



**CONCEPT PAPER PREPARED
UNDER GUIDANCE OF
DR. BRENDA GAEL McSWEENEY
UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR
AND
UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE
IN INDIA**

**FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON
GLOBALIZATION, LOCALISM, AND
DEVELOPMENT**

**"GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT: THE INDIA
EXPERIENCE"**

**AT TOYO UNIVERSITY
JAPAN**

- APPROACHES TO ISSUES OF GENDER EQUITY AND ENGENDERING DEVELOPMENT POLICY HAVE SEEN A RAPID SHIFT OVER THE PAST DECADE. THE MAJOR CREDIT FOR THIS MUST GO TO THE GLOBAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND TO WOMEN'S ACTIVISM, SUPPORTED BY THE FINDINGS OF SUBSTANTIVE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH WHICH HAS PROVIDED INCONTROVERTIBLE EVIDENCE OF THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL EXCLUSION OF WOMEN FROM MAINSTREAM DISCOURSE.
 - WITH THE EFFORTS OF ACTIVISTS, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGOs), RESEARCHERS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS, ISSUES SURROUNDING WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT HAVE COME TO THE CENTRE-STAGE IN SOCIAL POLICY AND PLANNING.
 - THE MOVEMENT FROM THE "WOMEN'S COMPONENT" APPROACH OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT TO THE CONCEPT OF GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN A REVOLUTIONARY PARADIGM SHIFT ---
 - EMBODYING THE CONCEPT OF STRUCTURAL AND POWER RELATIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN IN SOCIETY RATHER THAN SEEING WOMEN AS BENEFICIARIES ---
 - A SHIFT AWAY FROM THE IMAGE OF WOMEN AS VICTIMS TO WOMEN AS AGENTS OF CHANGE
 - THE BEIJING CONFERENCE WAS A LANDMARK EVENT WHERE WOMEN'S ISSUES CAME TO THE FOREFRONT IN THE GLOBAL ARENA.
 - ALONG WITH WOMEN, WHO WERE IDENTIFIED AS THE PRIMARY AGENTS OF CHANGE, MEN WERE ALSO RECOGNISED AS HAVING A CENTRAL ROLE IN TRANSFORMING GENDER RELATIONS AND IMPROVING THE STATUS OF WOMEN.
 - BEIJING PLUS FIVE AND THE UPCOMING WSSD ARE TAKING THIS AGENDA FORWARD.
- <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/>
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/beijing+5.htm>
- NOBEL LAUREATE PROFESSOR AMARTYA SEN'S SEMINAL APPROACH TO GENDER INEQUALITY SEES THE PLURAL DIMENSIONS OF INEQUALITY AND DISPARITIES IN THE LIVES AND STATUS OF WOMEN IN TERMS OF SEVEN TYPES OF INEQUALITY – MORTALITY, NATALITY, BASIC FACILITIES, SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES, PROFESSIONAL INEQUALITY, OWNERSHIP AND HOUSEHOLD INEQUALITY.

- WOMEN IN SOUTH ASIA ARE PARTICULARLY AFFECTED BY MANY OF THESE KINDS OF INEQUALITIES.
- BUT AS PROFESSOR SEN POINTS OUT INEQUALITIES ARE A STRUCTURAL FEATURE OF MANY SOCIETIES – HE CITES HIS OWN EXPERIENCE IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY AND TRINITY COLLEGE WHERE THERE WAS AND IS A LESSER PROPORTION OF TENURED FEMALE PROFESSORS AMONG HIS COLLEAGUES THAN HE HAD IN DELHI UNIVERSITY.

<http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl1822/18220040.htm>

- IN SOUTH ASIA PARTICULARLY WHAT ARE THE KEY GENDER ISSUES?
 - AN ADVERSE SEX RATIO WITH MANY FEWER WOMEN THAN MEN, PARTICULARLY IN THE 0-6 AGE GROUP; LOW LITERACY AND POOR HEALTH; VERY LOW PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING ARENAS; UNEQUAL ACCESS TO RESOURCES, WHETHER FOOD, LAND, JOBS OR ASSETS; HIGH-RISK DURING PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH; INCREASED VULNERABILITY TO HIV/AIDS.
 - ALL POINT TO THE INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION THAT POVERTY HAS BEGUN TO HAVE A FEMININE FACE IN THE FAST MOVING SCENARIO OF GLOBALISATION, WITH TRADITIONAL LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIAL SECTOR INVESTMENT BY GOVERNMENTS ERODED.
- AT UNDP IN INDIA AND INDEED THE UN SYSTEM THE MANTRA “WOMEN HOLD UP HALF THE SKY” HAS BEEN TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY.
 - PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IS A CROSS- CUTTING PRIORITY IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA’S UN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK.
 - ALL ORGANISATIONS AND AGENCIES WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM ARE COMMITTED TO THIS GOAL.
 - THIS PRIORITY BEEN DETERMINED FOR THE UN FAMILY THROUGH WIDE-RANGING STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOs, AND GOVERNMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS.
 - THE UN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK IS A JOINT FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE UN SYSTEM TO MAXIMISE INTER AGENCY SYNERGY TO BOOST IMPACT.

<http://www.un.org.in/undaf.htm>

- SO IN THE PERCEPTION OF THOSE WHO HAVE A STAKE IN IMPROVING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA, WHAT IS THE KEY ENTRY POINT FOR UN SYSTEM SUPPORT TO INDIA’S DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES?
 - PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND STRENGTHENING DECENTRALISATION THROUGH EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS WITH

STAKEHOLDERS HAS EMERGED AS THE TWO-PRONGED APPROACH FOR THE UN FAMILY IN INDIA TO REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

- AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL TOO, THESE GOALS ARE ECHOED IN THE MILLENNIUM DECLARATION ADOPTED BY WORLD LEADERS TO ERADICATE POVERTY AND IMPROVE THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATUS OF THE POOREST IN THE WORLD.

<http://www.undp.org/mdg/>

- SPECIAL ATTENTION TO GENDER EQUITY, THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATING WOMEN AND STRENGTHENING THEIR ROLE IN DECISION-MAKING ARE CAPTURED IN SEVERAL INDICATORS IN THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs).
 - FOR EXAMPLE --- THE NUMBER OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS IN A COUNTRY IS AN INDICATOR THAT EACH COUNTRY IS SUPPOSED TO HIGHLIGHT TO INDICATE WHERE WOMEN STAND IN THE HIGHEST POLICY-MAKING FORUMS.
 - THROUGH PATH-BREAKING CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PAVED THE WAY FOR DIRECT DEMOCRACY AT LOCAL LEVELS IN BOTH RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.
 - A SIGNIFICANT FEATURE OF THESE AMENDMENTS WAS RESERVATION OF ONE-THIRD SEATS FOR WOMEN AT ALL LEVELS OF PANCHAYATS OR LOCALLY ELECTED BODIES. WHILE THIS HAS PROVIDED VISIBILITY TO WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE MATTERS, IT HAS NOT BEEN EASY FOR WOMEN TO EXERCISE THIS POWER. LOCAL VESTED INTERESTS FIND MYRIAD WAYS TO EXCLUDE WOMEN FROM THE FUNCTIONING OF PANCHAYATI RAJ...BUT THE STORIES OF WOMEN ASSERTING THEIR RIGHTS THROUGH THEIR GRIT AND DETERMINATION ABOUND IN MANY PANCHAYATS.
- AT A RECENT MEETING CONVENED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT, WOMEN AND CHILD, OF THE NEWLY-CONSTITUTED STATE OF CHATTISGARH, THE CHIEF MINISTER ALLUDED TO THE FAVOURABLE INDICATORS THAT THE STATE SHOWED WITH RESPECT TO THE SEX-RATIO, ONE OF THE HIGHEST IN INDIA.
 - YET THE PARADOX AS AMARTYA SEN'S WORK OBSERVES, IS THAT NEW INEQUALITIES GIVE WAY TO THE OLD, AS FOR EXAMPLE WE SEE IN CHATTISGARH – A FAVOURABLE SEX RATIO FOR ADULTS, BUT AT THE SAME TIME AN ALARMING DECLINE IN THE JUVENILE SEX RATIO IN THE 0-6 AGE GROUP, AS THE CHIEF MINISTER POINTED OUT.
 - INDEED IT IS INDIA'S HIGHER INCOME STATES LIKE PUNJAB AND HARYANA WHICH SHOW THE LOWEST SEX RATIOS, POINTING TO THE CONTINUING PREVALENCE OF A SON PREFERENCE.
 - THE STATE OF KERALA, ON THE OTHER HAND, WITH A LOWER GDP ILLUSTRATES STRONG GROWTH IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

INDICATORS COMPARABLE TO MANY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, DESPITE A RELATIVELY LOWER LEVEL OF ECONOMIC GROWTH.

- JOINT UN SYSTEM ADVOCACY HAS BEEN USED VERY EFFECTIVELY THROUGH A UN SYSTEM COMMISSIONED REPORT – “ WOMEN IN INDIA: HOW FREE? HOW EQUAL?”
 - IT IS A SIMPLE BUT EFFECTIVE TOOL, FOR ADVOCACY WITH HIGH LEVEL DECISION TAKERS AND OPINION MAKERS SUCH AS PARLIAMENTARIANS, LEGISLATORS AND THE MEDIA.
 - THIS IS AN ONGOING PROCESS – AND THE MESSAGES ARE DESIGNED TO INSPIRE THESE KEY ACTORS TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES WITHIN THEIR OWN RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES TO TACKLE GENDER ISSUES ON AN EMERGENCY FOOTING.

<http://www.un.org.in/wii.htm>

- THE MEETING IN CHATTISSGARH DREW RESPONSES FROM LEGISLATORS FROM PRECISELY THESE SIMPLE MESSAGES AND GOT THEM THINKING ON INNOVATIVE WAYS OF USING THEIR OFFICES TO PROMOTE GENDER PRIORITIES IN DIFFERENT SECTORS.
 - FOR EXAMPLE THE FINANCE MINISTER WAS CATEGORICAL IN HIS COMMITMENT, DESPITE A STRAINED TREASURY, TO FINANCE SCHEMES TO PROMOTE RURAL CREDIT FOR WOMEN, SELF-HELP GROUPS AND WOMEN’S LIVELIHOOD.
 - SUCH HIGH LEVEL COMMITMENT SENDS AN IMPORTANT SIGNAL TO OTHER LEGISLATORS AND THE BUREAUCRACY ABOUT THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE LEADERSHIP WITH RESPECT TO GENDER ISSUES.
- WHILE INDIA IS ON TRACK TO HALVE INCOME POVERTY BY 2015, THE CHALLENGES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ARE INTIMIDATING.
 - IN THIS CONTEXT THE GOVERNMENT’S TENTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN EMPHASISES THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCELERATING THE PACE OF ECONOMIC LIBERALISATION ---
 - BUT ALSO REAFFIRMS THE COMMITMENT TO LABOUR INTENSIVE GROWTH WITH EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE WITH A STRENGTHENED ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR.

<http://planningcommission.nic.in/plansf.htm>

- IN OUR EFFORTS IN INDIA, ENGENDERING POLICY AND DEVELOPMENTAL INTERVENTIONS HAVE BEEN A SUBSTANTIVE THRUST OF UN SYSTEM WORK.
 - ENGENDERING POLICY HAS MACRO LEVEL IMPLICATIONS AND IS GEARED TO INFLUENCE AND SUPPORT STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL WORK OF THE NATION; WHEREAS WORK

THROUGH PARTICULAR PROJECTS PROVIDES GOVERNMENTS WITH A MODEL TO SCALE UP AND REPLICATE.

- MOREOVER PILOT INTERVENTIONS GIVE US INSIGHTS AND BEST PRACTICE WHICH ADD TEETH TO OUR ADVOCACY WORK.
- THE EFFORT IS TO MAXIMISE THE IMPACT GENERATED FROM OUR PROJECTS AT THE POLICY LEVEL, AND TO TACKLE GENDER ISSUES WITH MOMENTUM, IMPRESSING STAKEHOLDERS WITH INSIGHTS ON HOW GENDER IS IMPLICATED IN ALL THEIR PROGRAMMES.

- FOR INSTANCE THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC SURVEY OF INDIA IS PUBLISHED BY THE FINANCE MINISTRY EVERY YEAR – A MINISTRY WHICH HAS BEEN TRADITIONALLY VIEWED AS THE ONE WHICH DEALS WITH HARD FISCAL ISSUES AND FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS.
 - SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO ENGENDER THE SURVEY, WE WERE ABLE TO BRING THE PERCEIVED “SOFT” GENDER ISSUES TO THE FOREFRONT.
 - LAST YEAR’S REPORT CARRIED A SECTION ON WOMEN AND GENDER, TITLED GENDER INEQUALITY THAT RAISED TOUGH ISSUES LIKE AMARTYA SEN’S “MISSING WOMEN”, AND RECOGNISED THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE WORK THAT WOMEN DO, PAVING THE WAY FOR MORE IN-DEPTH GOVERNMENT ATTENTION TO THIS AREA.
 - INVESTMENT IN WOMEN WAS FRAMED AS NOT BEING SOCIAL SECTOR INVESTMENT BUT ALSO SEEN AS AN ECONOMIC ONE, WITH LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY GAINS.

- THIS DOVETAILED WELL WITH THE WORK THAT THE UN SYSTEM HAS BEEN ABLE TO SUPPORT IN TERMS OF ENGENDERING DATA INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS THE CENSUS OF INDIA.
 - ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THAT DATA GATHERERS HAVE TRADITIONALLY FACED IS THAT THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN HAS BEEN UNDERCOUNTED – IGNORING THE WORK THAT WOMEN DO EVERYDAY FOR COUNTLESS “MAN” HOURS CONTRIBUTING TO ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) GROWTH.
 - THE FIRST RESULTS OF THE IMPROVED METHODOLOGY TO MEASURE THE FEMALE WORK PARTICIPATION RATE ARE ALREADY TRICKLING IN, CONFIRMING THE OBVIOUS FACT THAT WOMEN CONTRIBUTE AS WORKERS AND LABOURERS TO A LARGE PART OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, A CONTRIBUTION THAT IS OFTEN INVISIBLE IN THE OFFICIAL DATA.
 - BEING INVISIBLE IN THE ECONOMY MEANS THAT WOMEN DO NOT RECEIVE THE BENEFIT OF SCHEMES, POLICIES AND TRAINING FOR SKILL UPGRADATION, OR INSURANCE --- APART FROM BEING SIDELINED FROM INTERVENTIONS THAT CAN STRENGTHEN THEIR ROLE AND ASSURE THEIR RIGHTS AS WORKERS AND ECONOMIC AGENTS.

- WOMEN HAVE PLAYED A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN PRESERVING NATURE AS WELL.
 - THE FAMOUS CHIPKO MOVEMENT IN THE HILLY STATE OF UTTARANCHAL - WHERE WOMEN WOULD EMBRACE TREES TO PREVENT THEM FROM BEING CHOPPED DOWN BY PRIVATE INTERESTS - IS AMPLE PROOF OF TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL WOMEN HAVE TO LEAD CAMPAIGNS AND TAKE CHARGE OF MATTERS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES....

- ON PROMOTING GENDER EQUITY, UNDP INDIA THROUGH ITS HUMAN DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE CENTER HAS BEEN SUPPORTING THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO PREPARE STATE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORTS, AND RECENTLY THE NATIONAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT HAS ALSO BEEN LAUNCHED.
 - THE REPORT FEATURES A GENDER EQUALITY INDEX, (<http://planningcommission.nic.in/nhdrep/nhdreportf.htm>)
 - AND THE STATE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORTS ALSO PRESENT THE GENDER-RELATED DEVELOPMENT INDEX (GDI) AND GENDER EMPOWERMENT MEASURE (GEM) INDEXES WHICH AT A GLANCE PROVIDE A PICTURE OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THAT STATE FOR POLICY MAKERS AND LEGISLATORS AND CITIZENS WRIT LARGE.
 - THIS SERVES AS AN IMPORTANT ADVOCACY PEG FOR GENDER AWARENESS.
 - THIS COMPLEMENTS SEX DISAGGREGATED DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS BY UNDP TO PROVIDE TOOLS FOR PLANNERS AT THE MACRO, MISO AND MICRO LEVEL TO ASSESS THE BASELINE VIS-À-VIS CONTEXT SPECIFIC CHALLENGES RELATED TO GENDER ACROSS INDIA'S STATES, AND ADOPTING POLICIES AND INTERVENTIONS IN RESPONDING TO THESE.

- USING INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO STATE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORTS LIKE THE "JAN RAPAT"- A PEOPLE'S REPORT, A UNIQUE 'CAMPAIGN-MODE' APPROACH, THE GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH DECIDED TO TAKE THE CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TO EACH OF ITS CONSTITUENT 20,000 VILLAGES WHICH WILL PREPARE THEIR OWN JAN RAPAT OR PEOPLE'S REPORTS.
 - THE VILLAGE-LEVEL PEOPLE'S REPORTS WOULD EVENTUALLY FEED INTO THE DISTRICT AND STATE-LEVEL REPORTS.
 - THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMUNITIES, ESPECIALLY WOMEN TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD AND BRING TO CENTER STAGE THEIR NEEDS AND CONCERNS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND BETTER CHOICES.

- IN UNDP'S PRO-POOR INITIATIVES, PROJECTS ARE DESIGNED TO HELP EMPOWER WOMEN AND KEEP THEIR PIVOTAL ROLE IN MIND THROUGH WOMENS COLLECTIVES AND COOPERATIVES.

<http://www.undp.org.in/pro-poor.htm>

- UNDP-SUPPORTED PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN FARMERS FOCUS ON INCREASING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LAND AND PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES, AND HELPING THEM TO ACCESS THEIR ENTITLEMENTS AS FARMERS.
- MANY OF OUR PROGRAMMES ALSO ADDRESS THE DIFFICULT ISSUE OF WOMEN'S CONTROL OVER COMMON PROPERTY RESOURCES AND LAND RIGHTS.
 - IN DROUGHT-PRONE WESTERN INDIA FOR INSTANCE, WOMEN HAVE CHALLENGED AND OVERTURNED THE TRADITIONAL CONCEPT OF DROUGHT RELIEF THROUGH DOLES, AND HAVE SUCCESSFULLY MOBILISED FUNDS FROM THE GOVERNMENT FOR THEIR CRAFT WORK AND TRADITIONAL RAINWATER HARVESTING - "DROUGHT PROOFING" AS THEY THEMSELVES CALL IT, RATHER THAN DROUGHT RELIEF.
- DRAWING ON THESE EXPERIENCES FROM OUR ONGOING GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMME, OUR NEXT COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOCUSSES ON FOUR PROGRAMME AREAS – PROMOTING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY, STRENGTHENING DECENTRALISATION, POVERTY ERADICATION AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS; AND VULNERABILITY REDUCTION AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT.
- GENDER MAINSTREAMING ACROSS ALL PROGRAMMES IS AN IMPORTANT PRIORITY AND OVER THE NEXT COUNTRY PROGRAMME CYCLE THIS WILL BE ACTUALISED.
 - LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCES ON GENDER BUDGETING AND GENDER AUDITING WHICH UNDP WILL SUPPORT AT THE STATE AND DISTRICT LEVEL, WILL BE A COMMON THREAD.

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Do please interact with us on the theme of Gender and Development at rohini.kohli@undp.org