



## **DIPLOMA IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**DRD-02**

### **Rural Development in India**

**Block**

# 6

## **WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL SOCIETY**

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**Unit – 1**

**Women in Rural Society & Women in Development**

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**Unit – 2**

**Gender needs in Rural Society**

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**Unit – 3**

**Gender and Development**

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## DIPLOMA IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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## Unit – 1

### Women in Rural Society & Women in Development

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#### Learning Objectives:

After completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- *Describe the role of women in rural society*
- *Understand the concept of women in development*
- *Understand the effect of development on women*
- *Explain the gender perspective on development*

#### Structure:

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Women in Rural Society and their roles
- 1.3 Women in Development
- 1.4 Impact of Development on Women
- 1.5 Women as Constituency in Development Policies
- 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.7 Key Words
- 1.8 References

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#### 1.1. Introduction:

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Though women constitute nearly half of the total human population their share in the fruits of development is abysmally low. This low status has raised the issue of what development ought to be. Gender perspective, it is felt, has to be an integral part of any development process. Women have always been a part of the survival of any community. Not only have they taken up the primary responsibility of rearing the young and integrating them into the ways of society, they have also worked towards the fulfillment of the everyday needs of the family and the community. Women cook, clean, wash, gather food and fuel, till land, work in offices as labour etc. However, only some of their work is acknowledged. This has been the root problem of looking at women as separate entities and not as an integral part of the development process. With increasing debates on these women's issues there has been an acknowledgement for the need to add a gender perspective into the development discourse.

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## **1.2. Women in Rural Society and their roles:**

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It is a matter of great achievement that the United Nations International Day of Rural Women is being celebrated on October 15 every year honoring the role of rural women in enhancing agricultural and rural development globally. For the rural women, the day starts early in the morning with the responsibilities of fetching water, fodder, fuel and cooking food. She takes care of the children and members of the family, their health, orientation and education and attends to various income generating activities. These women play a central role as producers of food, managers of natural resources, income earners, and caretakers of household food and nutrition security.

Rural women constitute nearly 77% of total female population in our country and after contributing 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of total working hours earn only 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the total income with an ownership of only 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the total resources. These women though often perceived as dependents or as homemakers, are engaged in three basic responsibilities that they shoulder and referred to as their triple role.

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### **1.2.1. Identifying Gender Roles / Triple Role:**

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This involves who does what in a given community and the different roles and responsibilities of women and men that are assigned by society. Work can be divided into three main categories. Women's roles encompass work in all these categories, and this is referred to as women's triple role such as:

- **Productive Work:**

Involves the production of goods and services for consumption and trade (farming, fishing, employment and self-employment). When people are asked what they do, the response is most often related to productive work, especially work which is paid or generates income. Both women and men can be involved in productive activities, but for the most part their functions and responsibilities will differ according to the gender division of labour. Women's productive work is often less visible and less valued than activity of men.

- **Reproductive Work:**

Involves the care and maintenance of the household and its members including bearing and caring for children, food preparation, water and fuel collection, shopping, housekeeping and family health care. Reproductive work is crucial to human survival, yet it is seldom considered 'real work'. In poor communities, reproductive work, is for the most part manual-labour-intensive and time consuming. It is almost always the responsibility of women and girls.

• **Community Work:**

Involves the collective organisation of social events and services, ceremonies and celebrations, community improvement activities, participation in groups and organisations, local political activities and so on. This type of work is seldom considered in economic analyses of communities. However, it involves considerable volunteer time and is important for the spiritual and cultural development of communities and as a vehicle for the community organisation and self-determination. Both women and men engage in community activities, although a gender division of labour also prevails here.

Women, men, boys and girls are likely to be involved in all three areas of work. In many societies, however, women do almost all of the reproductive and much of the productive work. Any intervention in one area will affect the other areas. Women's workload can prevent them from participating in developing projects. When they do participate, extra time spent on farming, producing, training or meetings means less time for other tasks, such as child care or food preparation.

In rural areas, woman is the nucleus of the family and plays an important role not only in running day to day household activities but in other areas too. She gets up first early in the morning, collects water from the tap, wood to burn the chullah, fodder for the cattle and what not for others. She manages all the household activities and works for almost more than 15 hours a day and always last one to sleep in the family. She also plays vital role in preserving the culture of the society along with grooming the children for their bright future. Out of the 40 crore rural women, majority of the women, nearly 80%, are engaged in agricultural and allied activities, responsible for 60-80 percent of the food production, and 90% of dairy production in India. Women are also responsible for the selection of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides and the maintenance of productive soil to nourish seedlings and plants. Rural women have a special relationship to natural resources. These women are also users, preservers and managers of biodiversity. Their cultures and practices promote a balanced, respectful use and preservation of natural resources so that future generations can meet their needs.

As consumers and producers, caretakers of their families and educators, women play an important role in promoting sustainable development through their concern for the quality and sustainability of life for present and future generations. However, due to discrimination, rural women are unable to exercise their full potential in natural resource and environmental management, given their lack of training, status, land and property rights and capital.

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### **1.3. Women in Development:**

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Development is a process. This process has been taking place in societies since time immemorial, but it has acquired greater intensity and velocity during the past five hundred years and has accelerated rapidly over the past five decades. Development today is not merely an economic phenomenon. It encompasses more than the financial side of people's lives. Development must be conceived as a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of absolute poverty.

#### **Development as Realization of Human Potential:**

Development is seen by some as a desirable state of being and in this sense a developed society often connotes a modern industrial society that enjoys economic well being as it has reached certain levels of wealth and consumption. Others see development as a vision wherein the centre stage is occupied not by levels of production and consumption but by the satisfaction of human needs and potentials. Let us examine some of these visions of development, which are as follows:

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#### **1.3.1. Development as an expression of human personality:**

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Dudley Seers (of Thomas 2000 : 33) while elaborating on the meaning of development, suggests that while there can be value judgments on what is development and what is not, it should be a university acceptable aim of development to make for conditions that lead to a realization of the potentials of human personality. Seers outlined several conditions that can make for achievement of this aim:

- The capacity to obtain physical necessities, particularly food;
- A job (not necessarily paid employment) but including studying, working on a family farm or keeping house;
- Equality, which should be considered an objective in its own right;
- Participation in government;
- Belonging to a nation that is truly independent, both economically and politically; and
- Adequate educational levels (especially literacy).

David Korten, a leading proponent of alternative development outlines three basic principles of what he calls authentic development. These are justice, sustainability and inclusiveness. He says development must ensure the following:

**Justice:** Priority must be given to assuring a decent human existence to all people.

**Sustainability:** Earth's resources must be used in ways that assure the well being for future generations.

**Inclusiveness:** Every person must have the opportunity to be a recognized and respected contributor to family, community and society. (Korten, cf Thomas 2000: 33)

Manfred A. Max-Neef (1991), a Chilean economist and a recognized advocate of human rights and alternative development, disillusioned with the economic growth based developmental experience of Latin American countries, talks of a new praxis based on development focusing on the "satisfaction of fundamental human needs". He calls this Human Scale Development. The other salient features of this model of development are:

- Planning with autonomy;
- Growing levels of self reliance;
- Coherent and balanced interdependence of people, nature and technology;
- Balance between the personal and the social;
- Constructive interplay of civil society with the State; and
- Emergence of global processes alongside local activities.

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### **1.3.2. People's development:**

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The people are held to be the principal actor's in human scale development. Respecting the diversity of the people as well as the autonomy of the spaces in which they must act converts the present day object person to a subject person in the human scale development. Development of the variety that we have experienced has largely been a top-down approach where there is little possibility of popular participation and decision making. Human scale development calls for a direct and participatory democracy where the state gives up its traditional paternalistic and welfarist role in favour of a facilitator in enacting and consolidating people's solutions flowing from below. "Empowerment" of people takes development much ahead of simply combating or ameliorating poverty. In this sense development seeks to restore or enhance basic human capabilities and freedoms and enables people to be the agents of their own development.

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### **1.3.3. Participation of the masses:**

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In the process of capitalistic development and leading national economy towards integration into foreign markets, even politically democratic states are apt to effectively exclude the vast masses from political and economic decision making. The state itself evolves into a national oligarchy hedged with authoritarian and bureaucratic structures and mechanisms that inhibit social participation and popular action. The limited access of the majority to social benefits and the limited character of participation of the masses can often not be satisfactorily offset by the unsuccessful and weak redistributive policies of the

government. Powerful economic interest groups set the national agenda of development, often unrepresentative of the heterogeneous and diverse nature of our civil society making for a consolidation and concentration of power and resources in the hands of a few. Also, a focus on people and the masses implies that there could be many different roads to development and self reliance. The slogans “human centered development”, “the development of people”, “integrated development”, all call for a more inclusive and sensitive approach to fundamental social, economic and political changes involved in development such that all aspects of life of a people, their collectively, their own history and consciousness, and their relations with others make for a balanced advancement. The adoption of a basic needs approach with the concept of endogenous development make for a development agenda that is universally applicable while at the same time allowing for country specific particularities to be given due account.

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#### **1.3.4. Nurturing diversity:**

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The challenge of human scale development is to nurture diversity instead of being threatened by it, to develop processes of political and economic decentralization, to strengthen democratic, indigenous traditions and institutions and to encourage rather than repress emerging social movements which reflect the people’s need for autonomy and space. The fruits of economic development may be distributed more equitably if local spaces are protected, micro-organizations are facilitated and the diverse collective identities that make up the social body are recognized and represented. Greater control of popular masses over environment is a must. In fact this concept of development seeks for the civil society rather than the state to own up and nurture development, so that the role of social actors is enhanced.

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#### **1.3.5. Development as an open process:**

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Human scale development has a vision of real development not as a stage or a state but as a process, a process that encompasses economic, social and technological changes by which human welfare is improved and embellished with its political, cultural and spiritual dimensions.

Above all, this conception frees development from any particular specifications and development becomes an open option justifiable only to the extent people need, understand, and able to integrate it. Development must become a process in constant motion for human beings themselves as well as their surroundings which are in permanent motion, a motion that defies static boundaries and frozen directions. Social and Human Development, therefore necessarily requires a unified approach, integrating and economic and social components in plans, policies and programmes for people’s betterment.

The challenge is to simultaneously integrate cross sectoral and regional developmental needs as well as to make for a participative development. The issues of environment, pollution, women, habitat, hunger and employment have come to the fore one by one and continue to require public and institutional attention along with resource allocations. Two major contemporary concerns that require focus in any development initiative are that of human security and sustainability.

We need to ensure that development does not mean social dislocation, violence and war and that we meet “the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Each of these problems is interrelated in complex ways and requires a unified approach. The purpose of development should be to develop man and not to end with developing things. Fulfillment of basic needs of mankind should be the true objective of development and achievements that either do not contribute to this goal or even disrupt this basic requirement must not be pursued as a development goal.

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#### **1.4. Impact of Development on Women:**

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Development is not gender neutral. While one argues for the equality and participation of all human beings, men and women, in the process of development, it is important that we are not indifferent to social implications of biology and the physical constraints, it puts for women, women and development is a theme that raises issues of equality and justice for women’s experience of development as mediated by both their biology and the social construction of it.

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##### **1.4.1. Intensification of Gender Inequality:**

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Gender inequality tends to lower productivity and efficiency of labour at all levels of the economy, not just the household, and intensifies unequal distribution of resources. Lack of security, opportunity and empowerment also imply the lowering of quality of life for both men and women. Even when women and girls may bear the direct costs of gender inequality it needs to be recognized that the ultimate costs of lack of development and poverty have to be borne by people across the society. Women’s development is therefore simultaneously a gender and a developmental issue, and the developmental planners need to be cognizant of women’s subordination for centuries that has controlled women’s mobility, their labour, sexually and fertility.

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##### **1.4.2. Mixed Gain for Women:**

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As far as women are concerned, development has had mixed gains for them, while it has widened women’s opportunities and opened up the public sphere to those hitherto confined to the private sphere of family life by tradition and

superstitious beliefs, yet evidence from large parts of the world also show that women still face disparity in opportunities and often development for women has meant the widening of the gap between the incomes of men and women and increased strain on their time and energies. Women are unfavourably represented in very large numbers in the unorganized sector where they work under oppressive and exploitative conditions but find themselves restricted due to their biological and social responsibilities as well as the low status they enjoy in society.

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### **1.4.3. Intensification of Double Burden:**

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In fact women lose twice as the development planners have been unable to recognize the dual roles of women whereby they bear children and at the same time carry out economic activities and have in their shortsighted definitions of women as mothers ignored and downgraded their economic functions so as to classify them as economically dependents. On the one hand, the exclusive burden of childcare makes women's access to the market limited, and then the market itself excludes prestigious and well paying jobs from them, doubting their ability to hold such jobs and perform in equal capacity to men. Also, the prevalent definitions of work as work when performed for money and work as work in the modern sector have also contributed to making women's economic contributions invisible. These definitions for instance exclude women who work in the agricultural sector as members of a family living off farm land products; women engaged in exchange labour, household work, childcare and many such activities that are not paid.

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### **1.4.4. Reinforcing Gender Role Stereotypes:**

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Stereotypes of sex roles have resulted in a situation where even developmental interventions aimed at modernizing farming systems have only exacerbated the problem by targeting only men for inputs such as training, loans and resources such as seeds, land and so on. In case of the green revolution wherein there is high capitalization involved, better harvesting systems have meant focus on good variety of seeds and fertilizers and such mechanization that means less of labourers required; thus unemployment. It is women who lose again their traditional economic employment in farms and any alternative employment planned is done only for men.

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### **1.4.5. Eroding Women's Role in Traditional Economy:**

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This has widened the gap between men and women, reducing the status of women. Subsistence economies with little specialization have been more equalitarian and just to women with little differentiation between the status of men and women. Civilization has created more functional specializations to the benefit of men and increasingly led to women being reduced to a dependency

status as they separated from their erstwhile food production functions. Women, as they lost these functions in civilized societies, increasingly became economic liabilities, and vulnerable to a host of patriarchal controls. Anthropological evidence shows that civilization's influence on subsistence economies has meant decreased involvement of men in child rearing roles and in other household tasks. Development being largely defined in terms and economic activities has thus focused on men, ignoring women's traditional economic roles.

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#### **1.4.6. Feminization of Household:**

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Changing of customary communal land tenure system to the concept of private property ownership, and introduction of cash crops have been two important developments that eroded women's role in traditional economic systems while favouring men and their rights over land and crops. Also the lure of the modern monetary economy has meant large scale migration of men away from their households, such that women are left to perform additional tasks formerly done by men, reducing significantly women's leisure as well as productivity. Again, improved transportation and markets have had mixed benefits for women and men. While increased access to the markets may have a positive impact on rural earnings, it also impacts people in making several traditional occupations redundant. Local land-made artifacts can seldom compete with cheaper machine made goods.

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#### **1.4.7. Differential Access to Education:**

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Since the 1980s a phenomenon called feminization of labour has been noted as a global development which refers to the process of decentralization of labour with the intention of reducing wage and non-wage costs of production. Women are preferred as employees for they are available on cheap, flexible, non-permanent terms and can be disposed of whenever it is felt necessary to do so. No doubt more women get an opportunity to work. However that itself is no reason for any optimism for they do such works on increasingly less favourable terms. Similarly Structural Adjustment Programmes and New Economic Policy are not seen in most feminist quarters as auguring well for women who are expected to be hit the worst by inflation and the winding up of the barest of welfare state measures we have. Increased poverty with a female face, abandonment of women and children as the poor grapple for survival, prostitution and violence are some of the alarming social consequences that are said to be on the flip side of the economic development that is planned through the processes of privatization, liberalization and globalization.

Education is widely regarded as one of the most important developmental initiatives to reduce gender disparity and there are several researcher which show positive links between girl's education and economic productivity, material and infant mortality, fertility rates and health prospects of future

generations. If we look into education and modernization and its effects on women, though we find that the elite nature of education in most of the erstwhile colonial nations has meant that education has not reached rural populations, particularly women. There is still a wide gap between male and female literacy figures in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Lack of education was itself not a big problem when women engaged in traditional pursuits, however, with development and accompanying changes wherein traditional occupations of women are being superseded, it becomes difficult for poorly educated women to move into the new sectors. In the markets women come to be in a disadvantaged position because of their lack of knowledge and training making for exploitative conditions of work and their inability to compete with more favourably disposed men. Lack of education severely limits ability to take credit, innovate and earn independent income through economic enterprise. In case of migration to cities, rural women often find themselves in less paying jobs as domestic servants, shop assistants and even prostitutes.

Education has all the same opened up a host of occupations for the middle and upper classes and women of these classes have found representation in services like teachers, nurses and doctors. New job opportunities in computers and information technology have bid many a middle class woman to substantially paying jobs. However, it must be remembered that by and large women's economic activities are permitted to them only in situations of family crisis, when women are required to earn an additional income without changing the distribution of work at home. In countries like India educated women often enter prestigious services due to several factors working in their favour of which a supportive family structure that takes pride in their education and employment and the availability of cheap labour for taking care of household jobs, are very important. At the same time women's work outside the confines of the house is not without its problem: divorce, separations and increase in the number of women-headed households may have a link with the increased hostility between men and women, for while women are required to work double shift, men continue to keep off the home sphere. A related issue of concern is the contemporary increase in violence and crime against women, which plays its function in maintaining women's subordination by restricting them from free and full participation in development initiatives.

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#### **1.4.8. Environmental Degradation and increasing Hardship for women:**

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Similarly, if we look at development and its impact on the environment, we find that the destruction of the previous balance of nature through unbridled pursuit of man's capitalist interests have affected women more severely than it has men, as they struggle and search for fuel, carry water over long distances and spend unduly long hours processing food. Women's overwhelming involvement in subsistence related activities has meant that environments that environmental degradation translates into special hardships for them for the

ready access to natural resources they enjoyed earlier is replaced by working harder to get access to them, often having to pay for what was otherwise communality owned.

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#### **1.4.9. New Technology and increase in Women's Drudgery:**

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The dominant discourse on development often draws women as victims of household drudgery. Technology in the form of household appliances and modern science is seen as the panacea for all trouble. However this technology is not really all that “emancipator” for much of environmental pollution and degradation is linked to this technology. It needs to be noted that women are aware of the links between a balanced and non-degraded nature and human survival as it is women who have taken the leadership and sought solidarity across the world in their struggles against the capitalist plundering of nature and environment be it on the issue of building large dams, the saving of mangrove forests, the building of atomic power plants or mining chalk and other resources.

This is not to say that development is not for women, rather that development interventions, based on certain stereotypes of women have bypassed them, they have negatively affected their productivity, and many times even created obstacles in women's lives when they were actually intended to facilitate them. Development interventions have either prioritized the woman's motherhood role or her economic agency while neglecting the other half of her role, thus creating a situation wherein women in their pursuit of development goals do not find themselves anywhere getting to be equal to men. While they have lost the protections and advantages of a sexually segregated society, they have not been able to get the freedom and status that development promised through reinventing their economic lives.

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#### **1.5. Women as Constituency in Development Policies:**

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It was only in the 1970s that development policy oriented itself to women as a distinctive category rather than as a residual one. Development planners of the time were faced with the failure of the trickle-down theory, with problems of poverty and unemployment that seemed to have aggravated with economic growth and with the need to focus on basic needs and poverty alleviation in the second decade of development.

At around the same time the women's movement gave a strong voice to the idea that women's issues have development policy implications. Several studies highlighting women's productive activities, especially women's critical role in food production, women's critical role in food production, women's preponderance among the poor of the world and researches linking women's fertility to their status in society came to the fore and substantiated the need to integrate women in developmental goals. Thus the UN Decade for women was

declared. This brought about a marked change in how development came to be directed at women. Before 1970, policy makers had focused on women in very gender-specific ways. While men were targeted for development as household heads and breadwinners, women were seen primarily as mothers and dependents, hence were beneficiaries of welfare measures rather than development itself. The welfare category has its obvious negative connotations for it is seen in most quarters as a residual category made of dependents who failed to be self-reliant, hence must be helped. Since women were type-cast in their sex roles without reference to the reality of developing and underdeveloped countries, the kind of initiatives directed for them were programmes on nutritional training, home economics, maternal and children's health care and family planning. This assumption of female domesticity came to be challenged by researches that pointed to women's productive roles and involvement in basic needs of their families. Development initiatives thereafter translated these insights into income-enhancing programmes for women as women came to be conceptualized as managers of low-income households. For most purposes during this interim phase development initiatives for women retained their "welfarist" projection and avoided any redistributive outcomes. It was much later, in the 1980s when the world economy was undergoing deterioration that there came about a growing emphasis on women as economic agents in their own right. It came to be realized that women's productive capacities had been under-utilized and as economic restructuring came to be prescribed through processes of liberalization and privatization, it came to be hoped that free market enterprise would make for a more efficient usage of human resources, both male and female. During this time, women first came to be given focus as key agents of the development process and were encouraged to take up micro-enterprises, small-scale business ventures and parallel marketeering.

However, this emphasis on women's economic agency has its serious pitfalls. The basic subordination of women and exclusive responsibilities of home and childcare continue and with structural adjustment programmes and the wrapping up of the state welfare measures, these responsibilities only increased, thus making unreasonable demands on women's time and energies. The free market itself is not all that free for women to enter the market with these disadvantages and end up getting more exploited. The efficiency approach of women's development again does not go very far in making change for better conditions in women's lives or for equality to men. The old fable of the fox and the stork that both needed food to be served differently to them to be able to eat is an appropriate analogy to explain differential needs of men and women.

Feminists have sought to influence developmental planners with the idea that for achieving developmental goals of freeing women from their subordination and achieving gender equality, recognition needs to be given to the gender

division of labour in production and reproduction. This would lead to better appreciation of the differential needs of men and women.

Equity and empowerment cannot be achieved in policy approaches that merely add women to existing developmental plans. Development policies must be based on a social relations framework that accounts for the differences in gender roles and needs. Additionally, development policy cannot justifiably premise itself on a universal category “woman” which does not exist. There are material differences in power, resources and interests of women across the world that effectively stand disguised and denied behind the concept of woman’s development, a fact that came to be deeply resented by women’s groups in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Development does not operationalise itself in terms of uniform benefits of all men and disadvantages for all women. Women are on structurally disadvantageous terms with men but the third world men and women. DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era), a network of Third World activists proposed therefore that the strategies for a more equitable development need to be worked out from the vantage point of the most oppressed women who are disenfranchised by class, race and nationally. Only then can the complexities of subordination by class, race and nationally. Only then can the complexities of subordination be fully taken care of in developmental agendas. Over the years, these insights have influenced development policies and achievement of equality, equity and empowerment became legitimate developmental goals of women across the world.

### **Check Your Progress I**

**Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answers.

b) Check your answers with the possible answers provided at the end of this unit.

1) Identify the roles of women in rural society of India?

Ans.

2) What are the impacts of Development in Women?

Ans.

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## 1.6. Let Us Sum Up:

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Rural women constitute nearly 77% of total female population in our country and after contributing 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of total working hours earn only 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the total income with an ownership of only 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the total resources. These women though often perceived as dependents or as homemakers, are engaged in three basic responsibilities that they shoulder and referred to as their triple role. These are productive work, community work and reproductive work.

Development is a process. This process has been taking place in societies since time immemorial, but it has acquired greater intensity and velocity during the past five hundred years and has accelerated rapidly over the past five decades. Development today is not merely an economic phenomenon. It encompasses more than the financial side of people's lives. Development must be conceived as a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of absolute poverty.

With regards to Women Development, there should be neutrality in gender. While one argues for the equality and participation of all human beings, men and women, in the process of development, it is important that we are not indifferent to social implications of biology and the physical constraints, it puts for women, women and development is a theme that raises issues of equality and justice for women's experience of development as mediated by both their biology and the social construction of it.

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## 1.7. Key Words:

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- **Productive work:** Involves the production of goods and services for consumption and trade (farming, fishing, employment and self-employment). When people are asked what they do, the response is most often related to productive work, especially work which is paid or generates income.
- **Reproductive work:** Involves the care and maintenance of the household and its members including bearing and caring for children, food preparation, water and fuel collection, shopping, housekeeping and family health care.

- **Community work:** Involves the collective organisation of social events and services, ceremonies and celebrations, community improvement activities, participation in groups and organisations, local political activities and so on.

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## 1.8. References:

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## Unit – 2

### Gender needs in Rural Society

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#### Learning Objectives:

After completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- *Understand the concept of gender needs in rural society*
- *Understand the effect of development on women*
- *Explain the gender perspective on development*

#### Structure:

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Identification of Gender Needs, Role and Strategy
  - 2.2.1. Gendered Men and Women and the Household
  - 2.2.2. Gender Roles and the Impact on Women's Development
  - 2.2.3. Practical and Strategic Gender Needs
- 2.3. Perspectives on Women and Development
  - 2.3.1. Structural Perspective
  - 2.3.2. Gender Relations Framework
  - 2.3.3. Empowering Women for Development
- 2.4. Let Us Sum Up
- 2.5. Key Words
- 2.6. References

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#### 2.1. Introduction:

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When we use the terms male and female, we commonly refer to the anatomical differences between these two sexes. When we used the word gender, however, we are going beyond anatomical or biological differences between male and female to their socially constituted roles and status. For example when one uses the word femininity the social expectations of feminine qualities may be nurturing, caring, delicate, irrational intuitive, submissive, non aggressive, etc. When a woman does not meet these social expectations of feminine attributes, she may be considered not female enough or transgressing her role either as daughter, mother, sister, all of which have some role expectations. These roles as you might be aware are socially conditioned and arise of structures of power. In a patriarchal set up the entire system is geared towards keeping women at a lower level. The tilt of power and status in such institutional differentiation clearly favours the male, with the establishment of

asymmetric relationships of dominance. However, despite such divisions being almost universal, nuances and impacts of gender varies significantly across situations and contexts. As a variable of social stratification, gender has to be analyzed in association with other variables like class, race , ethnicity and caste.

Gender relations contribute to the social meaning of female and male and thus depend on the considerations of appropriate behaviour and activity for women and men. The focus of gender in practice is on social roles and the nature of interaction between women and men. The valid understanding then is that gender relations are also social relations and not biological or natural. When accessing development with reference to women we are in essence trying to understand this gender aspect of women.

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## **2.2. Identification of Gender Need, Role and Strategy:**

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The important conceptual rationales forwarded for recognizing women as a distinct constituency in development and gender relations as a necessary framework for planning and implementation of developmental policies need to be discussed in greater detail. These are:

- Gender roles and needs; and
- Control over resources and decision making within the households.

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### **2.2.1. Gendered Men and Women and the Household:**

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Women were presumed to be beneficiaries of development as part of families and households targeted for development. It was pointed out by feminist researchers that women and men have different roles in the household and in society making for differential access to resources and power within households. Therefore women's needs for development cannot realistically be merged into those of others in the household. The disaggregation of the household/family on the basis of gender was, therefore, the first principle proposed for planning for development that was responsive to the distinct realities of men and women.

Caroline Moser found that development fell far short of people's, especially, women's needs due to certain widespread stereotypes among development planners about the structure of low income households, division of labour inside them and the power and control of resources within the household. More specifically, she found three faulty assumptions that emanated from a western perspective and that distorted development initiatives as they had no roots in Third World Contexts. These are:

- i) the household consists of a nuclear family of husband, wife and two or three children.

- ii) the household functions as a socioeconomic unit within which there is equal control over resources and power of decision-making between all adult members in matters influencing the household's livelihood.
- iii) within the household there is clear division of labour based on gender. The man of the family, as the breadwinner is primarily involved in productive work outside the home, while the woman as the housewife and homemaker takes overall responsibility for the reproductive and domestic work involved in the organization of the household (Moser 1993 : 15-16).

Firstly, the nuclear family with its naturalized division of labour is an idealized concept that distorts reality. It has also been pointed out that the household as a residential unit is distinct from families, the latter being a social unit that is based on ties of marriage and kinship and that though often these correspond, yet an assumption of them being one and the same is bound to lead to misconceptions about the nature of developmental needs of the units targeted. Moreover, not only do households show heterogeneity in their structure and composition, it is also a fact that women occupy different positions in these structures. To treat the family, therefore, as a static unit without the socio-economic context and the contemporary pressures that make for constant restricting of such units is bound to be problematic.

For instance, although it is normally assumed that the head of the household is a man, the situation is quite different in actuality with women-headed households showing an increase with desertion, death, male migration, situations of war, insecurity and disaster. Female dependency is constructed on a false assumption that men are the breadwinners and financial supporters of dependent women. While this may be a feature of industrial societies in some cases, it is a restricted phenomenon and does not represent the low income households and their realities where women are very often the primary or the sole earners. In the Caribbean, large parts of Latin America, Central America and parts of America, female-headed households form a sizable proportion of the economically vulnerable, often falling below the poverty line. Where the mother is the only adult income earner and there are several dependent children, poverty manifests itself in children dropping out of education, working and in making for an inter-generational transfer of poverty. Women balance multiple roles in the household and the assumption of their economic dependence on men can seriously impact policy against their interests. There have been many instances when false assumptions of women's role in the family resulted in their labour and participation in agriculture being discounted and they being excluded from developmental initiatives involving ownership of land, credit-extension and other services.

Similarly, faulty assumptions about the household as a natural socio-economic unit presupposes first that a family provides equal control over familial resources to all its members and that adult house members share between them the power of household decision making. The importance of intra-household

dynamic s in inequitable distribution of resources and in unequal exchanges of labour and its fruits is ignored and questions of power and control left unaddressed. Arguments about the economic rationality of household behaviour contradict the complex array of relationships and interactions within the household and treat the household as the most relevant unit of utility maximization removes the possibility of exploring and treating conditions of unequal exchanges and exploitation between family members. Empirical evidence exists that there are conflicts of interests between men and women as well as interdependence and that gender inequalities are often rationalized through bias in perception of individual contributions and interests of men and women. There are economic as well as cultural and ideological reasons that underlie such asymmetries in intra-household resource allocation.

However, it is commonly supposed that altruism governs family relations and individual family members subordinate individualism in pursuit of the common goal of the welfare of the family. Marriages specially are assumed to be cushioned with love and sacrifice from conflicts that dog other social institution. However, the belief that marriage and families mean a partnership between men and women that is shared on the basis of common objectives and where there is reciprocity in rights and obligations that make for a joint control and management of resources such that each has access to pooled resources according to his/her need, belies reality. First the household may not necessarily be a collectivity of reciprocal interests. Even though sharing may be the dominant principle of household distribution, it does not mean that everyone has an equal access to resources. Gender is an important element in defining people's access to resources especially scarce ones. For example women routinely get less to eat in poor households, and are socialized to bear hardships so that their men can get better care and resources. Material altruism is held to be a womanly virtue and in most homes, it is the woman's obligation to routinely sacrifice food, leisure, health and entertainment so that men can have a bigger share of these. Likewise women often do not have direct access to household assets and property and have any control over these solely by virtue of being wives or mothers of male relatives. In contrast men have direct access to property and cultural sanctions for independent decision making.

Household distribution of labour and responsibilities also plays an important role in circumscribing equal opportunities of men and women in the market and this limitation on women's ability to expand income generating activities pushes them back into a dependency status, vulnerable to violence and intra-household inequality.

It has also been pointed out that management and distribution of resources within the household takes place differently with men and women at the helm of affairs and this is linked to gender based responsibilities of the two sexes. Studies across the world show that women's income is largely used to pay for day to day food, clothing and domestic goods and thus this household

provisioning implies that a greater share of women's income covers subsistence and nutrition needs of the family as compared to that of men. It needs to be underlined that the assumption of the male head as a benevolent caretaker cannot be stretched too far and that the head cannot by him represent household needs, therefore his welfare too cannot be taken to be a representative of the welfare of all household members. While it is true that in most cases cultural rules, ideology and practices make the intra household distribution appear natural and legitimate, yet inequalities continue to exist because men and women share the bias in perception of their actual contribution to the household. Direct money earning by men is often perceived as a bigger contribution to the household entitling men to greater household resources than women whose time and energy spent on ensuring overall wellbeing of the family as well as in non-market activities that indirectly go to support the men's enterprises in the market are discounted. Correct assessment of individual interests and well being for planning development interventions therefore need to base on a gendered understanding of the dynamics of intra household inequalities.

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### **2.2.2. Gender Roles and the Impact on Women's Development:**

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Women though often perceived as dependents or as homemakers, are engaged in three basic responsibilities that they shoulder and these have been referred to in developmental literature as their triple role. Firstly, women are engaged in reproductive work that involves both bearing and rearing of child. Secondly, most low income households in the Third World have their women engaged in what is called productive work, or work that earns wages. In rural areas this could be agricultural work in urban areas women work in large numbers in the informal sector, in and around their homes. Thirdly as part of their reproductive responsibilities women also take up community managing work that facilitates collective consumption needs of the neighbourhood or the community. Despite three roles women's work is generally made invisible for either their work is regarded as a natural extension of their biological role of giving birth to children or nurturing them or their work is considered secondary. Men in contrast are largely seen as productive workers even when they may be unemployed or earning erratically. As far as reproductive role is concerned men do not have a clearly defined reproductive role in most societies and when involved in the community, men do not largely engage in consumption related voluntary work, rather they take up the community leadership roles that get them either some payment or social prestige.

Feminists have identified this gender based division of labour as both the reason and expression of women's subordination. They have contested the dualistic division of work as productive and reproductive, which essentially implies that the productive elements of reproductive work are completely erased. It has been pointed out that women's reproductive work both "produces" labour force and maintains it, thereby making for the fundamental

productive activity that is essential for all subsequent productive enterprises. Capitalistic development is itself held responsible for this historical and artificial division between men and women's roles that later got enforced by ideology. Several feminists have traced this "domestication of women" to the industrial revolution which created the modern cash economy that cut women off from their traditional subsistence activities and resulted in women's loss of autonomy as farmers, crafts workers or traders. The housewife role that came into women as their primary responsibility however is neither valued nor paid and value of reproductive work is not given the recognition it deserves. Even as far as the realm of productive work goes, the ideology of housewifization masks asymmetry in men and women's work and their exchange value. Not only do women get work at the lower end of the economy which are low skilled and low paid and not wanted by men, they are also vulnerable to exploitation and harassment and an overload of labour due to their multiple roles. Yet the unpaid work of women at homes and in the community and their low paid work in what is recognized as the productive sphere have not created major conflicts in the rank and file of women because they themselves accept and conform to the gender ascribed roles and find little choice.

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### **2.2.3. Practical and Strategic Gender Needs:**

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Since in discussing development, the concept of human needs and their satisfaction has emerged as an important criterion for assessing whether or not interventions lead to development, it is important to look at the twin concepts of practical and strategic gender needs when discussing gender development. Women and men have different roles in societies and therefore distinct prioritized concerns. Maxine Moleneux had conceptualized this distinction which was later elaborated by Caroline Moser while advocating to the developmental planners to be more gender sensitive. According to Moleneux and Moser, there are women's interests and gender interests. The two are not the same. Women's interests refer to interests which women across the world share by virtue of being the biological sex female. Since in real life situations, women live in a society where their position is defined not merely by their sex but by other important factors like their class and ethnicity as well as gender, it would be wrong to present women's interests and needs as a homogenous category for women. Rather, while planning, development planners must take cognizance of the fact that woman's interests and needs vary according to their social positioning which itself is defined by the specific socio-economic context and also by factors such as class, ethnicity and religion. This makes for the importance of referring to the general interests that women share amongst themselves as gender interests and the terminology changes to needs in reference to planning for addressing them.

Planning for development and change itself focuses on multiple levels of goals as policy interventions can accomplish limited goals. So that there is less

confusion in what is aimed and what is achieved; the distinction between strategic and practical needs is very useful.

It is evident that addressing strategic gender needs makes for a transformation in social relations such that women come to enjoy greater equality and power and that such a transformation is dependent on a consciousness of a different order and a commitment to struggle against the prevalent order. Practical gender needs, since they are addressed to make for better adaptation to women's concrete conditions in the domestic arena or in income generating activities or even in community based resources, do not result in such transformation though they generally provide relief to women in their gendered roles and responsibilities. The greater majority of developmental interventions aims at attending to women's practical gender needs and do not contribute directly to challenging either the sexual division of labour, or social political and economic organization of society that subordinates women. However, it would not be right to term strategic needs based development interventions to be feminist and the interventions directed at improving women's access to their practical needs as "less" feminist, for the two are linked and in effect often inseparable.

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### **2.3. Perspectives on Women and Development:**

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There are several important perspectives on women's development. Let us examine a few of them here.

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#### **2.3.1 Structural Perspective:**

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Structural perspectives on development are critical of the Women in Development (WID) approach of developmental policies for they start with the basic assumption of conflict in society that makes for competition for resources and power and that manifests itself in struggles of classes and groups, such that domination and oppression have a structural base. Change itself in existing systems is seen not in terms of accommodation and reforms but in radical and revolutionary transformations that result in a more fair redistribution of resources and power. Marxism forms an important wellspring for the critical conflict view. Marxism holds, like the WID approach, that development as economic modernization or capitalist development has led to the marginalization of women in the Third World. However, it goes further than the women in development approach in seeing sexual inequality at a deeper, structural and dialectical level and linking it to the uneven and unequal worldwide development of capitalism that Marxism fails to deliver what it promises for while it explains the capitalist development as a system of hierarchical structures of production that leads to the emergence of a small but powerful minority with resources and a much larger disposed majority that stands alienated from the means of production, it could by itself not explain women's subordination further to the subordination of men that is created by

the capitalist mass production. Feminists have critiqued it also for reducing women's oppression to the abstract concept of a particular mode of production, thereby not paying any attention to the fact that men, and not just the abstract concept of capital, benefit from women's oppression. The agency and consciousness of human beings as social actors stands completely denied in this conceptualization for the individual is defined purely in relation to class interests. Women's opposition to male domination and control is itself dismissed as false consciousness and the result of the divisive strategies of the ruling minority.

Not satisfied by these explanations some feminists reworked with the basic Marxist argument to explain female subordination as a part of new constraints that came about as a result of inequities generated by capital intensive development on a global scale. One stream of feminists hitched their arguments to the dependency theories, furthering the argument that the capitalist mode of production has polarizing tendencies and creates a relationship of dependency between the peripheral nations of the Third World with the metropolitan centres of the First World such that women's development is adversely affected in the Third World peripheral countries even while women in the First World may come to enjoy opportunities hitherto inaccessible. These theorists draw on Rosa Luxemburg's thesis that precapitalist forms of production provide an essential subsidy to capital accumulation. Saffioti (of Kabeer 1995:47) suggested that the family was an example of such a precapitalist form of production that aided capital accumulation by drawing on the labour of women, their time and energies without adequate payment, because the family is organized in such a way that voluntaristic sentiments rather than contractual labour marks production relations. Capital accumulation could take place in the metropolitan centres at the cost of women in the Third World countries that had to grapple with increasing poverty and marginalization, even while their unpaid labour or their "reserve" labour was called upon a benefit the capitalist system. A pervasive patriarchal sex role ideology was held to be the direct cause of women's subordination for it rationalized women's confinement to home on the basis of her biology and social role. Dependency feminists thus worked out connections between different forms of inequalities at the international, national and household levels. Yet, like the Marxist approach they held the view that men and women held common class interests and did not see the rationale for the material exploitation of women in their households by men. Sexual aggression and subordination by men was attributed to the frustration and helplessness of men involved in exploitative capitalist production, thus ignoring the relationship of men and women itself in terms of a set of production relations wherein production of people itself was undervalued in comparison to production of things with exchange value.

Maria Mies, a German feminist while drawing again on Luxemburg's thesis, has disagreed with the prioritizing of class as the primary contradiction and

sees the first contradiction to be that of gender. The basic biological difference between men and women, according to Mies meant that women experienced their relationship with nature and their environment differently; they experienced their whole bodies as productive and in tune with nature unlike men who could produce with their hands and the tools that became an extension of these hands. According to Mies men's relationship with nature was predatory from the beginning and in his lust for power; man established a similar relationship with women who seemed to be like nature.

She sees capitalism as a more recent manifestation of a male patriarchal order that came into force far back in the history of mankind when men realized that the destructive tools that they could make could be used to domesticate women and animals and thus make for appropriation of economic surplus. Since women came to be seen as providing the essential physical precondition for male production, men made women as their first colony. All subsequent development is likewise marked by the same predatory mode of production. Colonization and "housewifization" are two ways that women and the weak are reduced to, being nature and thence their control and exploitation becomes justified. Mies's account deviates from traditional Marxist accounts in that it establishes the relationship between men and women as a relationship of power and instead of blaming capitalism for women's oppression, blames patriarchy irrespective of its forms in different production systems and exploitation and oppression as the common denominator for both First World and Third World women. Men everywhere are held to be violent for they uphold the global patriarchal hierarchy, but since the while men currently control the technology of destruction, Mies holds them more culpable than men elsewhere.

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### **2.3.2. Gender Relations Framework:**

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Both the structural explanations outlined above make global generalizations about the effects on women of capitalism and its interplay with patriarchy. These have been critiqued by a group of women who promoted the gender analytical approach to development for being too monolithic to be of much use in practice. At the same time the WID promotion of the category "woman" was also found wanting for the exclusive focus on women creates woman and man as isolable categories.

Those who promote the gender analytical approach adopt social relations of gender as their chief analytical category and extend the Marxist concept of social relations beyond the production of objects and commodities to areas of gender relations such as procreation, care of children, old and sick and to what all comes under the daily reproduction of labour. Instead of seeing power rooted in men and denied to women in all circumstances, this approach sees power in general inherent in gender relations. While it explains women's subordination in gender relations in the household it does not limit itself to the household interact, relate and define relations in the broader economic arena.

Gender relations, thus are not merely male-female relations, they refer to the “full ensemble of social relationships”, through which men become men and women become women. More than the sex, it is the socially differentiated arrangements and patterns of gender behaviour and relations that define the differential experience of the world by men and women. The gender relations framework thus frees woman and man from any biologicistic determinism, while at the same time not regarding the fact of different sex bodies leading to different rules and practices coming into operation so as to define gender relations and make for gender inequality.

The framework goes further to emphasize that other social relations such as class, race, ethnicity, religion etc. mediate to define the translate gender inequality, so that neither class, nor sex, nor any other attribute has prominence over other as a determining principle of individual identity, social position or power. By rethinking of men and women without a universal structure of patriarchy, the gender relations approach makes it possible for constructing gender subordination in different societies, communities, institutions and arenas of action in a historically specific manner thus making for a more realistic and pragmatic attempt at changing how men and women work, live and relate.

Ascription of gender roles is often discreetly, it may be implicit rules and practices that promote one gender rather than the others and there are strong biologicistic ideologies supporting them. Many gender discriminatory practices like the sexual division of labour, construction of an elaborate and sacrificial motherhood or violent and aggressive manhood stand to be questioned more logically once it is realized that they are neither instinctual, nor dictated by biology, rather it is an elaborate social system of gender relations that defines them and that privileges one gender over the other in terms of resources and power.

Lastly, development planners must realize that gender is never absent, though family is a critical site for the beginning of its operations, it operates as a pervasive allocation principle determining the participation of men and women in all social institutions. It links production with reproduction, the domestic domain with the public domain and the micro-economic units with the larger economy.

A gender relations approach has the advantage of being an inductive mode of analysis and can thus explain empirically found contradictions of subordination and power and the multiplicity of outcomes of developmental interventions, sometimes “emancipator”, sometimes making for more oppressive and subordinating conditions for women across the world.

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### **2.3.3. Empowering Women for Development:**

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Very closely connected with the issue of women's development is the question of women's empowerment. But what does empowerment mean and how can development bring it about? The term is contentious, yet it is important not to see it equivalent to greater participation of women in economic activities for economic activities do not always improve women's conditions and often add extra work burden on her. The term empowerment has within it the highly contentious concept of power which is understood differently by different people. In an article, "What is Empowerment", Jo Rowlands (1997) makes a distinction between "power over" and "power to", the first implying that some people have power or control over others, hence an instrument of domination and the second as a generative power, a power to stimulate, to lead without a conflict of interest, a power that does not seek to dominate or subordinate, rather a power that can resist and challenge the coercive intentions of "power over".

Empowerment generally is defined as bringing women from outside the decision making process into it such that they have access to political structures and decision-making, to markets and income and more generally to a state where they are able to maximize opportunities without constraints of the family, community or the State. A feminist definition of empowerment however is broader for it demands a consciousness of one's own interests and how they relate to the interests of others so that decision-making is based on knowledge of self and others and an assessment of ability to exert influence. Empowerment in the feminist sense would imply a realization of the "power over" as well as the "power to" resist, negotiate and change. The ability to act and exert influence thus requires the empowered to understand internalized oppression as well as the dynamics of oppression such that power is not given or received rather it comes from within. Empowerment is thus a process; and development itself should not be confused as empowerment. In some of the policies of the State, as it has been pointed out, the goal of development should be women's empowerment. This implies that women gain in self confidence and take charge of creating for themselves and conditions that will facilitate the maximization of their human abilities and potentialities.

## Check Your Progress II

**Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answers.

b) Check your answers with the possible answers provided at the end of this unit.

1) How role of gender can have impact on the development of women?

Ans.

2) Differentiate between Practical and Strategic Gender Needs?

Ans.

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## 2.4. Let Us Sum Up:

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The word gender, however, we are going beyond anatomical or biological differences between male and female to their socially constituted roles and status. For example when one uses the word femininity the social expectations of feminine qualities may be nurturing, caring, delicate, irrational intuitive, submissive, non-aggressive, etc. When a woman does not meet these social

expectations of feminine attributes, she may be considered not female enough or transgressing her role either as daughter, mother, sister, all of which have some role expectations. These roles as you might be aware are socially conditioned and arise of structures of power. In a patriarchal set up the entire system is geared towards keeping women at a lower level. The tilt of power and status in such institutional differentiation clearly favours the male, with the establishment of asymmetric relationships of dominance. However, despite such divisions being almost universal, nuances and impacts of gender varies significantly across situations and contexts. As a variable of social stratification, gender has to be analyzed in association with other variables like class, race, ethnicity and caste.

Gender relations contribute to the social meaning of female and male and thus depend on the considerations of appropriate behaviour and activity for women and men.

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## 2.5. Key Words:

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- **Practical Gender Needs:** Practical gender needs are the needs of women or men that relate to responsibilities and tasks associated with their traditional gender roles or to immediate perceived necessity. Responding to practical needs can improve quality of life but does not challenge gender divisions or men's and women's position in society. Practical needs generally involve issues of condition or access.
- **Strategic Gender Needs:** Strategic gender interests concern the position of women and men in relation to each other in a given society. Strategic interests may involve decision-making power or control over resources. Addressing strategic gender interests assists women and men to achieve greater equality and to change existing gender roles and stereotypes. Gender interests generally involve issues of position, control, and power.

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## 2.6. References:

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2. Schrijvers, Joke (1993) The violence of Development: A choice for intellectuals - Kali for women: New Delhi.
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## Unit – 3

### Gender and Development

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#### Learning Objectives:

After completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- *Describe the role of women in rural society*
- *Understand the concept of women in development*
- *Understand the effect of development on women*
- *Explain the gender perspective on development*

#### Structure:

- 3.1. Introduction
- 3.2. Difference between WID and GAD
- 3.3. Gender and the Constitution: Women in India
- 3.4. Development Planning in India
- 3.5. Policy and Planning for Women
- 3.6. Areas of Concern for Gender Development
- 3.7. Constraints in Gender Developmental Policies
- 3.8. Gender Mainstreaming
- 3.9. Gender Budgeting
- 3.10. Let Us Sum Up
- 3.11. Key Words
- 3.12. References
  
- 3.13. Check Your Progress – Possible Answers

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#### 3.1. Introduction:

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Having understood the term gender let us look at how women's issue came up in development discourse. Gender is one of key terms for social analysis. It is important to understand the social, economic, political and cultural forces that determined how men and women participate in and benefit from the development process. Like all other social relations, gender relationships are also affected by and have an effect on, how societies and economics change over time (Pearson, 1992). The processes of socialization and social relations of production have a distinct impact on the location of women's lives across countries and regions.

Much of the formative intersection between the ideas of feminism and women in development took place during the context of the U.N. “Decade of women” – 1976 – 85. Equality, Development and Peace was the slogan that was proposed at the International Women’s Year Conference in Mexico City in 1975. What exactly constituted key women’s issue was constantly being debated and it was eventually realized that women’s issue should not be kept as a separate section (see Box for more details)

**Box: Emerging issues in U.N. Decade of Women – 1976 – 85.**

Women were proposing new visions of development towards which several international meetings in the late 1970s and 1980s made public declaration about feminist visions of development from a global perspective. Following are some of the major international meetings with their vision and plan.

**Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development (APCWD), 1979**, held in Bangkok, was sponsored by UN. “It proposed one of the first global definitions of feminism as an ideology with two long term goals: a) The achievement of women’s power to control their own lives within and outside the home and (b) the removal of all forms of inequality and oppression through the creation of a more just social and economic order nationally and internationally (of Tinker 1990: 77). One of the paramount goals of feminist vision of development was empowerment of women.

**Workshop on “Developing strategies for the future Feminist Perspectives”, 1980**, held in Stony point, New York. It approached development as political process and stated dissatisfaction with limited definition of development, which confined itself to economic indices such as GDP. It asked for integrationist approach and empowerment of women.

**“Dakar Declaration on another development with women”, 1982**, was held in Senegal. The declaration “believed that the most fundamental and underlying principle of another development should be that of structural transformation, a notion which challenges the economic, political and cultural forms of domination at the national, international and household level” (ibid : 79).

**Nairobi End of the U.N. Decade World Conference, 1985 :**

A Third World Women’s Group was formed to define the issues of development from the “vantage point of women” DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era). It called for cultural diversity of women’s movement and issues but a structural unity in trying to understand subordination. It emphasized the active involvement of women in structural transformation and a deep commitment to self-reliance, which rests on indigenous culture rather on western models.

## United Nations, Women and Human Rights

- 1945 UN charter
- 1946 CSW established
- 1948 UN declaration of human rights
- 1975 International women's year
- 1975 First World Conference on Women, Mexico city
- 1976-1985 UN decade for women
- 1976
  - INSTRAW established
  - UNIFEM established
- 1979 CEDAW adopted

It is this continuous realization of women's integral role in development process that brought in concepts such as, "**Women in Development**". The Women in Development (WID) approach promotes women's integration in development efforts by focusing on women, looking at how the process of development has made an impact on the position of women in society. The study of women in development focuses upon development and the economics of development i.e. the distribution of economic benefits rather than its growth singularly. The key question in such contexts is essentially "who gets what". Indicators of human development show that women have an unequal share in the processes of development and they are often endowed with negative development merits. When resources are stretched, then, it is women; the most marginalized in the first place, who suffer first and most. However "a major criticism of the women in Development approach is that it treats women as

beneficiaries. It starts from the premise that women have been excluded from development. But women's time, energy aspect of the development process, it is the inequality of gender relations and the continuing subordination of women that ensure that women's contribution is not matched by recognition and remuneration in social, political and economic terms" (Pearson, 1992).

The problem with the women in development approach is that it targets women in order to make them a part of main stream development while ignoring the fact that women are already an intrinsic part of the development process. Women are always there. The understanding of women's 'face labour' is that there is no need to compensate it, and subsequently there is no cost in terms of resources allocated. The 'real' picture, however, is that female domestic labour provides a critical and necessary support enabling the male workforce and society to function. Women's role in society is a combination of productive and reproductive role. Women's productive role includes all tasks that enhance the income and economy of the household and the community, e.g. crop and livestock production, handicrafts production, marketing and wage employment. Reproductive activities are those carried out to reproduce and care for the household and community, including the activities involved in fuel and water collection, food preparation, child care, education, health care and home maintenance. These activities tend to be viewed as non-economic, generally carrying no monetary compensation and are usually out of the budgets of the national income accounts. This reality of social reproduction derives from a sexual division of labour that is tied to gender division and male dominance.

While a woman in development refers to the current situation of people, it tends to demarcate "women as a separate practice area. The frame of "Women in Development"(WID) has been supplanted by that of "**Gender and Development (GAD)**", since the late 1980s. Gender and Development is a prominent strategy of Developmentalist approach to promote gender relations and positions. In contrast to the previous approach like WAD and WID, GAD uses the concept of gender in the place of women. The GAD considers women's power positions in the society are conditioned by the "Social explanations of gender". It is a holistic approach that proposes fundamental changes in the socio-economic and political structure of the society to bring about a perceptible change in the position of women. It sees women as the catalyst of change or as change agents rather than being the passive recipients of development efforts. The main focus of GAD is gender mainstreaming and it proposes top-down state intervention can play a major role in women's emancipation.

The GAD approach to development looks at the unequal relations women face in the society and the prevalent inequitable distribution of esteem, power and economic resources. The ultimate goal of the GAD approach is to create equitable and sustainable development for both men and women and to make them equal participating members in the decision making process. Since the

mid of 1980s there has been a consensus that sustainable development is required to avoid the fears of a risk society and this sustainable development demands an adequate responsibilities of both men and women within the community and their inter relation with each other. This has become the foundation of the GAD approach. The GAD suggests improving the status of women is no longer seen as a women issue, but as a goal that requires the equal and active participation of both men and women.

Development programmes affect men and women differently because of their differing roles, responsibilities, reaches to resources and priorities. Gender analysis should concentrate on these aspects and should bring out solutions to make development programmes equally benefiting men and women. The GAD sees development passes through three distinct phases. They are: project level, policy level and programme level and it recommends women's visibility at every stage. Women's voice and choice should be reflected and echoed at all the three levels to make development efforts proactive for women's development.

Thus, the GAD approach is a way of determining how best to structure development projects and programmes based on analysis of gender relationships. It applies gender analysis to uncover the ways in which men and women can work together to generate maximum efficiency and optimize productivity.

The GAD framework owes its origin to the works of Caroline Moser who developed the Moser Gender Planning Framework while working at the Development Planning Unit of the University of London. Working with Carin Levy, she expanded it into a methodology for gender policy planning. The Moser framework analysis the traditions of access and control prevalent in a society and to the extent it shapes the gender relations. The major focus of the Moser frame work includes gender role identification, gender needs assessment, disaggregating control of resources and decision making within the households planning for balancing the triple role of reproductions, production and community management, distinguishing between different aims in intervention and involving women and gender – aware organizations in planning. In 1994, the World Bank issued a policy paper on Gender and Development where it mentioned that GAD aims at addressing the policy and institutional constraints that maintain disparities between genders and thus restrict the effectiveness of the development programme.

The GAD approach is criticized for over emphasizing the social differences between men and women without providing equal weightage on the bonds between them and the potentials they have for change. Further, it is also alleged that GAD does not dig deep enough into social relations and how cultural changes can be brought about to bring vital changes in gender relations.

Finally, the GAD provides an overriding significance to the state machinery to design and direct change.

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### **3.2. Difference between WID and GAD:**

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Though both WID and GAD are approaches to development of better gender relations, there are some key differences between them which can be discussed as follows:

- WID stands for women in development.  
GAD stands for gender and development.
- The WID approach was developed in the 1970s.  
The GAD approach was developed in the 1980s.
- The WID approach has its root in liberal feminism.  
The GAD approach has its roots in socialist feminism.
- The WID approach has its origin in the influential intellectual work of Easter Boserup. The GAD approach has its origin in the intellectual work of Caroline Moser.
- The Harvard Analytical framework undertook efforts to provide a better shape to the WID. The GAD approach is associated with the Development Planning Unit of the University of London.
- The WID makes women its key word. The GAD prefers gender as its key word.
- The WID approach seeks to integrate women into the existing development programmes without transforming the unequal gender relationship. The GAD approach seeks to make women not the passive recipients of the development benefits but active participants in the development process.
- The WID stressed on equity, strategy, anti-poverty strategy and efficiency strategy. The GAD stressed on “gender mainstreaming” strategies.
- The WID became popular throughout the United Nations Decade for women from 1976 – 1985 and during this period; it became the priority area of the development agenda of the nations. The GAD approach became popular with the beginning of the structural adjustment programmes in different nations since mid 1980s.

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### **3.3. Gender and the Constitution: Women in India:**

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There is growing criticism against the top-down approach and growth oriented development perspectives, as they fail to consider women as an integral part of development and as they continue to add to the growing inequalities between the haves and the have-nots, women being the have-nots. Let us see in what way India has been addressing women and development. To get a sense of where we are, we need to understand where the foundations are and for that we will first examine the constitutional guarantees and in our next section the planning and policy issues with regards to women.

The underlying principles of the gender role presumed by the Indian State are embodied in the Indian Constitution, which is foremost among the basic documents which declare the intention of the Indian State. The primary imperative for women's equality is rooted in Part – III (Fundamental Rights) of the Constitution. The sub article of Article 15 dealing with the Right to Equality lies down: "The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth or any of them". Further, the constitution in the same article at sub-article (3) lies down; "Nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making any special provision for women and children".

The Constitution thus gives equal status to women as citizens, while also taking into consideration some special disabilities which the State may come forward to rectify through affirmative action. Para – IV of the Constitution of India, dealing with the "Directive Principle of State Policy" has references to the principles to be taken into account by the State wherein concern for women is exhibited (Desai 1994). Articles 39, 42 and 44 refer to certain principles which may not be enforceable in the courts of law, but provide guidance to the State treating women as equal citizens. However certain other sections of the constitution like the right to freedom of religion, as embodied in Articles 25 to 28, as interpreted by the State legislated in the form of personal laws, fundamentally deny equality to women in almost all basic facets of her life. They deny equality in personal, economic, sexual, social, educational, cultural and even with regard to her right to body as well as with regard to hold certain beliefs, values and norms and codes of personal conduct (ibid).

Further, the economic assumption, embodied in the constitution, as formulated in the Article 23 and 24 in the Fundamental Rights, dealing with Right against Exploitation, does not consider the day-to-day immense and incessant appropriation of surplus labour of women, witnessed in every family, as exploitation, not to mention how women invariably are paid less for their work than men. Right to freedom of religion and right against exploitation are fundamentally discriminatory against women and while not agreeing to designate women's labour at home as exploitation, it has been supportive of gender bias of the State. The state permission to personal religious laws permits the world on religious prescriptions of varied discriminately norms and practices towards women. Personal laws orient towards the domestic 'private' space. The Constitution mostly addresses itself to the 'public sphere' personal laws, having implications for shaping women's status, position, rights and obligations in society. The relegation of women in the private sphere through personal laws, has transformed the entire issue of gender justice and development into individualized and limited pathologies to be dealt with by specialized bodies.

The manner in which social policies discriminate against women and prescribe certain tasks and behaviour of development reveal the essence and values that are the guiding factors of the state. The understanding of what women's consciousness should be is conjured with the State's definition of femininity and this definition of femininity is not marginal but absolutely central to the purposes of welfarism (Elizabeth 1989).

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### **3.4. Development Planning in India:**

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Early development planning in India, since the 1950s identified social welfare services as the only category which tackled problems of women, among the other targets groups. Such an approach was the outcome of the understanding of women as a category for whom special (and separate) programs, services, safeguards, etc. were put in place. Social Welfare Services targeted to reach out to vulnerable groups divided into several categories.

The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), set up in 1953, was confronted with the arduous problem of the lack of any governmental machinery and for welfare related activities it undertook the task of promoting welfare through voluntary organizations. It also encouraged women's organizations to take up such activities in partnership with government. As part of this strategy women's organizations were promoted, especially those working with the grassroots. Mahila Mandals were promoted as 'delivery mechanisms' for essential services like education, health, especially for maternal and child health, both by the CSWB and the Community Development Programme through the first and the second Five-Year Plans. According to Vina Mazumdar, this combination of institution building and woman resource development was also expected to prepare women to participate in the political and developmental processes. Thus though the language of these strategies reflected contemporary meaning of 'welfare', there was a conceptual thrust (even though inadequately articulated) towards actively involving and stimulating the participation of women's organizations in the process of change. However, increasing bureaucratic control, top-down designing and streamlining of programmes and declining resource support to organizational and institutional development from below both reflected and contributed to the low priority and non-series approach to basic issues in promotion of gender equality.

The Third, Fourth and the Fifth Five-Year Plans saw a decline in support to strategies of organization building and human resource development. The Report of the National Committee on Women's Education (1958-59) saw some priority being accorded to Women's Education. From the period of the Third Plan there was a distinct rise in the priority according to the issue of population control. Directives from the Planning Commission, from the 4<sup>th</sup> Plan onwards, failed to integrate Family Planning with Maternal and Child Health (MCD) planning for supplementary nutrition of children and nursing and expectant

mothers from poverty groups were not integrated with MCH. The Community Development Programme (1952) was another significant step in the early years of development planning. It aimed at decentralized development in the rural areas through community efforts. In the sections to follow let us look at various plan strategies and policies to see how and what place women had in the development process.

### **The CSWI's Critique and Parliamentary Mandate:**

In the year 1971, the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Government of India appointed a committee called committee on the status of women in India to study the status of women in India. The Ministry was acting on a UN request for a status of women report for international women's year in 1975. The Committee had two tasks : (i) to examine the constitutional, legal and administrative provisions that have a bearing on the social status of women, their education and employment and (ii) to assess the impact of these provisions.

The Committee came to the conclusion that there was an increase in the marginalization of women in the economy and society. The CSWI report Towards Equality (1974) found demographic trends of declining sex ratio, disparities in the life expectancy and death rates between men and women; and the difficulties involved in women's access to literacy, education and livelihood. It was of the view that the Indian State had failed in its constitutional responsibility of gender equality. The planning process for development in agriculture, industry, fishery, livestock, etc. and other important sectors of the Indian economy contained no acknowledgement of the millions of women involved in these sectors due to livelihood reasons. This process of marginalization of the large majority of women in the economy, together with their neglect and devaluation by the society with the support of the state, definitely demonstrated gender bias. The increasing investment on education, health and the opening of public employment opportunities had benefited a very small section of the female population. This privileged section of women were again threatened by escalation of social practices like dowry, inequality meted out as a consequence of the personal laws, the non-enforcement of the existing laws, which sought to offer protection to women (like the labour laws or criminal laws) and lack of women's overall "visibility" in the sense of the inclusion of their needs, concerns and perspectives in the planning process.

Even though the parliamentary debate on the Towards Equality report sought the removal all disabilities that Indian women continue to suffer from. The declaration of National Emergency (1974-77) within a few weeks after it has been tabled in the Parliament pushed back any serious action on the CSWI recommendations.

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### **3.4.1. Post-Emergency Planning of Women's Development (1977 – 80):**

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The period between 1977 and 1980 witnessed significant policy review exercises by the government. Among them were the Report of the Working Group on Employment of Women (1977-78), Report of the Working Group on Development of village Level Organizations of Rural Women, 1977-78, Report of the National Committee on the Role and Participation of women in Agriculture and Rural Development (1979-80). These review exercises constituted a substantive base to the conceptualizing of fundamental problems and strategies for women's development in India. The Indian agenda of women's development got incorporated into the United Nations' mid-decade programme of action, mediated through the non-aligned movements, special conference on women and development in Baghdad, 1979. India gained membership of the Commission on the status of women (1978-80) and the preparatory committee for Mid-Decade Copenhagen Conference (1980) and Programme in Action. India's contribution to the emphasis on Third World perspectives on development was acknowledged during the mid-decade conference and there was the consequent adoption of employment, health and education as a sub-theme of the decade's agenda.

Vina Mazumdar's examination of the conceptual approach enroled through these few years identified women's development needs as having multiple dimensions, cutting across economic, social and political sectors requiring explicit examination of women's situation on various sectors. She called for earmarking of a share of various sectoral allocations for women, instead of limiting it to women specific programmes or agencies. She also called for promotion of rural employment and development. Through women's own collective organization, organizations such as SEWA, etc. which were paving the way towards such path.

The Sixth Five – Year Plan released in December, 1979, marked a new beginning as it included a separate unit on women. Till this time, women's concerns were always subsumed under sectoral approaches in health, education, rural development, agriculture, etc. This unit was a first attempt at a holistic planning of women. It stated that the objective of population control could not be achieved without bringing about major changes in the status of women. This plan suggested the need for “administrative innovation” and the “collection of sex-wise distribution data on development assistance, thereby urging for better information, together with mechanisms to ensure women receiving their “due share” of government's attention and support and “equal opportunity for growth and distributive justice”.

These principles of women's involvement in the planning process also sought to extend support for organisation of rural women similar to organisations of

the rural poor in the effort to improve their “bargaining power and access to development assistance”. However, the new Planning Commission set up in 1980; reverted women back to the social services and put on held the outward looking strategies, approaches and perspectives developed for women. However, the intervention at this stage, by the national women’s organization, made a definite impact upon the planning process. A period of partnership began between the few cells on women that had been set up within the Ministries of Labour and Employment, Social Welfare and Rural Development, and the growing women’s movement and women studies scholars. Seven women’s organizations got together to submit a joint memorandum in 1980, gathered the Planning Commission to incorporate a unit on women and development in the sixth plan. This was landmark achievement in India’s Planning History.

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### **3.4.2. The Sixth Five Year Plan on Women Development:**

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The Plan on women and Development acknowledged women’s lesser status in society and traced it to the inadequate opportunities of “independent employment and income”, and demographic trends (higher mortality, lower economic participation, literacy, sex-ratio, etc.). It defined a multipronged but inter-dependent strategy for women’s development which would be dependent on the total development process. Regarding “cases of transferred assets, such as agricultural and homestead land”, the redistribution policies of the government promised that “government shall endeavor to provide joint title to husband and wife”. It also advocated strengthening of the grassroots women’s voluntary organizations, which were envisioned “as channels for women to participate effectively in decisions that affect their lives and for promoting adequate development efforts for women at different levels.” For education, special support services of a women’s quota and magic figure of one-third made its first ever appearance within the TRYSEM programme. The Sixth Plan also proposed “collective measures” in sectors where women’s employment is low or on the decline.

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### **3.4.3. The Seventh Five-year Plan (1985-90):**

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The Seventh Five-Year Plan emphasized provision of gainful employment to women and youth. It reiterated strategies of organising women around socio-economic activities in order to succeed in the twin objectives of making their projects economically viable and also of adding social strength to enhance their overall status. For the first time there was use of “feminist language”, as against the predominantly patriarchal preference to confine women to an oppressive environment, in Unit – 14 of the actual plan document. This period that coincided with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi’s gruesome assassination, was a period of change within the government, it was however, a period of optimism for women’s cause both inside and outside the government. The Government of India hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> NAM Conference which was to be held at

Nairobi, India's approaches, both official and unofficial, at the ILO sponsored Afro-Asian Conference on Rural Women's Organizations and Development, earned encouraging appreciation. The Department of Rural Development announced a 30% quota for women in anti-poverty programmes for rural areas. Steps were taken to initiate gender sensitization as a mandatory part of training of rural development officials.

The new government at the centre formed a full department of Women and Child Development, under the Ministry of Human Resources. It included the development of education, culture, sports and youth affairs among women. Pressures from the women's movement and internal struggle within government led to the incorporations of two paragraphs on Education for Women's Equality with the National Policy on Education. For the first time, a message appeared that together with expanding women's access to all kinds of education, the system with all its institutions, had to shoulder a major responsibility for genuine empowerment of women, through change in the social construction of gender.

Yet another breakthrough in this plan period was the issue of effective representation of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions. Initially the CSWI's recommendations in this regard had been shelved. Efforts were made to begin a debate on them by the Secretary, Social Welfare from January, 1985. The results took shape in two years time. Preparations for a National Perspective Plan (NPP) for women were started under the aegis of the Department of Women and Child Development. The National Commission for Self Employed Women (NCSEW) was set up to articulate the problems, needs and aspirations of working women in this poverty sector. The NPP (1988) wanted an increase in women's participation and presence at decision – making levels – in local self – government bodies, State Assemblies and Parliament and suggested 30% reservations at all these levels.

The NPP was heavily critiqued by the women's movements. Finally the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments came about in 1992. They conferred constitutional status on these bodies, mandated regular elections, wider powers/resources and reserved one-third of seats for women at various levels of the local bodies. On the issue of reservation for women, the women's movement organizations rejected suggestions of nomination to build up a critical mass as undemocratic and subversive of the constitution. They also rejected reservation in State Assemblies and Parliament. However in the case of the Panchayats and Municipalities, demand was made for achievement of a critical mass, which could throw up new leadership and new concerns from the more marginalized sections.

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#### **3.4.4. The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992 – 97):**

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Part – I of the Plan document mentions women only in the context of the need for population control. In Part – I of the Sectoral units, mention is made of women only in contest of women-specific programmes. The principles of a women’s quota or a ear-marked share of allocations are not mentioned.

The new features in the section of women’s development include a paragraph on violence against women and a two-page “Situational Analysis”, which highlights the problems of higher mortality, lower education and increasing unemployment of women”, the conceptual, methodological and perception biases regarding value of women’s work, compounded by women’s concentration in the informal sector resulting in casualisation, non-protection of labour laws and inaccessibility to credit, technology and other types of development assistance. The girl child got a paragraph for the first time, with the promise of “special programmes”.

The National Commission for women Act was passed in 1990 whereby the autonomous national commission for women was set up through an enactment act to act as a statutory ombudsperson for women, reviewing laws and policies and intervening selectively in individual cases of violation and denial of women’s rights. In 1991, the National Plan of action for the Girl child set up time-bound recommendations for the survival, protection, development and participation of girl-children, with emphasis on non-discrimination and the universality and indivisibility of rights. The draft National Policy for Empowerment of Women (1996) put together policy directives for securing gender justice and gender equality and for the mainstreaming of gender considerations.

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#### **3.4.5. The Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997 – 2002):**

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The Ninth Plan had important objectives for women. The approach paper of the Ninth Plan focused on the issues of empowerment of women, decentralization and people’s participation in planning and implementing strategies. For the first time in the history of planned development in India, the empowerment of women was adopted as one of the objectives in the Ninth Plan. The approach paper also declared a strategy of drawing up a women’s component plan for every sector which would identify the inflow of benefit to women and carryout a gender appraisal of past performance in the sector. In the field of development, for the state legislative assemblies were discussed. The plan proposed to ensure 30 percent representation of women in the public sector and provides for a larger entry for women, in the premier civil services. In the field of health, the emphasis would as usual be on reproductive health. In education, besides gender equality, plans would be initiated for free education of girls’ upto the college level and greater vocational training for

them. To increase women's participation in the industrial development of the country. The plan proposes to set up a "Development Bank for Women Entrepreneurs" for assisting them in the small and tiny sector. In agriculture, a greater assistance and share was called upon through rural development employment schemes. The most important resolve of the plan was to have a special women's component in the plan to ensure 30 percent flow of funds to women development sectors.

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#### **3.4.6. The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07):**

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The Tenth Five Year Plan was formulated to ensure requisite access plan of women to information, resources and services, and advance gender equality goals. During this plan, economic empowerment of women through Self Help Groups was expected to bring changes in the position and esteem of women. Skill and capacity development through trainings were insisted upon in this plan period.

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#### **3.4.7. The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12):**

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The 11th plan was based on the following five-fold strategy of Empowerment of women viz. Economic empowerment, with special focus on women in agriculture and on the effects of globalization; Social empowerment and engendering social change; Political Empowerment to facilitate entry and effective functioning of women in Parliament, PRIs and in premier government services; Strengthening mechanism for effective implementation of women related legislations; and Creating institutional mechanisms for gender budgeting leading to mainstreaming and strengthening delivery mechanisms for effective implementation of women-related programmes.

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#### **3.4.8. The Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17):**

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The vision for the XII Five Year Plan is to ensure improving the position and condition of women by addressing structural and institutional barriers as well as strengthening **gender mainstreaming**.

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### **3.5. Policy and Planning for Women:**

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A review of policy formulation and planning for women's development in India reflects the lack of effort in planning and policy formation for women in the States. There is very little conceptualization regarding women's needs and the necessary formulations required to give them a larger share of development. Only a few states of India have policies for women's development. The efforts are inadequate and do not meet the requirements. Initiatives have come mostly from the central government.

For a federal state that India is, the success of any development process is a far cry unless the state governments fully realize their responsibility to raise the status of women. Greater involvement of grassroots organizations through the political process would be one of the mechanisms for the achievement of women's empowerment. Further, for gender equality to be fully achieved, it has to be integrated in all development programmes of the country.

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### **3.6. Areas of Concern for Gender Development:**

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Gender development has not achieved its full success. It needs more insight, more initiative and has to take some more concerns while planning, designing, formulating, implementing and evaluating gender development policies. Some important areas of gender development concern can be discussed below:

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#### **3.6.1. Work:**

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Households in all societies differentiate various household activities and responsibilities by gender. For women, production and reproduction are two interlinked activities, which is productive in nature but these works are unpaid. Men have always played a major role in outside work and minor role in household work and they are considered as paid workers. Gender disparities in access to economic resources, limited access to agricultural inputs, especially for food crops, severely curtails women's potential productivity and affect women's potential for achieving the kind of economic autonomy. Due to the gender discrimination in employment sector, women continue to work in less prestigious jobs, are paid less and have fewer opportunities for advancement. Promoting gender equality in work should be taken up as an area of priority.

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#### **3.6.2. Poverty:**

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Poverty can be defined as the condition where income and resources are so inadequate as to the victim from having a standard of living considered acceptable in the society in which he/she lives. Because of their poverty they may experience multiple disadvantage through unemployment, low income, poor housing, inadequate health care and barriers to lifelong learning, culture, sport and recreation. They are often excluded and marginalized from participating in activities. Women represent a staggering 70% of the world's poor. The reasons being, women are often primarily responsible for childcare and household duties- tasks for which they receive no pay. Women living in developing nations may also be relied upon to participate in exhausting physical and/or agricultural labour to help support the livelihoods of their families and villages. Having so many other responsibilities, these women have less time to devote to paid employment, and consequently earn a smaller income which causes poverty among them. Women lack skill and bargaining power is limited among them. Women do not migrate like men. This inability

to migrate arrests their income earning capacity and causes poverty among them. So, it is high time that the problem of poverty is to be addressed to ensure development of women.

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### **3.6.3. Family Life:**

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In all societies women are the prime careers of children, the elderly and the ill, and do most of the domestic tasks. Women's lives are greatly affected by reproduction, which has a direct impact on their health and on their educational, employment and earning opportunities. Family life becomes more miserable and burdens double for the women when they head the families. The post globalization period has triggered migration among the men which has made the women take up double roles as domestic care givers and productive earning roles. Several studies have shown women's devotion of time for domestic work is proportionately much higher than the man. This entails upon the health, nutrition, responsibility of the women. The engagement in household works in the family very often goes unpaid, undervalued and unrecognized. These issues are to be tackled through gender development plans and programmes.

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### **3.6.4. Health and Nutrition:**

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Biologically, men and women have different health needs. Their life styles and socially ascribed roles arising from prevailing social and cultural patterns also play a part in the health picture. Women's health risks are mainly linked to reproduction which includes diseases like anemia, malnutrition, hepatitis, etc. Due to some biological, environmental, and social cause women's life expectancy is greater than men's. Custom, social constraints and lack of resources gives rise to gender disparities among children in terms of nutrition, morbidity and mortality. Males are fed more and better. The sharing of food in family may also be unequal in some societies. Women often serve the family first and eat whatever is left which is not enough for their health. So, this alarming health condition of the women is to be given priority in gender development policies.

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### **3.6.5. Education:**

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More women than men are illiterate and the lower a country's literacy rate, the wider the gap between the two sexes. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimates that 41% of women in developing countries are illiterate, compared with 20% of men. In some countries, the illiteracy rate of rural women between the ages of 15 to 24 years is twice to three times that of women in urban areas. Girls leave school earlier, especially in rural areas where they are needed to help with domestic and productive work. The lack of transport or the schools located far from the homes widens the literacy gap by directly affecting girls' school attendance, as parents tend to worry about the personal safety of their daughters. In some

societies, rigid cultural patterns and social needs restrict women's movement outside the home. Cultural traditions, prejudices, stereo-types and family reluctance frequently result in the exclusion of women from the scientific and technical fields, inducing many to opt for the more, "female", but less remunerative and less promising careers- a choice that aggravates segregation in the job market. Now these concerns should adorn the gender development agendas and policies and efforts are to be initiated for inclusive education with women in focus.

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### **3.6.6. The Environment:**

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The impact of environmental degradation is gender differentiated in terms of workloads and the quality of life. As women are responsible for the daily management and use of natural resources, they are the first to be affected by the depletion of natural resources. Environmental degradation is most keenly felt by the most vulnerable members of the community and those who rely heavily on nature's bounty. For this reason, gender disparities in natural resource management and participation in policy-making must be clearly understood and women should be given a prominent share in environmental protection programmes.

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### **3.6.7. The Public and Policy Making Spheres:**

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Gender inequality is a persistent feature of the public and policy making spheres. Women continue to be underrepresented in governments, legislative bodies and many other crucial sectors affecting public opinion. Worldwide, there are only 16 countries in which more than 15 percent of ministerial posts are held by women, and in 59 countries there are no women ministers at all. Although women have the right to vote in nearly every country in the world, there are very few women in government, in 1994, only 10% of the world's parliamentary deputies were women. Socio-cultural prejudices and stereotyping are still the main constraints to women's participation in the spheres of political and economic power. Unless and until are women's voice is reflected in decision making bodies their felt needs cannot get manifested in the policies. So, providing political representation to women can make gender planning better and more realistic.

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## **3.7. Constraints in Gender Developmental Policies:**

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From previous discussions, it has become quite visible and clear that till now development policies for women has not become very yielding and successful in bringing changes in their traditional roles, status, ensuring rights and increasing their access to opportunities. Poverty has not decreased, food security has not become the right of every woman, violence and vulnerability rates have not perceptively come down, political participation and decision making roles have not become common to every woman. This clearly projects

that there are certain constraints in planning, formulation and implementation of the policies. These constraints are discussed below:

- The lack of gender disaggregated data has probably been the main constraint, ideal for serious consideration of women's real role. Such data would help to enlist women's full participation in the formulation of rural development and food security strategies, gender differentiated impacts of food and cash crop production, financial management, etc.
- Women have limited access to land nearly everywhere throughout history. Women would certainly make better use of land to which they had some sort of guaranteed rights, as such rights would help encourage them to make the correct long term and short term input and management decisions and achieve higher yield. FAO studies have shown that insecure rights to land ownership and use are a crucial, gender based barrier to enhancing women's agricultural productivity and income. The Beijing Platform for Action underlined this aspect as a direct cause of female poverty. It urged governments to implement policies and promote women's access to and control over land, and to reform legislation that deprived women of the right to own and inherit land.
- Women play an important role in water management. They are responsible to provide it to the family unit and they cannot afford to waste a drop of it. But water policies and programmes frequently restrict women's right to the use and sustainable management of water. Now, it is a mandate on the part of the Governments to make women the front leaders of the "save the water" movements.
- In the context of food security, sustainable development and poverty eradication, research and extension objectives are to increase food supplies, create employment opportunities, reduce environmental degradation and enhance resource management. To achieve sustainable agricultural production in developing countries, there is a need for using the expertise of women who are responsible for growing food. FAO studies confirm that women produce 60-80% of the food in developing countries and 50% in worldwide. However, they have much less access than men to the information and farm support services that were established to boost productivity. If women are overlooked as food producers and resource managers, it hardly will become a difficult proposition to increase food supply and food security.
- FAO studies have identified several weak points that prevent extension programmes from reaching rural women. Few women have access to land and other resources, and encounter serious constraints to obtaining credit. Extension services tend to sideline them. Other factors hindering women's access to extension are their lack of formal schooling, mobility and time for extension activities. The lack of extension service provision for women restricts their access to inputs such as improved seed, fertilizer and pesticides.

- Green Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s was successful worldwide, in boosting yields and food supplies, but, it did not necessarily enhance food security, economic opportunities and general well-being among the poorest of the rural poor because its impact differed greatly by gender and social class. The rich benefitted more than the poor and men more than the women.
- In most countries, rural women have difficulty in getting credit because they are unable to put up the collateral securities that lending institutions demand or because of the prevailing laws. Civil and/or farm legislation either does not grant women property rights on a par with those enjoyed by their husbands, or fails to acknowledge women as heads of household, even when they play that role. All these limit women's access to the market, lending institutions and bring disadvantages for them.

## **CONCEPTS RELATED TO GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **3.8. Gender Mainstreaming:**

Gender mainstreaming happens to be the chief strategy and major instrument of the GAD concept. It is often said to be a manifestation of gender awareness. It aims at increasing gender awareness in all areas and all levels of public life. The concept of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of society was accepted and established as a global strategy for promoting gender equality in the Platform of Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Congress for Women, held in Beijing in 1995. It highlights the need and urgency to ensure gender equality as a priority area in all sectors of social and economic development. In July, 1997, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defined the concept of gender mainstreaming as follows:

“Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislations, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as men an integral part of the design, implementations, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, Economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.”

Mainstreaming includes gender specific activities and affirmative action whenever men and women are not put into disadvantaged position. Gender-specific interventions can also target women exclusively or men exclusively or men and women together to enable them to participate in and procure the benefits from the development endeavors.

Mainstreaming is not about adding a “women’s component” or “even a gender equality component” into an existing development programme. It also does not confine itself to mere participation. It implies adding experience, knowledge, skill, interests of men and women to the development agenda. Gender mainstreaming aims at transforming unequal social and institutional structures into equal and just structures for both the gender groups through need identifications, chalking out the constraints.

Carolyn Hannan, Director of the UN Division for the Advancement of women provides following basic principles of mainstreaming:

- Adequate accountability mechanism to monitor the progress of gender neutral development projects.
- Identification of issues, area of gender differences and disparities.
- Assumptions to design and implement gender-equal policies and programmes.
- To carry out continuous gender analysis.
- To ensure a clear political will and allocation of adequate resources for mainstreaming. Deployment of more manpower and investment of more finance to translate the concept of mainstreaming into a programme of action.
- To initiate efforts to broaden women’s equitable participation at all levels of decision-making.
- Mainstreaming need not replace the need for targeted women-specific policies and programmes and positive legislation.

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### **3.9. Gender Budgeting:**

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Before going to the ‘Gender Budgeting’, we should know, ‘what is budget’? A Budget is not just an annual statement of receipts and expenditures. It is an instrument for fulfilling the obligations of the state and is a political statement of the priorities set by the government in resource allocation.

Gender Budgeting is not a separate budget for women. It is the analysis of general government budgets from a gender perspective. It involves the analysis of the allocations and spreading its different impact on women and men. Women’s budgets are a mechanism for establishing whether a government’s gender equality commitments translate into budgetary commitments. Without adequate resource allocation gender equality commitments are unlikely to be realized. These budgets are also a mechanism for gender mainstreaming as these exercises forge a strong link between resource allocations and policies across all governmental activities. Budgets are not gender neutral. Budgets can either promote women’s equality or exacerbate women’s inequality—in other words, budgets can either increase income gaps and other forms of inequality between women and men, or they can lessen them. Budgets are one of the most influential policy documents governments have because without money a government cannot implement most other policies or programs. Gender budgets

are, however, not simply about spending, they also examine government revenue- how a government gets the money it spends- and the implications of that for women and men. Thus, gender budgets reflect Government's commitments, priorities and policies to create a gender neutral environment.

Gender Budgeting is needed for:

- Awareness raising, advocacy, and training purposes
- Planning, monitoring and accountability purposes
- Efficiency, effectiveness and transparency
- Gender equality and development
- To examine the commitment of the state and the action with regard to gender equality
- To monitor and evaluate government's spending and resource raising for men and women
- To improve allocation for women
- To identify constraints faced by women or men which influence the extent to which they are in a position to access services which are designed to be 'gender neutral'?
- To highlight the gender differential needs
- To integrate gender perspective into planning, policy making and development

Budget has a differential impact on women and men. It deals with financial aggregates- expenditures and revenues, surpluses or deficits, but men and women are affected by it in different ways and means. Policy makers have to be informed and sensitized that women's concerns have to be linked into every aspect of public policies, women as economic agents have to be incorporated. Women have individual human rights not necessarily as a part of the household and/or family.

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### **3.9.1. Procedure of making Gender Budgeting:**

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There is no one way of conducting gender budget analysis. Methodology and focus depends on the stake holders involved, sectoral interests, opportunities and access to information. It could be done on the overall budget of the state and/or any specific sector such a health or education and/or any particular programme scheme. It can be done at all levels - Macro/ Regional/ Institutional/ Household.

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### **3.9.2. Needs for Gender Budgeting:**

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The needs for gender budgeting emanates from multiple sources. They are:

- The most obvious need of gender budget initiatives is improving women's economic equality. However, gender budgets are no simply about equality for women.

- Gender budgets can also improve effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and transparency of government budgets.
- Gender budgets can reveal discrepancies between what a government says it is doing and the actual impact of government's policies.
- Gender budgets also reveal budget priorities.
- Gender budgets offer a practical way for governments to implement their obligations under international human rights agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA) which requires the, "integration of a gender perspective in budgetary decisions on policies and programs as well as the adequate financing of specific programs for securing equality between women and men."

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### **3.9.3. Main Actors in Gender Budgeting:**

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It is important for both people within and outside government to be involved in gender budgeting work. People inside governments can work to implement gender analysis policies in the budget process while activists from the broader community can push governments to consider the importance and benefits of gender equality. Community members can also encourage governments to make more gender-specific data available to them. One of the outcomes of gender budgets is getting more people involved in the budget process, in other words, increase democracy. Budgets impact all people, therefore everyone should be able to participate in their creation not simply those within government.

Government and Policy makers are the two main actors in making and formulating policies to gender budgeting. It is the main related work of the NGOs, Funding agencies, Development agencies, Researchers, Parliamentarians, Public and Civil Society and groups to implement these policies and gives feedback and suggestions to make this program more fruitful and gender effective.

### **Check Your Progress III**

**Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answers.

b) Check your answers with the possible answers provided at the end of this unit.

**1)** Differentiate between WID and GAD?

Ans.

**2)** How 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan is instrumental in bringing development of women?

Ans.

**3)** Which are the areas of concern for Gender Development?

Ans.

**4) Explain about Gender Mainstreaming?**

Ans.

**5) Explain about Gender Budgeting?**

Ans.

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### 3.10. Let Us Sum Up:

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In this unit, we have covered a vast area related issues in development. As human being is at the centre stage of all development the gender issue can no more be neglected if we are to make development sustainable? Here we discussed the impact of development on women, women as a constituency of development and various perspectives on women's development.

Though the various sections in this unit we learned the concept of gender and the place of women in development perspective both in a general as well as Indian context. We have seen how the gender empowerment approach identifies women's participation in decision-making as the key to success. Its goal is to increase self-reliance and self-confidence so that women become active players in society. Incorporation of gender into the development process acknowledges that women and men experience development differently according to their social position, race, class, colonial history, etc. Structures and situations are required to be addressed at multiple levels so as to ensure that women gain increased access and control over critical material and non-material resources. Further, the focus of gender based development is on gender relationship that determines the existing inequities. Measures include credit, training, skills and resources needed for productive decision-making processes and community power structure. Development of women implies their access in overcoming the underlying structural inequalities. Gender in development is the approach that seeks to redress women's status through affirmation action in improving the qualities of women's lives. In this unit we have also covered areas of gender development concerns. We have also discussed regarding constraints in gender development policies.

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### 3.11. Key Words:

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- **Gender Mainstreaming:** Gender mainstreaming happens to be the chief strategy and major instrument of the GAD concept. It is often said to be a manifestation of gender awareness. It aims at increasing gender awareness in all areas and all levels of public life. The concept of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of society was accepted and established as a global strategy for promoting gender equality in the Platform of Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Congress for Women, held in Beijing in 1995. It highlights the need and urgency to ensure gender equality as a priority area in all sectors of social and economic development.
- **Gender Budgeting:** Gender Budgeting is not a separate budget for women. It is the analysis of general government budgets from a gender perspective. It involves the analysis of the allocations and spreading its different impact on women and men. Women's budgets are a mechanism for

establishing whether a government's gender equality commitments translate into budgetary commitments. Without adequate resource allocation gender equality commitments are unlikely to be realized. These budgets are also a mechanism for gender mainstreaming as these exercises forge a strong link between resource allocations and policies across all governmental activities.

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### **3.12. References:**

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### **3.13. CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – POSSIBLE ANSWERS:**

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#### **Check Your Progress I**

- 1) Productive work  
Community work  
Reproductive work
- 2) Intensification of Gender Inequality  
Mixed Gain for Women  
Intensification of Double Burden  
Reinforcing Gender Role Stereotypes  
Eroding Women's Role in Traditional Economy  
Feminization of Household

Differential Access to Education  
Environmental Degradation and increasing Hardship for women  
New Technology and increase in Women's Drudgery

## **Check Your Progress II**

- 1) Women though often perceived as dependents or as homemakers, are engaged in three basic responsibilities that they shoulder and these have been referred to in developmental literature as their triple role. Firstly, women are engaged in reproductive work that involves both bearing and rearing of child. Secondly, most low income households in the Third World have their women engaged in what is called productive work, or work that earns wages. In rural areas this could be agricultural work in urban areas women work in large numbers in the informal sector, in and around their homes. Thirdly as part of their reproductive responsibilities women also take up community managing work that facilitates collective consumption needs of the neighbourhood or the community. Despite three roles women's work is generally made invisible for either their work is regarded as a natural extension of their biological role of giving birth to children or nurturing them or their work is considered secondary. Men in contrast are largely seen as productive workers even when they may be unemployed or earning erratically. As far as reproductive role is concerned men do not have a clearly defined reproductive role in most societies and when involved in the community, men do not largely engage in consumption related voluntary work, rather they take up the community leadership roles that get them either some payment or social prestige.
- 2) Practical gender needs are the needs of women or men that relate to responsibilities and tasks associated with their traditional gender roles or to immediate perceived necessity. Responding to practical needs can improve quality of life but does not challenge gender divisions or men's and women's position in society. Practical needs generally involve issues of condition or access. But, it is evident that addressing strategic gender needs makes for a transformation in social relations such that women come to enjoy greater equality and power and that such a transformation is dependent on a consciousness of a different order and a commitment to struggle against the prevalent order. Practical gender needs, since they are addressed to make for better adaptation to women's concrete conditions in the domestic arena or in income generating activities or even in community based resources, do not result in such transformation though they generally provide relief to women in their gendered roles and responsibilities. The

greater majority of developmental interventions aims at attending to women's practical gender needs and do not contribute directly to challenging either the sexual division of labour, or social political and economic organization of society that subordinates women. However, it would not be right to term strategic needs based development interventions to be feminist and the interventions directed at improving women's access to their practical needs as "less" feminist, for the two are linked and in effect often inseparable.

### Check Your Progress III

1. Differences between WID and GAD are as follows:
  - WID stands for women in development.  
GAD stands for gender and development.
  - The WID approach was developed in the 1970s.  
The GAD approach was developed in the 1980s.
  - The WID approach has its root in liberal feminism.  
The GAD approach has its roots in socialist feminism.
  - The WID approach has its origin in the influential intellectual work of Easter Boserup. The GAD approach has its origin in the intellectual work of Caroline Moser.
  - The Harvard Analytical framework undertook efforts to provide a better shape to the WID. The GAD approach is associated with the Development Planning Unit of the University of London.
  - The WID makes women its key word. The GAD prefers gender as its key word.
  - The WID approach seeks to integrate women into the existing development programmes without transforming the unequal gender relationship. The GAD approach seeks to make women not the passive recipients of the development benefits but active participants in the development process.
  - The WID stressed on equity, strategy, anti-poverty strategy and efficiency strategy. The GAD stressed on "gender mainstreaming" strategies.  
The WID became popular throughout the United Nations Decade for women from 1976 – 1985 and during this period; it became the priority area of the development agenda of the nations. The GAD approach became popular with the beginning of the structural adjustment programmes in different nations since mid 1980s.
  
2. The 11th plan was based on the following five-fold strategy of Empowerment of women viz. Economic empowerment, with special focus on women in agriculture and on the effects of globalization; Social empowerment and engendering social change; Political Empowerment to facilitate entry and effective functioning of women in Parliament, PRIs and in premier government services; Strengthening mechanism for effective implementation of women related legislations; and Creating institutional mechanisms for

gender budgeting leading to mainstreaming and strengthening delivery mechanisms for effective implementation of women-related programmes.

**3. Work**

Poverty

Family Life

Health and Nutrition

Education

The Environment

The Public and Policy Making Spheres

4. Gender mainstreaming happens to be the chief strategy and major instrument of the GAD concept. It is often said to be a manifestation of gender awareness. It aims at increasing gender awareness in all areas and all levels of public life. The concept of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of society was accepted and established as a global strategy for promoting gender equality in the Platform of Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Congress for Women, held in Beijing in 1995. It highlights the need and urgency to ensure gender equality as a priority area in all sectors of social and economic development.

5. Gender Budgeting is not a separate budget for women. It is the analysis of general government budgets from a gender perspective. It involves the analysis of the allocations and spreading its different impact on women and men. Women's budgets are a mechanism for establishing whether a government's gender equality commitments translate into budgetary commitments. Without adequate resource allocation gender equality commitments are unlikely to be realized. These budgets are also a mechanism for gender mainstreaming as these exercises forge a strong link between resource allocations and policies across all governmental activities.

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