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Part 2
Keynote Papers

INTEGRATING GENDER TRAINING POLICY: A GATEWAY TOWARDS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

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The concept of gender issues and related subjects are relatively new, particularly in the underdeveloped countries worldwide. The relevant terminologies, such as; gender equality, gender sensitivity, gender mainstreaming, empowerment, integration, participation and many others, have no clear common understanding among gender analysts, specialists, experts....etc working in such important field. Abusing attitudes towards farm labor women are indeed due to misunderstanding or even ignorance about human social relations, culture, traditions, wrong habits and attitudes, low standards of living, poor environmental conditions and many other factors. Therefore, to change all these discouraging and inhibiting factors to the sustainable development nationwide, it needs long-term strategy to change the human attitudes and the wrong beliefs.

Politics, available technologies and decision making, form the real national power and the driving force to steer the wheel towards women enforcement in the society especially in less democratic systems where women may not be able to express themselves explicitly to the public media freely. Therefore, the blessing of such trilateral power driving force is essential to make social organizations efforts, effective and efficient in the field of gender. Accordingly, the initial focus should be directed to convince top management planners politicians and decision makers with the importance of gender mainstreaming in the development process. Meantime, in depth analysis by sociologists and gender experts must be made to understand clearly the actual obstacles and objections to accept the discussion of social gender affairs and problems within the rural communities, in order to mediate the rejection to change. The end result should be a) gaining support from the official authorities, and b) developing a suitable social environment ready to accept new ideas and concepts, concerning gender affairs. Disciplined efforts are most needed as we apply well-organized and designed tools appropriate to poor women communities in less developing countries, at the regional level. This objective is aiming to establish a regional gender-training center (RGTC) to offer non-traditional training programmes to gender specialists of the region. Therefore, our role and responsibility at this stage is to support Bari initiative to develop special gender training programmes based on the regional needs in this developing field now and in future. It is strongly recommended that Bari institute would host such training programmes to achieve integrity of common understanding. This integrated training policy will develop common consensus among gender experts in the region.

1. INTRODUCTION

Training is a planned scientific activity to develop and make changes in the human attitudes and qualify them to conduct their work in a profession manner and increase the productivity. In addition, it is considered an investment in human resources, gaining updated information, skills and better attitudes to comply with a civilized way of living. Training is not a newborn subject, but it exists since the creation of humanity; it is 50% human skills (person equipped with) – 37.5% technical and scientific skills (to be gained through education) -12.5% leadership (leaders/followers).

Every working individual in the society has his basic needs from training, which is different according to priorities from time to time, to age stage, capabilities and nature of job he is doing.

Hence, training, in gender, is an uprising pyramid building blocks like, to achieve sequential targets see (Fig. 1), which is founded on 1) basic training programmes, to build on 2) psychological security, to develop 3) feeling of belonging to the society, which leads to 4) feeling of appreciation, and ultimately 5) self confidence.

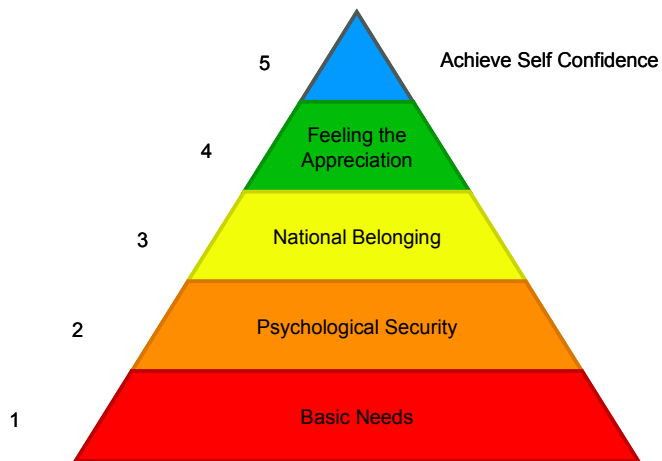


Fig. 1. Training pyramid of human needs

Gender training, in specific terms, is an approach for changing the attitude to gender oriented actions within organizations and institutions that has become increasingly popular since the mid-1980s (Jongepier and Appel 1995). Its origins lie in the development of popular education or "conscientization" in Brazil during the 1960s, most notably by Paulo Freire. Gender training is organized either around the broad issue of gender and development or focused on particular issues, like water and development, reproductive health, violence or the environment. Experiences with gender training exhibit a variety of approaches, objectives, underlying assumptions, and differences in the extent to which the professional, political or personal dimension is addressed. Different approaches reflect ways of thinking about gender and development, ranging from concern about the efficiency of development efforts, to analysis of institutions from the perspective of feminist theories and analysis or creating a package of planning tools for integration a gender perspective.

2. TRAINING TECHNIQUES AND POLICY FORMULATION

Before discussing the needs for gender training at all levels, it may be useful to introduce the main concepts of training techniques to lay a platform for the appropriate mechanisms and efficient policy for gender empowerment and participation.

The types of training are summarized as follows:

- Basic training

The training objective is to qualify the trainees with the necessary knowledge and skills. Basic training does not require previous working experience, but it does require the desire and motivation of the community services trainees for the type of job they will perform.

- Orientation or induction training

It is mainly general awareness about the overall goals and objectives of the gender issues, the teamwork procedures, the institutional and regulations... etc. This information will enable the trainee to appreciate his job duties and responsibilities within the scope of the community service organization. It is always short time periods depending on the amount of knowledge and information provided in order to fulfill the training objectives.

- Refresher training

This training refreshes the trainee background, and upgrade his/her knowledge and skills by introducing new technologies relevant to the job. Thus, refresher training stimulates the capabilities of the working group to be creative, more efficient and self-confident. It is usually conducted before adopting new techniques and tools which aim to upgrade performance.

- Retraining

This type of training provides the trainee with new knowledge and skills to perform a new community services job that is different from his/her own, providing the new job complies with the

background experience. It is important to adjust the balance between the different skills needed in order to avoid unbalance between jobs.

- Development training

Training programmes are job promotion oriented, i.e. offered to the trainees who will be transferred to senior community development jobs. This higher level requires special knowledge, skills and administrative profession.

Gender training policy formulation involves top management, planners, politicians and decision makers to address several important elements, so it may be fully informed by and relate to the specific context of the work and live. The training policy acknowledges the three distinctive demographic gender groups, a) urban gender at the top managerial level b) urban and rural gender government and non-government employees c) illiterate rural gender sector.

The position or the hierarchal structure form, in both local and urban contexts, to some extent understanding difficulties to gender concerns and gender analysis; but it also dictates how much change they are able to bring about.

3. ELEMENTS OF POLICY FORMULATION

Gender training, at a small scale, has achieved very positive results with many development planners and hence projects' decision makers are becoming comfortable with the terms, concepts of gender concerns and analysis.

Accordingly, Gender training is derived into several elements: Trainers, trainees, approaches, frameworks, materials, difficulties and resistance. There should also be continuous monitoring and evaluation against specific indicators. The following guiding questions help to shade a light and reveal ambiguities:

a) Who Train?: Trainers to be chosen and co-trainers at the field levels to form a link and based on the needs to build a core group of staff who are confident in taking forward the process with other staff and counterparts. The trainers should be representative of both the local context and the organizations. They should have considerable authority within the hierarchical system to ensure that the importance of gender concerns is fully recognized by the trainees; also they should be of high personal and professional caliber, ensuring that concepts and tools are understood and used by participants. Trainers should monitor and support the implementation of work addressing gender inequalities after accomplishing the training.

b) Who are the trainees?: Implementers, politicians, decision makers are the intersection of an enormously complex set of social relations, within which they operate and have influence both as individuals and as development professionals. Training in context must acknowledge and address the hierarchical position of the trainees within their cultural and organizational contexts.

c) Approaches: "Gender is a political issue, because it is about power. It is a political issue because it seeks to bring the private sphere into the public arena of debate and action. MacDonald:1993.

c-1)The skills acquisition approach is non-confrontational and non-threatening. This approach is the best used in heterogeneous groups, and it is often used in short one-off trainings. This approach is appropriate in giving trainees very important skills, but it does not allow for time and space to address the more personal elements of gender relations, nor the reality of gender relations as relationships of power.

c-2)The personnel awareness raising approach addresses peoples' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs. This is a longer time and requires sensitive facilitation; it is also best achieved with a homogenous group. It does not explicitly explore the political nature of gender relations as relationships of power. Challenges power relations is a political approach to gender. This can be threatening and confrontational, creating increased resistance to gender concerns. However, if handled sensitively, it equips the trainees with an understanding that fully addresses the realities of gender relations, their basis in people and the relationships of power that exists between people in both the local and the organizational contexts.

d) How do people learn? The principle is that adults learn best by actively engaged in subject-matter through all over their senses and team work spirit. With some exceptions, the lack of clear documentation in much of the gender training is a limiting factor in its success in building the capacity. The over-reliance on the frameworks being taught can lead to problems of over-simplification of

gender issues, and the failure to adequately address the complex reality of gender relations in development initiatives.

e) Training materials: It is important to use useful materials effectively. Case studies help relate gender issues more closely to the local context. Materials should contain references to the organization itself, setting out how its policies and practice reflect its commitment to addressing gender inequalities. Materials to be produced from the gender training documenting its development and its success or failure in different contexts. The lack of systematized documentation constrains the process of learning that should be an integral part of gender training.

f) Resistance: Many trainees find concepts of gender analysis threatening personally and professionally, in other terms it is threatening the position they occupy in a community. This leads to emotional resistance to gender training and a failure to understand or implement concepts of gender analysis. Language problems form a difficulty for the trainees to understand concepts involved in gender analysis. Logistical difficulties also have different implications for women and men, and should be given attention in the planning of gender training course.

4. GENDER TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (GTNA) AND IMPLEMENTATION

There are Questions to be addressed and discussed before preparing gender training:

- 1-What are the objectives of different training programmes? Who devised them, and whose is being served?
- 2-Who are the target groups and what assumptions are being made about them?
- 3-What are the methodological bases and contents of training programmes?
- 4-What type of background do training facilitators have and do they tend to be women or also men?
- 5-What institutional training strategies are employed?
- 6-How is training institutionalized within an institution?
- 7-Is gender training carried out by one sector (NGOs, ministries and other institutions) more sectors if so, Why?
- 8-How is evaluation of training procedures undertaken; and who benefits from the intervention?
- 9-How often is "follow-up" undertaken? is it effective?

Having defined the detailed and clear answers to the addressed questions, one have to present schematic sketches indicating the integrated conceptual representation to the actions, Fig(2), illustrate the gender hierarchal training strategy matching the individual needs with the organization requirement. Three levels of training are identified level 1 is designed to train gender specialists directly in contact with the bottom demographic group of the community who are completely ignorant about gender issues.

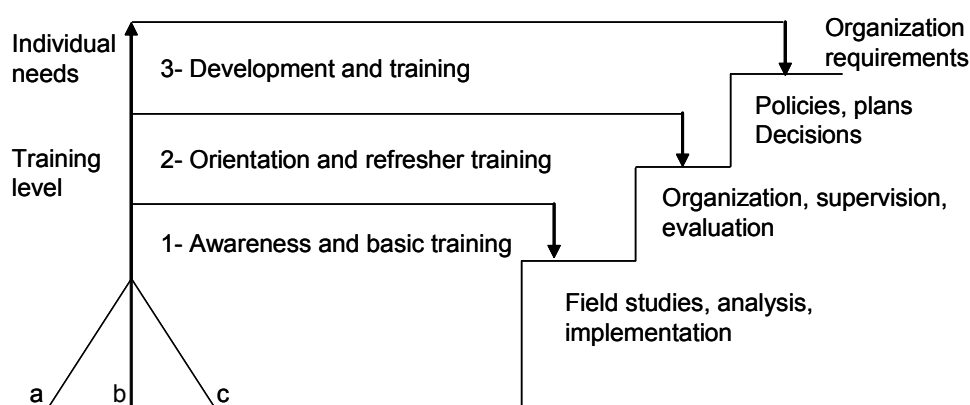


Fig. 2. Gender hierarchal training for individual needs and organizations requirement

The three main pillars which gender training programmers aim to achieve:

- a- provide suitable education background to build on the knowledge and skills
- b- develop self confidence to strengthen personality , change attitudes and create commitments

c- Stimulate the ability to express technically and freely their needs (common technical gender language)

Their role is mainly to disseminate gender awareness and convince the broad-spectrum population base of the importance and benefits of changing bad habits and attitudes towards women in the community. Field visits are essential to survey and study prevailing social norms, and environment to suggest action strategy and tools, which gender specialists can use effectively and efficiently. Level 2 of training is a step upward, aiming at addressing the relatively large working gender spectrum who lack appropriate knowledge and information about equity and ethical right to participate in planning and management of their concerned organizations. At this training level, gender experts have more in depth role of training exposure to legal and institutional aspects that might inhibit full gender involvement in the development process. Hence, the training tools and techniques are more advanced and technical. Level 3 concerns the management of gender group, who are in charge of polices and plans of projects which gender might not be having equal chances and opportunities in the plans. The gender-training professionals addressing this group must organize workshops, bilateral meetings, round table discussions...etc, so, as to convey messages and new concepts softly and clearly. For each level there is certain different evaluation means to ensure the effectiveness and validation of the overall training course with quantitative and qualitative indicators. The common foundation of the different training levels are three basic pillars required to achieve;

- a) Suitable education background
- b) build self confidence, and
- c) use of common gender language for communication.

The second major activity for developing the gender training policy is the determination of the gender training needs assessment (GTNA) Fig(3).

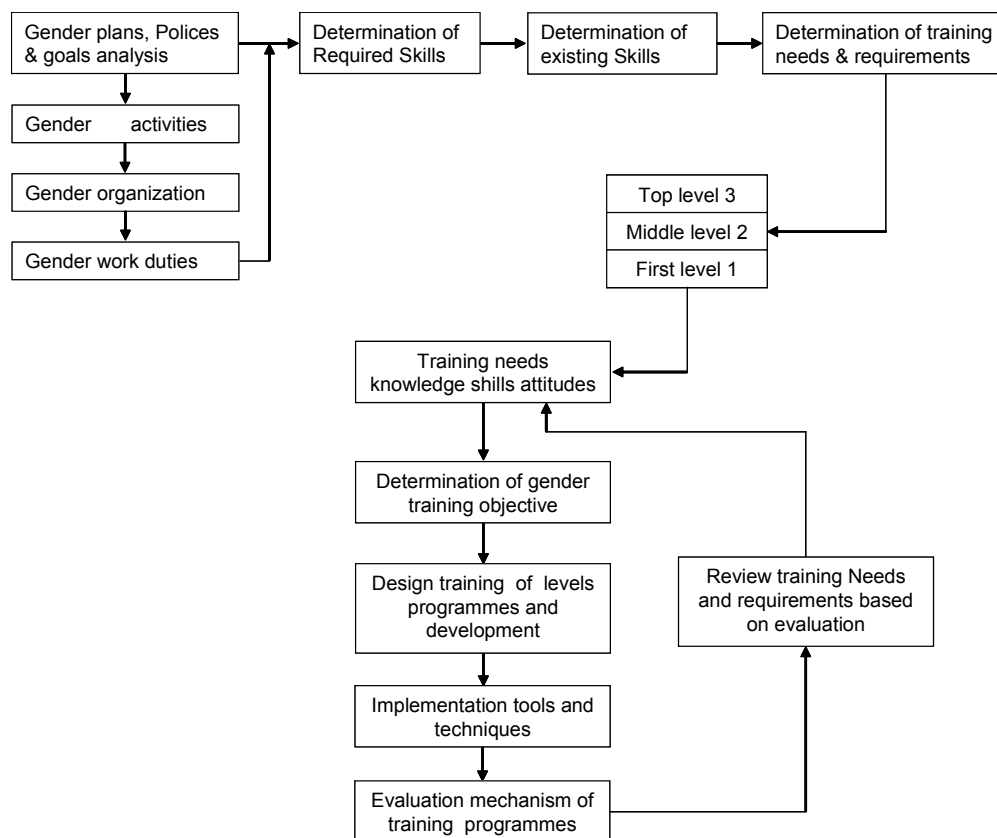


Fig. 3. Determination of gender training needs

In fact, this essential step is the core and essence of structuring the pre defined training levels. The sequential GTNA process begins by identifying the gender plans and polices then break it down into gender activities, organization structure, and work duties. These information leads to identification

of the required skills to implement the plans and policies. However, a detailed survey is needed to determine the existing skills and consequently the differences can be interpreted into training needs and requirements which in turn can be categorized into the three training levels. Hence, for each level certain amounts of knowledge, skills and attitudes can be determined to achieve, the objective guiding; the design of the training programmes, tools and techniques, and finally the evaluation mechanisms. The overall training procedure has to be reviewed according to the evaluation results of the three levels. Accordingly revised training policy can be made to optimize the overall efficiency of the programmes addressing the common needs of the targeted groups, indicated by Fig.(4).

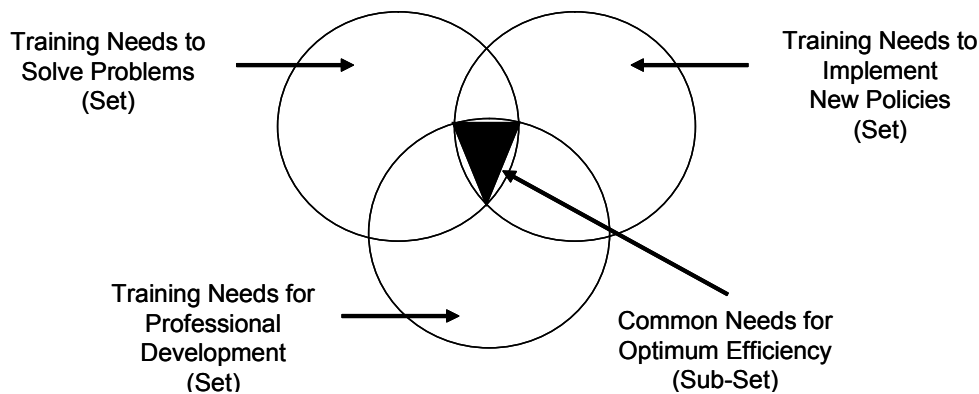


Fig. 4. Interaction between training programmes

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Gender concepts and related issues are relatively new subjects in the under developed countries. It needs drastic change in human behavior and attitudes in order to accept women in developments at all stages.

- The typical women categorized structure in most third world countries is characterized by wide differences of three distinctive levels. The top level, a few intellectual women at the policy and decision making, middle sector a considerable number of half educated employees and bottom level, the bulk, are illiterate, uneducated and dependent women.

- Due to culture, inherited tradition, wrong religious understanding, ignorance and other socio-economic factors, gender ideas are not accepted by the society. This fact inhibits the progress of developments nation wide, which turn planners and decision makers, in some countries, to listen to donors and international gender experts to the importance of gender involvement and participation in the development process.

- A few experiences for introducing gender concepts, show strong resistances and objections to change prevailing habits, attitudes and bad traditions. However, most donors' projects include gender components to carry out the analysis and studies to overcome this problem.

- Some simple and modest efforts have already started in several countries, particularly in "MENA" with the help of developed Mediterranean countries, such as Italy, however still more efforts are needed to join forces under one umbrella to strengthen the appropriate knowledge dissemination mechanisms.

- Therefore it is highly recommended that special gender training programmes should be developed based on the regional needs in the field of water management now and in future. Training courses should be tailored to the specific needs of the targeted group, such as water management, through modular training programmes. A set of courses to be designed with gradual information and full set of needed knowledge to reflect the need for skills acquisition.

- Gender training for implementers, politicians and decision makers should be continuous: it is an important contribution to building the capacity of staff to work on gender issues.

- Trainers to be selected as trainees for gender training should be positioned within local and organizational hierarchies in ways that represent real opportunities to carry out gender-aware work. Time and resources should be available for trainers to carry out needs assessment before gender training implementation. It is essential to train the trainers on how to conduct needs assessments and institutional analysis to gain an understanding of the trainees hierarchical location to prepare training that acknowledges both the opportunities and the limitations to address gender inequalities.

- New, imaginative approaches to educate gender analysis techniques should be developed and shared. In addition, provision of long-term, local support in applying skills in gender analysis should be an essential component of gender training. Strong institutional support is a pre-requisite for the long-term success of any follow-up activity.

- Evaluation of gender training is generally carried out at the end of a course, and so will evaluate the course itself, the performance of the trainer, the tools and facilities used.

- Finally, it is strongly recommended that Bari institute should take the lead to initiate the innovative step by establishing, "Bari Gender Training Center" for the purpose of unifying concepts and standardizing approaches, disseminating in MENA and the Mediterranean region some stories of gender success and lessons learned, and combining multinational experiences of gender coordinators to share and implement training courses based on real field experiences from the region. Indeed by this land mark, Bari institute will not only be strongly supporting the countries of the region but also will create unique example of gender training activity that can be copied worldwide under similar conditions.

- Finally yet importantly, I would urge to issue a new journal/magazine/newsletter or else for the regional gender activities such as; regional gender occasions, gender articles case study results, training offered and other activities. Again, Bari institute can host and take the publishing responsibility, editorial board assignment, reviewers and artistic prints.

SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

- Gender Training for Development Policy Implementers, An Oxfam Working Paper, Fenella Porter and Ines Smyth.

- Appropriate Training for Professional Development and Improved Performance, Fouad El Shibini MB. Saad,

- Training of Trainers Course documents, held in Beirut by the Center for Research and Training on Development (CRTD)- Machreq/Maghreb Gender Linking and Information Project.

- Integrating Gender in Water Management Projects Egypt: Case Study Nadia Aziz, Integration of Gender Dimension in Water Management in The Mediterranean Region, Bari, Italy Workshop, 7-2004.

