which presently specify the voter to be male or female. At the same time as campaigning for recognition as intersexuals, Bondhon is reaching out to the national women's network Doorbar ('indomitable' in Bengali). This dual strategy may reflect the diversity within Bondhon, where most members identify as female, but some identify as neither male nor female, or as both.

Doorbar member organisations, many of whom are grassroots rural women's groups, have started a process of discussion on the relationship with Bondhon. This discussion has raised new issues of gender, sex and sexuality, and provoked a range of reactions. Some are curious or suspicious. Others are welcoming, and feel if Bondhon members identify as women, then they qualify for inclusion in Doorbar. A process of exchange between Doorbar and Bondhon has begun, including Bondhon's participation in the Doorbar national conference in January 2002.

Source: Interview with Shireen Huq at the Institute of Development Studies, 8th July, 2002.
See overview report, section 3.1.2 for more information on intersexuality.

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[1] Intersex refers to those whose chromosomes or anatomy does not perfectly match the criteria for male or female. Up to one in every five hundred babies are born intersex (Philips, Helen, 'Boy Meets Girl' in 'Gender: Why two sexes are not enough', *New Scientist,* No. 2290, 12 May 2001:31). 'Transgender' refers to all those who do not feel they fit sex norms, including those who feel their bodies do not match the sex they feel themselves to be, and those who do not feel they are either male or female, or reject the requirement to conform to these categories.

3.4   Sexual Pleasure as a Human Right: Experiences from a Grassroots Training Program in Turkey

This project starts from an understanding of sexuality and sexual identity as instilled in children from a very early age. The ways in which children are allowed to display their bodies and how they relate to other children and adults are often strictly policed by families and communities. This continues into adulthood when ideas of 'correct' and 'incorrect' sexual conduct are an important part of social life. For example, among young adults, people are seen as more manly if they have sexual experience, and more womanly if they remain a virgin. This creates social taboos around the discussion of women's sexuality.

Women for Women's Human Rights in Turkey talks about sexuality in terms of human rights as part of its programme on 'Human Rights and Legal Literacy Training for Women'. This is conducted by specially trained social workers at Community Centres and State Residences for girls throughout Turkey. Included in the human rights training is a module which challenges the ideas that women are not permitted sexual pleasure and that sexuality should always be seen in terms of reproduction. Placing sexuality in a training programme that addresses a wide range of human rights issues brings it into a social rather than a private context. The subject of sexuality is broached at the end of the training when the concepts of human rights and how to claim them are understood, and when participants are already familiar with each other. A strong emphasis is placed on building up an environment of security and trust in the workshops.

Women who attended the sessions described how they had been chastised for being curious about sexuality when they were children, and had been totally ignorant about sexuality, virginity, pregnancy and their own (and their husband's) bodies. During the session on sexual pleasure, the women were encouraged to see sexual pleasure as natural, and to separate sexuality from their negative ideas and experiences of violence, fear and shame that so often accompany these discussions. Women began to discuss their expectations of sex, and how they could sometimes talk about it with their friends despite the taboos. Some described how, even in poverty, sex is one of the few free enjoyments! The sessions were useful both for older women coming to terms with decades of negative feelings about sexual pleasure, and young women who were not yet sexually active. They also helped mothers to think about how they could better help their daughters understand sex and sexuality.

Methods used in the training are: Opening the session by identifying positive and negative associations women have of sexuality, and showing how these are constructed; discussions around social myths and how these affect personal experiences; information sessions on the female sexual organs; and sharing of ideas on how to look at sexual pleasure in terms of human rights.

Source: Ilkkaracan, Ipek and Seral, Gülşah, 2000, 'Sexual Pleasure as a Women's Human Right: Experiences from a Grassroots Training Program in Turkey', pp. 187-196 in Pinar Ilkkaracan (ed.) Women and Sexuality in Muslim Societies*, Istanbul: Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR)*

3.5   Organising for sexual rights: The Namibian Women's Manifesto

Khaxas (the author of this piece) begins by noting the contradiction between the Namibian government's claim to respect the human rights of all women and the fact that lesbian women are told that they have no human rights at all. This essay tells the story of how Sister Namibia, a women's rights organisation, co-ordinated a national and collaborative process of producing a *Women's Manifesto*. At the outset of the process, one of the most contentious issues was whether to include language on sexual rights and the rights of lesbians. While the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) women's council (a branch of the ruling party) among other groups, resisted including references to the rights of lesbians in the manifesto, the majority of other organisations, including grassroots rural women's groups, welcomed the inclusion

of these references. Through discussion and role plays in regional workshops about the manifesto, Sister Namibia found that the overwhelming majority of participants were enthusiastic about the use of human rights as a means of empowering all women, regardless of their sexual orientation. In fact they were willing to boldly resist SWAPO's discriminatory position on this issue, and made supportive statements for inclusion, such as 'Lesbian women are our mothers, sisters and daughters' (Khaxas, 2001: 64). Sister Namibia has continued to work consistently for the indivisibility of women's human rights in all their endeavours.

Source: Khaxas, Elisabeth , 2001, 'Organising for sexual rights: The Namibian women's manifesto' pp. 60-65 in Cynthia Meillon with Charlotte Bunch (eds) Holding on to the Promise: Women's Human Rights and the Beijing+5 Review*. New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Women's Global Leadership, Rutgers cited in Fried, 2002, see section 6.4 of this collection.*

3.6   Challenging cultures of gender and disability in Nicaragua

Women with disabilities in Nicaragua, as elsewhere, face material obstacles such as inadequate infrastructure, lack of economic and social opportunities, and violence. However, one of the major barriers to integration faced by women with disabilities in Nicaragua is low self-esteem. The 'Women with Disabilities program' of the NGO Solidez, initially focused on organising and providing economic support. This was found to contribute to building self-esteem, but did not allow for discussion of why self esteem was low, or for a strategic vision to be developed. As a response Solidez reoriented their strategy to explicitly address issues of 'gender, self-esteem and reinforcing of women's individual identities' (Dixon, 2001:11).

Solidez' women's program sets up local groups. These may be set up initially by able bodied organisers who start by visiting women with disabilities in their homes, and share experiences and analyse obstacles. Meetings begin in people's homes, but may shift to a public space such as under a tree once women become confident enough to be seen in public. Issues of self-esteem and dependency are central. Training at all levels, and rotation of leadership responsibilities within the groups encourage all participants to develop greater confidence.

Gender training takes place with the same goal of increasing self-esteem and independence. This was rated highly in an exercise where all members ranked Solidez activities in order of value to them. Results were as follows:

1. Mutual support and company
2. Auxiliary devices (eg. Orthopaedic aids, wheelchairs, etc.)
3. Gender training
4. Work skills training
5. Awareness raising within the family
6. Economic projects and credit
7. Awareness raising with institutions

The gender training workshops cover:
- Sex and gender identity (including the image of women)
- The basis of oppression
- Sexuality, pleasure and life stages
- Violence within families and within couples

These workshops have had direct, material effects. After the workshop on violence, which included a study of the law against domestic violence, some participants felt able to offer advice and support to women in situations of violence. Sessions on sexuality broke taboos, allowing open discussion, and some women subsequently became involved for the first time in sexual and intimate relationships. For some this was experienced as positive, while for others this meant experiencing further discrimination in new areas.

Source: Dixon, Helen, 2001, 'Learning from experience: Strengthening organisations of women with disabilities, Solidez, Nicaragua', London: One World Action

3.7 Challenging cultures of racism in the UK: Roots of the Future

Roots of the Future is a project of the UK's Commission for Racial Equality. This programme aims to challenge racism by showing the important role and contribution that 'ethnic minorities' have made to the country's economic, social and cultural development. The idea that cultures and societies are all made up of a wide variety of different influences and hence that we are all in fact 'mixed race' is a valuable way of confronting racial discrimination. Roots of the Future has produced an exhibition which has toured all over the country, together with a book and other posters and publicity materials. These show the origins of not only the different cultural ideas, but the skills, labour and capital which come from the different groups in UK society. The first minority women who have entered British establishments such as the army or Oxford and Cambridge Universities are celebrated. This exhibition aims to challenge the present British climate of hostility to immigration and asylum seekers.

Source: http://www.cre.gov.uk/, http://www.cre.gov.uk/ethdiv/ed_roots.html

4. Case studies: Challenging cultural norms of the development industry

As argued in some of the texts in section one (Schech and Haggis, Sweetman, Mohanty), development organisation are laden with northern and economistic cultural values. Cultures of development organisations may be oppressive and resistant to change. Examples are given below of activities which aim to bring about positive changes in cultures of development. ACORD's shift of decision making positions to Africa is described. An action research project is introduced which challenges preconceptions about Muslim women, including by donors. Oxfam's shift to working in the UK, and the implications for North-South divisions are presented. Finally, the effectiveness of gender training of staff in the UK Department for International Development (DFID) is discussed.

4.1   Organisational change – ACORD moves to Africa

ACORD is an international NGO with its head office in the UK. ACORD works in African countries on themes of conflict, livelihoods, gender and HIV/AIDS. Regional and Pan-African workshops of ACORD staff and stakeholders raised the issue of north-south dynamics within the organisation. In 1999, a Pan-African workshop launched a process of moving the strategic leadership, identity and management from the UK to Africa. The same workshop initiated a shift in ACORD's mission from meeting basic needs to promoting social justice. All key decision making positions are now being moved to Africa and the profile of ACORD's staff has become more African through a process of capacity building and internal and external recruitment. The relocation will be completed by 2004.

Source: Telephone interview with Debra Vidler, ACORD director for organisational development, June 28th, 2002.
See the Overview Report section 6.1 for a more detailed account.

4.2   The Muslim women and development action research project

The Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in the Netherlands has co-ordinated a Muslim women and development action research project (1998-2000). The project was initiated to tackle prejudices in GAD against Islam, and against Muslim women, which obstruct efforts to tackle gender issues in Muslim societies:

> *The aim of this project was to develop insights into the way in which Muslim women use religious and cultural resources in supporting their rights to reproductive health and education. A further aim is to use these insights to develop approaches to GAD which empower women and see them as agents of change rather than as victims of patriarchal cultures. 'Islamic tradition' is often viewed as monolithic and unitary...[which is] inappropriate and incorrect… [Neither Islam nor culture can] be considered static and normative. They fail to take account of the myriad ways in which every day millions of women in the Islamic world (as elsewhere) confront, negotiate, adapt to advance their own agendas for survival and enforcement of rights (Mukhopadhyay, 2001).*

Researchers were recruited from partner organisations in Senegal, Mali, Yemen, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Bangladesh. They worked in their own countries and in the Netherlands with Dutch researchers, many of whom were from the immigrant Muslim community. They engaged in participatory research, in depth interviews, life histories and focus group discussions with poor women in different stages of life.

The research has found that religious traditions and institutions can function both as a constraint and a support. Policy implications vary according to country. In Bangladesh, change is shown to be possible where government NGOs and religious organisations take a common stance on an issue as they have done with family planning. In Ethiopia, researchers recommend that support and recognition are given for the role of community and Islamic schools and trainers in helping poor women and girls. In Yemen, incentives for girls to attend school are suggested such as free education and stipends. In the Netherlands, it is proposed that the Dutch government allocate resources specifically to ethnic minorities, and at the same time promote exchanges between the indigenous Dutch population and Muslim women and men, with the Dutch side taking responsibility to initiate and engage in such an exchange.

Further outputs resulting from the project will include:
- A Resource book for participating organisations and women
- Videos of exchanges between women as support to the resource book
- Guidelines for donors
- Publication on Islamic ethics, gender and human rights by eminent Islamic scholar Dr. Riffat Hassan

Source: Mukhopadhyay, Maitrayee, 2001, 'Muslim Women and Development Action Research Project', Synthesis Report, KIT, Royal Tropical Institute, Netherlands http://www.kit.nl/frameset.asp?TargetURL=/gender/default.asp

4.3   North-South dichotomies: Oxfam in the UK

Much international development implies an association of inequality and poverty with the south, and a premise that the south will learn from the north. For example, ideas about what counts as good governance or fair and equal gender relations, flow from north to south. I highlight below aspects of Oxfam's UK strategy which attempt to reverse such north-south dynamics.

- Recognising inequality and poverty in the north:
  In 1997, Oxfam started a UK poverty program in the north of England, where de-industrialisation has led to high male unemployment. Although women there traditionally formed a smaller part of the paid workforce than men, the burden of supporting the family increasingly fell on them. However, women were often in part time, low paid jobs with no security, career prospects or Trade Union recognition, and still doing the bulk of childcare, leading to 'time poverty'. This, together with UN reports that 15 percent of British people live in poverty, and the fact that the gap between poorest and richest is larger in the UK than in Sri Lanka or Ethiopia, indicated the need for a UK poverty program (*Links*, 1998).

- Promoting learning from the south:
  Bringing her experience of Oxfam working in the south back to the UK, Geraldine Terry, former Oxfam Great Britain (GB) Asia communications Officer, subsequently became Oxfam GB Poverty Project Officer. Some approaches were transferable, such as microfinance, capacity building and some participatory measures. Departing from the usual dynamic of northern organisations expected to teach those in the South, the Great Britain Poverty Programme aimed to set up a mini-programme of 'north-south learning' with exchange programmes. The programme supported 'Engender', a Scottish group of women, which seeks to bring gender issues into economic development and regeneration programmes in Scotland, to learn from the South African Women's budget, which analyses the gender impact of the South African budget. Terry says 'In my view, gender is one area where the British voluntary sector might benefit from seeing what's being done elsewhere' (*Links*, 1998)

- Exploding the myth that women are more liberated in the North:

  Oxfam's gender magazine, *Links*, features the following table which addresses the myth of the liberated western woman and her oppressed third world 'sister' which Mohanty criticises.

Are British women really better off?

Although Britain is seen as a developed country, the feminisation of poverty is an issue in Britain, just as it is in the developing world.

- Women constitute 70% of the lowest earners, and 56% of adults living in poverty in Britain
- In Britain, women earn 30-40% less than men in similar jobs.
- Gender and racial disadvantage intersect. 16% of ethnic-minority women of working age are unemployed compared to 6% of white women.
- Most men still do not see domestic work and caring as part of their role. 68% of women do housework, compared with 4% of men (27% share the work). 48% of women care for someone for more than 50 hours a week, compared with 28% of men.
- Women are less likely to control the household budget, but more likely to manage it. 44% of men compared with 28% of women had personal spending money.

(Adapted from Links, 1998)

Source: Oxfam, 1998, Links*, Oxfam's newsletter on Gender, November 1998*

(http://www.oxfam.org.uk/policy/gender/98nov/9811bett.htm)

4.4   Gender Training and the 'Culture Question' in the UK Department for International Development (DFID)

Why do some DFID staff remain ambivalent about gender? In an analysis of the impact of gender training at DFID, Sheelagh Stewart finds that gender awareness and gender planning courses were both effective and enjoyable, however resistance remains in the form of ideas of culture.

> *The 'gender argument' has been won in DFID. The importance of equality between women and men is widely acknowledged and the majority of interviewees were extremely comfortable with this agenda and related concepts. The 'culture argument', has not, however, been settled. A significant proportion of interviewees believe that it is 'culturally problematic' to intervene in gender. This group do not see culture as dynamic, changing, and a reflection of power dynamics within given societies'* (Stewart, 1998: 2*).*

It is interesting who is mobilising or being mobilised by this argument. Of the 26 percent of respondents to this study who gave unqualified agreement to the statement that gender was 'messing in other people's cultures' and imposing western/feminist agendas, only 1 percent were women. This study recommends that the culture question is incorporated into future gender training, and that the five arguments outlined by Schalkwyk and Woroniuk are included (see section 2.3.1 of this collection).

Source: Stewart, S., 1998, 'The Contribution of Gender Training to Equality between women and men in DFID Development Management', DFID report.

5. Training manuals

Training can open the possibility for change on an individual and organisational level. Three diverse training manuals are introduced in this section which focus on gender at the different levels of individual, society, and organisations.

5.1 Balchin, Cassandra (ed.), 1996, *Women, Law and Society: An Action Manual for NGOS*, Women Living Under Muslim Laws, Women and Law Pakistan Country Project, Lahore: Shirkat Gah

Cultural values are implicit in both statutory and customary law. This manual aims to advance women's understanding of their entitlements under these sometimes conflicting legal frameworks in Pakistan.

The rules by which societies are governed are made up of:
- national legislation or statute law which is enforced by the courts
- customs or customary law which comes from different religious, local and social practice

This combination is an example of how cultures are made up of many different influences. Both statute and customary laws or rules dictate the way that people live their lives, in relationships, childrearing, economic decision-making and health. For many women, a better understanding of their position with regards to both statute and customary laws could greatly enhance their ability to make choices and to negotiate better situations for them and their families. Some laws will discriminate against people and others will enable them to lay claim to certain rights and benefits.

This manual provides detailed and practical information for NGOs to help women in dealing with various aspects of the law. It also has the potential to be used by women themselves, in learning how to approach complicated situations of statute and customary law. In Pakistan, as in other countries, the combination of national and customary law is incredibly complicated and will vary between different regions and cultural contexts.

Accessible charts outline what statutory and customary laws say on marriage and divorce, the family, economic rights and bodily autonomy/violence. Explanations follow about how the laws work in practice in different scenarios, with explanatory diagrams and cartoons, and information on related issues such as police codes, statistics and the documentation that may be involved. Real-life stories are told of the impact of these laws on women's lives.

Lively illustrations are featured throughout, such as the cartoon overleaf.

1. NIGHAT AND HER COUSIN WERE ENGAGED WHEN THEY WERE CHILDREN.

2. LATER, STUDYING AT MEDICAL COLLEGE HE USED TO BULLY NIGHAT.

3. AT A PARALEGAL TRAINING NIGHAT LEARNT THAT SHE DIDN'T HAVE TO MARRY AGAINST HER WISHES.

4. NIGHAT TOLD HER MOTHER SHE WOULD NOT MARRY HIM.

5. NIGHAT'S MOTHER AND AUNT SUPPORTED HER.

6. NIGHAT'S FATHER ANGRILY THREW THEM OUT.

7. WOMEN FROM THE COMMUNITY ORGANISATION PERSUADED NIGHAT'S FATHER TO ACCEPT HER DECISION.

This information is geared towards helping women to use the laws that give them rights and to challenge those that discriminate against them. Examples of topics covered are:

- Negotiations and Marriage Contracts: Differences are shown between statute law which does not sanction dowry and carries provision for divorce by both parties, and customary law which often dictates dowry negotiations and often will not accept divorce. Different customs are explained with regard to dowry, and information is given on how to change them using both statute and customary laws. The different ways in which divorce procedures are conducted are explained, and advice is given on how to fill out marriage contracts and divorce certificates to ensure women are able to maintain their rights.

- Domestic violence: There are no statute laws specifically dealing with this issue, although bodily hurt and assault are indeed covered by the Pakistan Penal Code. However these are rarely applied by the police when registering the case and, more to the point, the PPC sections treat the kinds of injuries common in domestic violence as 'minor'. Here statute law is not the most useful, and examples are given of situations where community solutions have been used.

Such cases show how in dealing with actual situations it is important to understand how and in which contexts statute and customary law affect women's lives and how and when they can be used.

5.2   Bornstein, Kate, 1998, *My Gender Workbook: How to become a real man, a real woman, the real you, or something else entirely*, London and New York: Routledge

> *I think what I've found is a pretty interesting hole in the theory that there's actually such a thing as a real man or a real woman. And that's what this workbook's about…*(page 7).

My Gender Workbook is full of fun exercises to help you unpack your own gender. While it does have some group exercises, it is largely aimed at individuals who want to look at how their gender has been constructed, including influences from parents, teachers, the media, and the law, and take action in challenging the gender norms they experience as constraining. This is the first gender manual I have seen which goes this far in taking apart both gender and sex, and in opening channels for people who want to explore being 'something else entirely'. It is written by Kate Bornstein, an American transsexual, who was born male, "became a woman" as an adult, and a few years later 'stopped being a woman and settled for being neither'(page 7). Note however, that although a few examples from international sources are cited, this is heavily North American in style and cultural references, and uses explicit language.

Sample exercises on the theme of 'Gender Anarchy' and 'Responsible Power Play' are shown below. Trainees are asked to make notes, think about and discuss the following:

Exercise

- What social taboos, if any, have you broken without harming anyone?
- What company or organisational rules or regulations, if any, have you broken without harming anyone?
- What spoken or unspoken codes of your family, tribe or community, if any, have you broken without harming anyone?
- What laws, if any, have you broken without harming anyone?
- Did breaking any of those rules end up being beneficial to yourself and others? If so, how?

(Page 270)

Exercise: On your own gender journey *thus* far

- What rules have you followed?
- What laws have you obeyed?
- What conventions have you conformed with?
- What sanctions have you accepted?

(Page 272)

Exercise: To get to the point at which you'd like to arrive in your gender journey

- What rules do you think you might need to ignore?
- What laws might you have to disobey?
- With what conventions would you need to break?
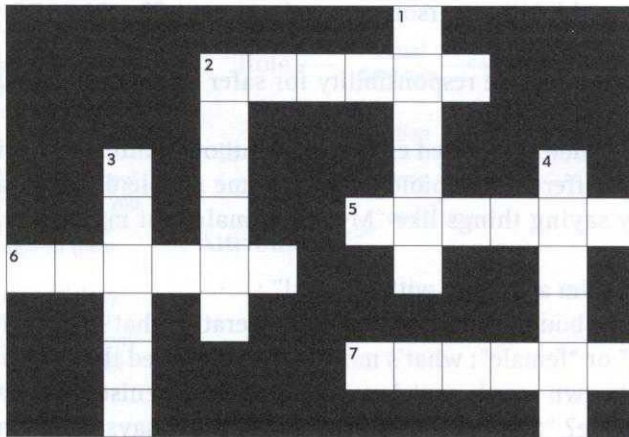- Which sanctions might you need to refuse to accept?

(Page 272)

The following crossword puzzle is also featured:

Solving the Gender Puzzle

So, what is gender anyway? It's not such a difficult puzzle after all.

The Not-So-Difficult Puzzle After All

ACROSS:

2. a fanatical cult, demanding blind obedience to mostly unwritten, unagreed-upon rules, regulations, and qualifications.
5. any standard (usually, but not necessarily biological) by which we can easily and without much thought conveniently divide the human race into two neat parcels. (e.g., sociological, genital, chromosomal, psychological, hormonal, et cetera, *ad nauseum*)
6. an oppressive class system of two and only two classes, usually held in place by the assumption that the class system is "natural," in which system one class has nearly total economic and political power over the other.
7. a means of cultural traction, an identity or persona by which to identify oneself to another or maintain some position within a relationship or culture.

DOWN:

1. currently a system of dividing people into one of two impossible-to-live-up-to standards: male or female.
3. a means by which we can express our sexual desire.
4. a means by which we can attract others, to whom we are attracted.

(Answers on page 33)

All answers: gender

20

5.3   GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit), 2001, *Civil Society, Gender and Change in the Organisational Culture: Tools to construct a gender sensitive organisation*, Eschborn: GTZ Division 4200, State and Economic Reform

How do you change the gender culture of an organisation? Emerging out of a gender equality project of cooperation between the government departments of Columbia and Germany, this manual aims to provide some answers. It argues that structures, guidelines and physical surroundings may have to be changed, but this does not go far enough. For changes to be deep rooted, an organisation's culture, in other words, their systems of values and beliefs, assumptions and mental models, also need to be challenged. This manual presents ways to challenge these. The first part provides the concepts, the second offers specific technical tools. These tools cover: how to carry out gender analysis in an organisation, how to guide and support collective change, and how to facilitate a process of personal change. Tools consist of in-depth interviews, surveys, focus group discussions, group exercises, workshops, and a review of organisational documentation including images. The text is geared to members of organisations in the private and public sectors, including NGOs and donors.

Below is an example of an exercise used in gender analysis of the organisation. The aim is to make explicit the gendered patterns of representations in organisational texts and images. An inventory is made of these, and they are then categorised according to which people (women, men, young and old people, ethnic and other groups) and which activities and attitudes they portray. It is noted whether the images reinforce or challenge gender or other stereotypes. The results, and their implications for and effects on organisational culture, are discussed by groups of colleagues.

Corporate image, symbols, murals, labels, posters, signs, graffiti

	Images: who they portray		Images: Doing what activity?		Language		Reinforce or help to change gender stereotypes
	women	men	women	men	women	men	
Symbols							
Corporate image							
Murals							
Posters							
Labels							
Signs							
Graffiti							
Others							

(page 97)

6. Guides, bibliographies, and other resources

This section presents practical and reference materials on diverse aspects of cultural change: firstly, a source book on participatory work with older people; secondly, a selection of training and reference materials on female genital mutilation; thirdly, a guide to perspectives on sexuality of different religions, which includes a variety of thinking within each of five world religions; fourth, an annotated bibliography covering the latest material and ideas on sexuality and human rights; and finally a previous BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack on 'Gender and Participation'.

6.1   HelpAge International, 2002, *Participatory research with older people: A sourcebook,* London: HelpAge International

 (available free online at www.helpage.org, or contact hai@halpage.org or HelpAge International, PO Box 32832, London NI 9ZN,UK)

In spite of the respect promised to older people in many cultures, they are often seen as weak, non-productive, and not contributing to society, and face material problems. This sourcebook helps non-specialists to carry out participatory research with older people to replace these images with the realities of older people's lives. It contains:

- Comprehensive guidelines for planning, carrying out and disseminating the findings of participatory research with older people, with checklists and practical tips.
- Case studies drawn from the experience of HelpAge International's partners and the older people working with them, which illustrate the application of processes described in the text.
- A selection of participatory exercises and tools developed by HelpAge International and practitioners around the world.
- Practical examples of materials developed and field-tested by HelpAge International.
- Glossary of key terms in participatory research.
- Sources of information and contacts.

Whilst the sourcebook does not focus on gender, these issues are present, including:

- The need for an awareness among researchers that women and men are often affected differently by ageing and socioeconomic change. For example, world wide, women live longer than men, and are more likely to be widowed and live alone. Family links are stronger for women, who are more likely to be seen as continuing to have an important role. Men are more likely to lose touch with and lose support from family and become homeless.

- The need to allow the voices of both older women and older men to be heard. For example: by consulting women and men separately; ensuring the timing of any meetings suits both women and men; facilitators encouraging non-dominant speakers to join in, and consultation with both women's and men's organisations. Both women and men should be involved in research teams, so people can be interviewed by someone of the same sex if they prefer.

6.2　PATH, 1999, 'Female Genital Mutilation, Programmes to date: what works and what doesn't, A review', Review for the Department of Women's Health, Health Systems and Community Health, World Health Organisation.

(www.path.org)

Innovative resources on prevention of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) are available from the Programme for Appropriate Technology and Health. This 166 page document, which can be downloaded from the PATH website, provides an extensive review of programmes to combat FGM. Key points are:

- Beliefs around FGM are described as a 'mental map' which 'incorporates myths, beliefs, values, and codes of conduct that cause the whole community to view women's external genitalia as potentially dangerous, that if not eliminated, has the power to negatively affect women who have not undergone FGM, their families, and their communities' (page 1). Rejection of women who do not undergo FGM, and rewards for those who do, enforce this practice.

- Encouraging findings are that there is an increasing political will to understand and combat this practice in community organisations, NGOs, governments and donors, including within countries where FGM is practised.

- However, prevention efforts so far have been based on the message that FGM is a harmful traditional practice with negative health effects on women and girls. This message does not address the 'mental map' and its enforcement mechanisms. Strategies to oppose FGM need to shift emphasis from awareness raising to behaviour change.

PATH has also developed training and reference materials on this subject including fact sheets, booklets, and comic books. PATH is currently developing an 'FGM Game Board' designed to stimulate discussion among and between adolescents and their parents around the physical, emotional and social sides of sexuality, gender and traditional practices such as FGM.

6.3　Green, M.C. and Numrich, P.D., 2001, *Religious Perspectives of Sexuality: a Resource Guide,* The Park Ridge Center, USA

(with summary chart: Religion, Sexuality and Public Policy: Overview of World Religions)
www.parkridgecenter.org

Why is it important to understand the religious dimension of issues such as reproductive health, marriage and family, adolescent sexuality, homosexuality and the role of women? For many people sexuality cannot be separated from a religious context, and their values have an impact on policy. According to the Park Ridge Center, religious leaders and their communities remain an untapped resource for influencing public opinion and promoting change. This resource guide presents perspectives on sexuality of Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, including both official and alternative views within each religion. This study was part of a response to the interaction between religion and sexuality at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development at Cairo, where informal alliances between the Vatican and Muslim groups dominated the debate on reproductive rights and overpopulation. Progressive elements and forces are identified in the different religious texts and institutions which can provide grounds for calls for change. This guide is primarily about North America, with examples of religious practice drawn from the USA, however it does have some implications more broadly for the understanding of these world religions.

6.4   Fried, Susan T., 2002, *Annotated bibliography: Sexuality and Human Rights*, International Women's Health Coalition

(**www.iwhc.org**)

What are the connections between sexuality and human rights? Themes covered in this bibliography are gender, sexuality and power; gender and bodily integrity; lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender rights; refugees and asylum seekers; sexual rights and HIV/AIDS; sexual rights and religion; reproductive rights; sexual violence, including sexual violence and armed conflict; sex worker rights; trafficking; declarations on sexual rights and campaigns on this issue. Both general reflections on sexuality and human rights concepts and practices, and specific thematic or regional discussions and case studies are included. While North America is over-represented, examples are drawn from all regions of the world. The bibliography consists of 28 summaries and a list of further references.

6.5   BRIDGE, 2001, ' Gender and Participation', Cutting Edge Pack, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies

(**Available from BRIDGE, or online at http://www.ids.ac.uk/bridge/reports_gend_CEP.html**)

Participation can provide an effective way to change cultures. This pack explores participatory approaches to gender change in project and programme implementation, policy, and organisations and institutions. Successful experiences and practices are identified. Examples of failure, and mistakes to avoid, are also described. The pack consists of a report overviewing the main issues, an *in brief* newsletter consisting of short commentaries, and a collection of supporting resources including key texts, tools, guides and relevant organisations.

7. Networking contact details of organisations cited in this Cutting Edge Pack

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Agency for cooperation and research in development (ACORD)

Dean Bradley House,

52 Horseferry Road,

London SW1 2AF,

England

Tel: +44(0)20-7227-8600

Fax:+44(0)20-7799 1868

Email: Debra Vidler debrav@acord.org.uk.

ACORD works for justice and equality in African societies, on themes of conflict, livelihoods, gender and HIV/AIDS.

African Women's Development and Communications Network, (FEMNET)

Off Westlands Road,

Next to Bavaria Hotel,

P O Box 54562,

Nairobi,

Kenya

Tel: +254 2 741301/20

Fax: +254 2 742927

Email: femnet@africaonline.co.ke

Through communication and information dissemination, FEMNET promotes networking and enhances women's empowerment. FEMNET provides an exchange of information on the organisation's programmes, on inter-NGO and inter-regional collaboration with respect to women's developmental issues.

Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation

116 East 16th Street, 7th Floor,

New York, NY 10003 – 2112,

USA

Tel: +1-212-529 8021

Fax: +1-212-982 3321

Email: grants@astraea.org

www.astraea.org

Astraea raises and distributes funds to advance the well-being of lesbians in the USA, and sexual minorities worldwide.

Bondhon Hizra Songstha

K/233/2 Kuril Progoti

Bishwa Road.

Badda, Dhaka.

Bangladesh.

Bondhon is an intersex sex workers' organisation in Bangladesh working on HIV/AIDS prevention and intersex rights

Christian Aid

35 Lower Marsh,

Waterloo,

London SE1 7RL,

UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 7620 4444

Fax:+44 (0)20 7620 0719

Email: info@christian-aid.org

www.christian-aid.org.uk

An agency of churches in the UK and Ireland, Christian Aid works wherever the need is greatest, irrespective of religion.

It strives to end poverty and campaigns to change the rules that keep people poor.

Commission for Racial Equality

Elliot House,

10-12 Allington Street,

London SW1E 5EH

UK

Tel: +44 (0)207 828 7022

Fax: +44 (0)207 630 7605

Email: info@cre.gov.uk

www.cre.go.uk

The Commission for Racial Equality is a publicly funded, non-governmental body set up under the Race Relations Act

1976 to tackle racial discrimination and promote racial equality in the UK.

DAWN, Development Alternatives With Women For A New Era

Dawn Secretariat,

PO Box 13124,

Suva,

Fiji

Tel/Fax: +679 314 770

Email: admin@dawn.org.fj.

DAWN is a network of women scholars and activists from the economic south, who engage in feminist research and

analysis of the global environment and are committed to working for economic justice, gender justice and democracy.

Department for International Development (DFID)

1 Palace Street,

London SW1E 5HE

UK

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7023 0000

Fax: +44 (0) 20 7023 0016

Email: enquiry@dfid.gov.uk

www.dfid.gov.uk

DFID is the UK Government department responsible for promoting sustainable development and the reduction of

poverty.

Doorbar

G.P.O Box-723,

Dhaka-1000,

Bangladesh

Tel: +88 02 8119917

Fax: + 88 02 8116148

Email. convenor@pradeshta.net

Doorbar is a national network of women's organisations in Bangladesh.

Football Unites, Racism Divides (FURD)

The Stables,

Sharrow Lane,

Sheffield S11 8AE,

England

Tel/Fax: +44 (0)114 2553156

Email: enquiries@furd.org

FURD fights racism in football in the UK. FURD links anti-racism with the fight against discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation.

Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)

Pvt. Bag A6131,

Avondale,

Harare,

Zimbabwe

Tel: +263 (0)4741736

Fax +263 (0)4741736

Email: galz@mweb.co.zw

The principle objective of GALZ is to build a democratic and accountable organisation and to strive for the attainment of full, equal rights and the removal of all forms of discrimination in all aspects of life for gay men, lesbians and bisexual people in Zimbabwe, and to inform, educate, counsel and support people in matters relative to their health and well being.

HelpAge International

York House,

207-221 Pentonville Road,

London N1 9UZ,

UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 7404 7201

Fax: +44 (0)20 7404 7203

Email: hai@helpage.org

www.helpage.org

HelpAge International is a global network of not-for-profit organisations with a mission to work with and for disadvantaged older people worldwide to achieve a lasting improvement in the quality of their lives.

HIVOS (Humanist Institute for Development Co-operation)

Hivos Head Office,

Raamweg 16,

2596 HL The Hague,

The Netherlands

Tel. + 31 (0)70 376 55 00

Fax + 31 (0)70 362 46 00

E-mail: hivos@hivos.nl

www.hivos.nl

Hivos is an organisation working to further emancipation and democracy and to combat poverty in developing countries.

International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC)

24 East 21st Street,

New York,

NY 10010,

USA

Tel: +1 212 979-8500

Fax: +1 212 979-9009

Email: info@iwhc.org

www.iwhc.org

IWHC works to generate health and population policies, programs, and funding that promote and protect the rights and health of girls and women worldwide, particularly in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and countries in postsocialist transition. IWHC is committed to the themes of adolescent health and rights, sexual rights, and safe abortion.

KIT (Royal Tropical Institute), Gender

P.O Box 95001,

1090 HA Amsterdam,

The Netherlands

Tel + 31 20 568 8306

Fax + 31 20 568 8409

Email wgd@kit.nl

www.kit.nl

KIT is an international institute with a broad range of activities in the area of international co-operation and multicultural exchange. The aim of KIT gender is to contribute to gender equality and social justice through developing a comprehensive, intersectoral gender training and advice program.

The Lesbian and Gay Equality Project

PO Box 27811,

Yeoville 2143

Johannesburg

South Africa

Tel: + 27 11 487 3810/1/2

Fax: + 27 11 648 4204

Email: info@equality.org.za

Formerly the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality, the new Lesbian and Gay Equality Project is a civil and human rights group that lobbies against discriminatory practices by government and the private sector.

Maendeleo Ya Wanawake (MYWO)

P.O Box 44412,

Nairobi,

Kenya

Tel: 222095

Fax: 225390

MYWO is a non-governmental organisation striving to end female genital mutilation and promote the welfare of Kenyan women and girls.

Musasa Project

P.O. Box A712,

Avondale,

Harare,

Zimbabwe

Tel: +263 (0)4725881, 734381

Fax: +263 (0)4794983

Email: musasa@telco.co.zw

www.musasa.org

The Mususa project aims to enhance the development of women in Zimbabwean society through making the authorities and the general public fully aware of the illegality and non-acceptability of violence against women and through taking action to decrease the incidents of the crime.

Naz Foundation (International)

Palingswick House

241 King Street

 London W6 9LP, UK

Tel.: +44 (0) 181 563-0191

Fax: +44 (0) 181 741-9841

www.floatinglotus.com/aidsnaz.html

The Naz Foundation works in the South Asia region to ensure that issues of sexualities and all types of sexual practices, with the HIV/AIDS and human rights concerns that arise from them, are appropriately and adequately addressed in the provision of HIV/AIDS and sexual health services.

Oxfam Great Britain

Oxfam House,

274 Banbury Road,

Oxford OX2 7DZ,

UK

Tel: +44 (0)1865 312610

Email: oxfam@oxfam.org.uk

www.oxfam.org.uk

Oxfam GB is a development, relief, and campaigning organisation dedicated to finding lasting solutions to poverty and suffering around the world.

PATH (Programme for appropriate technology and health)

1455 NW Leary Way

Seattle,

WA 98107-5136

USA

Tel: +1 (206) 285-3500

Fax: +1 (206) 285-6619

Email: info@path.org

PATH is an international NGO working to improve health, particularly of women and children.

PROMUNDO (Instituto PROMUNDO)

CEP 20031-060'

Rio de Janeiro,

Brazil

Tel: +55 21 2544 – 3114, 2544 – 3115

Fax: +55 21 2220 – 3511

Email: promundo@promundo.org.br

www.promundo.org.br

Instituto Promundo conducts research around ideas that have the potential to achieve positive social change, applies these ideas in pilot initiatives and disseminates the results of this applied research to organisations that are well-placed to continue, expand and replicate these initiatives in the long-term. They do this through publications, seminars and courses and by providing technical assistance to organisations. See In Brief 11 on Gender and HIV/AIDS for more information about PROMUNDO's work.

Redd Barna

PO Box 12018,

Kampala,

Uganda

Redd Barna Uganda is one of the country programs of Redd Barna, the Norwegian Save the Children NGO. Since 1994, Redd Barna Uganda has adapted participatory approaches to provide innovative ways of incorporating a gendered perspective into community-based planning.

Sakhi

P.O. Box 3526,

Lajpat Nagar,

New Delhi, 110024

India

Sakhi is the first lesbian archive and activist group in Delhi, and has done path breaking work to help the lesbian movement in India gain some visibility.

Shirkat Gah

208-Upper Mall,

Scotch Corner,

Lahore,

or:

1-Bath Island Road,

Clifton,

Karachi-75530,

Pakistan

Email: sgah@lhr.comsats.net.pk

Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre is a non-hierarchical collective, which works towards women's empowerment for social justice and social justice for women's empowerment. SG focuses on law and status, and women and sustainable development (including reproductive rights).

Shonghoti

G.P.O Box-723,

Dhaka-1000,

Bangladesh

Tel: 88 02 8119917

Fax: 88 02 8116148

Email: convenor@pradeshta.net

Shonghoti is a national alliance of NGOs and women's organisations working for the human rights of sex workers in Bangladesh

Sister Namibia Collective (SNC)

P.O. Box 60100,

Windhoek,

P.C. 9000

Namibia

Tel: +264 (0) 61 36371

Email: sister@iafrica.com.na

Sister Namibia is a collective dedicated to protecting the human rights of women of all ages, races, and cultures. It publishes a multicultural feminist magazine, Sister Namibia, in three languages (English, Afrikaans, and Oshiwambo). The magazine is the first vehicle in Namibia which offers space for lesbians and gays to express their views.

Solidez,

apdo 986,

SVC j. Navarro,

Managua,

Nicaragua

Email: Solidez@ibw.com.ni

Solidez works on socially integrating people with disabilities and moving them into the workplace. Solidez Women with Disabilities Program, set up in 1991, supports the self-organisation of women with disabilities.

SPEECH

14 Jeyaraja Illam,

Kiruba Nagar,

Madurai 625 014,

India

Tel: + 91 452 681994

Fax. + 91 452 680965

Email: speech@md3.vsnl.net.in

SPEECH is a participatory NGO working in Tamil Nadu, India, on empowerment and capacity building with marginalised people.

Women for Women's Human Rights/Kadinin Insan Halkari Projesi,

Inonu Cad. Saadet Apt. No:37/6,

Gumussuyu 80090,

Istanbul,

Turkey

E-mail: wwhrist@superonline.com

WWHR is a non-governmental organisation that seeks to: facilitate the empowerment of women and women's rights organisations and improve exchange and solidarity between groups; raise public consciousness about violations of and constraints to women's rights; and change law and policy at national, regional and international levels.

Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

PO Box 28445,

London N19 5NZ,

UK

Tel: +44 207 263 0285

Fax: +44 207 561 9882

Email: wluml@wluml.org

Women Living Under Muslim Laws is an international network that provides information, solidarity and support for all women whose lives are shaped, conditioned or governed by laws and

customs said to derive from Islam.