A WaterAid Briefing Paper

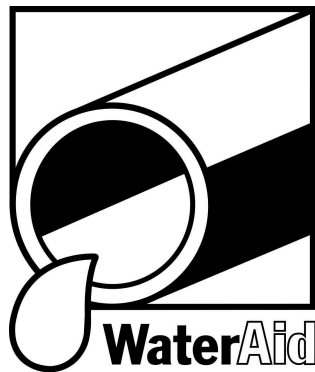**WaterAid**

A Gender and Development Approach to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Programmes

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1:0 Introduction

This paper considers the concept of gender in the context of water supply, sanitation and hygiene development.

It begins with a discussion of the location of gender in the broader framework of international development thinking, practice and policy approaches. The paper then focuses on gender issues in relation to water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion, and considers the Institutional and organisational issues involved in mainstreaming gender. Finally, some of the options and implications for those intending to meet the challenge of enabling change are outlined.

1:1 Defining gender and context

The term 'gender' describes the social relations between and characteristics of women and men. It concerns men's and women's participation in the determination of their lives including access to rights, power and control over resources. Gender is understood to mean that 'people are born female and male, but learn to be girls and boys who grow into women and men. They are taught what the appropriate behaviour and attitudes, roles and activities are for them, and how they should relate to other people' (Williams, Seed and Mwau 1994).

Men and women fulfil a number of concurrent social roles and social relations[1] that are influenced by other people.

Race, ethnicity, age, culture, tradition, religion and an individual's 'position' (wealth, status) also assist to differentiate the experience of being a man or a woman within a particular society. Therefore gender identity and gender roles are the result of learned behaviour and, given the right impetus and motivation, can change.

The crux of the issue here, is that **in developing countries, men's and women's gender roles determine their access to, power and control over adequate water supply, sanitation facilities and hygiene. Unchallenged these roles have a number of direct effects on communities, households and individuals, in particular women and children.**

2:0 Locating Gender in Development

The need to consider matters of gender in the provision of water supply and the promotion of sanitation and hygiene in developing countries does not exist in a vacuum. For many years after the Second World War the dominant role of actors in development[2] was one where the 'rich' countries in the North provided infrastructure, capital investments and technical 'expertise' to those poorer, 'developing' and emergent nations in the South. Activity concentrated on encouraging 'developing' countries to embrace the values of industrialisation in the belief that this was a way of addressing poverty. The social side of development was largely ignored. Indeed efforts to acknowledge them resulted in a development culture that viewed people as the passive recipients of aid and 'good change', planned and implemented by 'outsiders' (Cleves Mosse 1997). However, belief in the existence of a development 'blueprint' was to be challenged by the emerging

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[1]Social roles are defined here as who does what, has what and so on. Roles for women also extend to being a mother, wife, sister, daughter-in-law and so on. Equally men fulfil a number of concurrent roles, husband, father, son, brother. Social relations are defined here as how people relate to each other: their power, degree of self-interest and so on.
[2] At this time the principle actors were the World Bank, Northern Governments and United Nations Agencies.

voice of those marginalised by such action in the South. They were supported by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and agencies that championed a new approach focusing on the role and participation of communities, and especially women in the development process.

The articulation of a Women's agenda was most notably accelerated during the United Nations Decade for Women and Development (1976-1985) and the contributions of the UN's conferences on women - Mexico 1975, Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1985 and Beijing 1995 (see Box 1). The Decade's early themes of equality, development and peace signalled the way for international debate that encompassed the broad spectrum of development issues[3].

Over the Decade, women from the South were able to influence and exchange ideas with those from the North, a process that assisted consensus building. These dialogues recognised the different perspectives held by each, their interests and areas of central concern while also establishing common ground, the basis for partnership. The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (UN CEDAW), which entered into force in 1981, reaffirmed the UN Charter's fundamental faith in 'the dignity and worth of the human person and in equal rights of men and women' (CEDAW 1981). CEDAW proved to be a major step forward in fostering debate and setting international standards of gender equality[4]. It is against this background that gender gained prominence in the water and sanitation development arena.

Box 1: World Conference on Women

The United Nations 4th World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995) made significant commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. In the context of development co-operation, commitment to the Conference's 'Declaration and Platform for Action' is demonstrated in the Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) 'Gender Guidelines', which endorse gender equality as 'an overall strategic objective for promoting the role of women and therefore sustainable, people-centred development.' This perspective, seeing gender equality as a precondition for effective and sustainable human development, builds upon previous United Nations conferences spanning education, environment, human rights, population and social development. Furthermore DAC maintains that such development is based on partnership models that emphasise local leadership and locally owned strategies (DAC 1997).

3:0 Policy Approaches

Since gender became a development issue two major 'streams of theory and practice' have existed; '*women-in-development' (WID)* and *'gender-and-development' (GAD)* (Humble cited Guijt and Kaul Shah 1998:35). Before discussing WID and GAD some key principles are outlined in Box 2 and Table 1.

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[3] Women's Agenda includes core issues related to Rights, Entitlement, Investment, Voice, Poverty, reproductive Labour, Security and Empowerment (Jahan 1997:5).
[4] About a quarter of the world's states are still to either ratify CEDAW or have done so with some reservations (Jahan 1997:4)

Box 2: Women's Triple Role and 'Practical and Strategic' Gender Needs
Just as gender roles differ from society to society different values are ascribed to what determines the division of labour between men and women. Typically, women in low-income countries undertake a *'triple role'* in society, that is *reproductive, productive and community roles (see Table 1)*. Because women and men have different roles and exercise different levels of control and power over resources they often have different needs. How work is valued in any given context affects the way women and men determine priorities when it comes to planning a project and likewise their capacity to participate in it. Analysis of the interests of women and men in the development process has evolved into the notion of 'practical' and 'strategic' needs (Moser 1989).

Practical gender needs (PGNs) are linked to the *'condition'* of women's lives, their immediate environment, workload and responsibilities that exist in the society of which they are part. Practical in nature, they are often linked directly to inadequacies in living conditions such as inadequate access and availability of drinking water. Meeting PGNs is relatively straightforward but their existence alone is unlikely to change (and in fact may worsen) the inequalities that exist relative to the condition.

Strategic gender needs (SGNs) refer to improvements in women's disadvantaged *'position'* in society relative to men in terms of labour, power and control. SGNs are not as readily identifiable as PGNs and vary according to particular contexts (Moser 1993:39). For example, in water scarce situations where there are competing demands for water use, women's efforts to protect this resource for drinking may be undermined in favour of other uses usually determined by men. Strategic needs cannot be met by 'outsiders', rather the men and women concerned have to address SGNs themselves, typically through collective action, increased self-confidence, consciousness-raising and strengthening women's and community based organisations (CBOs) (Ebba Augustin, cited GTZ 1995).

Practical and strategic gender needs cannot be neatly separated. Longwe (cited March, Smyth and Mukhopadhyay 1999:20) maintains that every practical intervention has an effect on 'strategic' areas of life (power relations and control), whether it is intended or not. An extension of this is the concept of 'redistributive' potential (Young 1987, cited March, Smyth and Mukhopadhyay 1999:20) that considers how practical needs can be met in a way that assists women in challenging gender inequalities in relation to the need, thus contributing to women's empowerment.

Table 1: Women's Triple Role

Role	Role Composition
Reproductive	Childbearing/rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks undertaken by women, including the care and maintenance of the workforce (husband and working children) and the future workforce (infants and school-going children).
Productive	Work done by men and women for payment in cash or kind. Includes both market production with an exchange value and subsistence/home production for actual use/potential exchange value.
Community	Activities undertaken primarily by women at the community level as an extension of their reproductive role. Includes provision and maintenance of collective resources; water, health and education. Work is voluntary unpaid and undertaken in addition to the other roles. It rarely includes levels of decision making and formal community politics - this is often the role of men who get paid in cash, status or power.

(source Moser 1995:27-36)

3:1 WID

In the early 1980's in an attempt to meet the demands of the women's movement and the Decade for Women, donors and NGOs rapidly adopted the *women in development (WID)* approach.

In light of the criticism levelled at past donor policies WID appeared to provide a manageable 'add-on' solution to the issue of women being 'left out' of development. This approach views women in isolation, making resources more directly available to them as a means facilitating their involvement. The underlying rationale being that development activity would proceed better if women were integrated into the process and thus as an untapped resource able to provide an economic contribution to development (Moser 1995:3).

Rather than challenging male bias WID operates within the environment where it prevails and so largely ignores the real problem of women's unequal position to men.

WID does not represent a monolith of thought, and five policy approaches are further classified. These approaches differ in terms of the roles recognised and the type of gender need that is met. Outlined in Table 2 these are: *Welfare, Equity, Anti-poverty, Efficiency* and *Empowerment* (Moser 1998 citing Moser 1998 and Buvinic 1983, 1986).

3:2 GAD

Gender and development (GAD) offers an alternative and potentially more powerful position shifting away from the WID approach and the marginalisation of women-only programmes.

GAD starts from the premise that women have always participated in development *but* from an unequal and unacknowledged position.

What constrain women are the social structures that favour male domination and female subordination (Humble cited Guijt and Kaul Shah 1998:35).

In adopting a GAD perspective the motivation for intervention is to work toward equity and respect for the human rights of all people

(Williams, Seed and Mwau 1994:7). Inequalities are addressed through an understanding of the roles of men and women in relation to situation specific development goals, for example water supply. GAD theory asserts that women improve their position relative to men in ways that will benefit the whole community. GAD seeks to ensure that all decisions concerning development be reached through the local, equitable participation of women and men in the development process.

GAD asserts that gender is a cross-sectoral and social concern. Its approaches and principles underpin typical water and sanitation development objectives related to efficiency, effectiveness and equity.

Table 2: Policy Approaches

PGN = Practical Gender Needs SGN = Strategic Gender Needs (Table adapted from Moser 1995:56-7)

Approach	Purpose	Needs of women met and roles recognised	Comment
Pre WID: Welfare – the earliest approach concerned with women in developing countries	To bring women into development as better mothers: this is seen as their most important role in development.	To meet PGN in reproductive role, relating particularly to food aid, malnutrition and family planning.	Women seen as passive beneficiaries of development: a non challenging and therefore popular with government.
WID: Equity – the original WID approach	To gain equity for women in the development process: women seen as active participants in development.	To meet SGN in terms of the triple role – through state down intervention, giving political and economic autonomy by reducing inequality with men.	Challenging – in identifying women's subordination in terms of relationship to men, considered threatening/not popular with governments.
WID: Anti-poverty – the second WID approach	To ensure poor women increase their productivity, poverty seen as a problem of underdevelopment not of subordination.	To meet PGN in productive role, to earn an income, often small-scale income generating projects.	Poor women isolated as separate category with tendency only to recognise productive role.
WID: Efficiency – the third and predominant WID approach	To ensure development is more efficient and more effective: women's economic participation seen as associated with equity.	To meet PGN in context of declining social services by relying on women's triple role and elasticity of their time.	Women seen in terms of delivery capacity and ability to extend working day; post 1980s popular approach.
From WID toward GAD: Empowerment – the most recent approach articulated by women from the South	To empower women through greater self-reliance: women's subordination seen not only as a problem of men but also of colonial and neo-colonial oppression.	To reach SGN in terms of triple role – indirectly bottom up mobilisation around PGN as means to confront oppression	Potentially challenging with emphasis on Third World and women's self reliance: popular but largely unsupported by governments.

4:0 Gender Issues in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

4:1 Locating Gender in the International Water and Sanitation Arena

> 'Those interested in participation have much in common with those interested in gender. The exploitation which millions of women suffer in developing countries should be of particular concern to those interested in implementing or promoting more participatory projects. Development interventions have been shown to be more sustainable when women are involved as equal partners'
>
> (Blackburn and Holland 1998:5)

In 1977 a major UN gathering, 'the World Water Conference' in Mar del Plata, Argentina, declared that the 1980s were to become the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade. Realisation of the Decade slogan '*water and sanitation for all*' would demand a radical overhaul of the way water and sanitation development was implemented. This included a vision for reaching the needs of the poor and marginalised and in this context gender equality and women's participation began to be acknowledged as key themes.

Following the Decade and the preparation of the Earth Summit's Agenda 21 Document, (specifically Chapter 18) (UNCED 1992), a set of agreed principles (most commonly known as the *'Dublin Principles*[5]*)* provided the basis for policy discussion in the water and sanitation sector. A key feature was recognition of water as an economic commodity, a factor which demanded that attention should be focused on the value water has to its users, including women and how such value translates into demand for services.

The need for a holistic, participatory and integrated approach in the management of scarce water resources and the environment was also seen as key and the importance of the role of women was clearly stated in Principle 3, below.

> ### Principle 3, The Dublin Statement, January 1992
>
> *Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water* and goes on to state that:
>
> *The pivotal role of women as providers and users of water and guardians of the living environment has seldom been reflected in institutional arrangements for the development and management of water resources. Acceptance and implementation of this principle requires positive policies to address women's specific needs and to equip and empower women to participate at all levels in water resources programmes, including decision making and implementation, in ways defined by them.*

Key international bodies have been established to maintain the impetus of the Decade and related initiatives. They include the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC)[6] which endorses gender as a specific focal area and the 'Global Water

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[5] These four guiding principles for water related activity, result from the International Conference on Water and the Environment (1992)

[6] Agreement was reached to set up the WSSCC in 1987 during a review of the Decade that involved donors, developing country partners and NGOs . The purpose of the WSSCC

Partnership' (1996) that recognises the commitment to support the management of water based on *equity and demand*. This objective is strengthened by the World Water Council's recent task of developing a long-term vision for water and water issues that includes the promotion of integrated approaches consistent with the UNCED and Dublin principles.

4:2 Existing Gender Roles and Relations

Development goals in the water and sanitation sector typically address issues of access to and the availability of adequate and safe supply and services, poverty alleviation and health and well being.

Development goals in water and sanitation converge with gender issues because women play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water-related resources and facilities, while men are often key investment decision-makers but do not always account for women's needs.

The whole community, women, men and children experience the negative effects of inadequate supply and service through poor health, nutrition and the emotional and physical devastation of recurrent water and waste related disease. However, 'participation of women alongside men in planning, design, maintenance and management has brought distinct benefits to the functioning and use of (water) systems and created more equal chances for training and functions of women and men' (van Wijk-Sijbesma 1998).

Approaching water, sanitation and hygiene from a gender and development perspective is crucial to ensure balanced control of the resource and facilities in order to facilitate 'successful'[7] projects. Box 3 and Table 3 highlight the tools and methods used to analyse gender considerations in development projects.

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is to provide an international forum for the exchange of views, ideas and practices. Focusing its activity through the establishment of tasked 'working groups' gender is addressed as a key issue.

[7] The key elements for success are strengthened through the full participation of women *and* men. The Environmental Health Project (EHP, formally WASH/USAID), has identified 8 indicators of success in water and sanitation projects that have reduction of childhood diarrhoeal disease as the ultimate goal. They are health impact, water quantity, hand washing, latrine use, water access, latrine access, cost recovery and community maintenance (Billig 1998).

Box 3

Tools, Methods and Frameworks

A variety of tools and methods have been developed and used for integrating gender considerations into development projects. As with Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), many of these techniques were initially developed in the agriculture sector. Adaptations need to be made for application in the water and sanitation sector. Indeed, many of the designers of the gender analysis methods or frameworks expect them to be applied flexibly to suit the local context and programme.

Frameworks are practical tools to help users integrate gender analysis in to social and infrastructure planning. Some of the main gender analysis frameworks are listed below, many of which contain a series of inter-linked tools.

Harvard Analytical Framework (including a checklist) and People-Orientated Planning
Moser Framework
Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM)
Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis Framework
Women's Empowerment (Longwe) Framework
Social Relations Approach

See March, Smyth and Mukhopadhyay (1999) for a description of the key aims, concepts, uses, benefits and limitations of each framework. The checklist developed as part of the Harvard Analysis Framework is set out in Appendix 1. If it were to be used for a water supply and sanitation programme, it would need to be adapted to suit the local context.

An example of a GAM used in a drinking water supply project in Ouled Hamouda in Tunisia is given below in table 3. Prior to project implementation women had to walk 2km twice a day to collect water and women rated this as their biggest problem. The men, who never fetch water, rated this problem as their fifth priority. The use of the matrix enabled the men to understand the potential impact of addressing this problem. After completing the matrix, both women and men classified the water project as their first priority.

The table represents the combined views of both men and women in Ouled Harmouda. It represents their expectations of the impact of the proposed water project. It enabled men to become more aware of the burden of women's labour and after the project men also began to collect water. Thus emphasising the potential for gender aware learning of such a method. This technique and others that are equally adaptable can be easily used in conjunction with participatory assessment and evaluation techniques. While this scenario seems ideal, its potential benefits are clear.

Table 3
Using the GAM: Potential project impacts in Ouled Hamouda

	Labour:	Time:	Resources:	Culture:
Women	+ Don't need to carry big cans of water + No fears about personal security	+ Saves a lot of time + Have more time with children	- Must pay for water + Can have home garden or other small projects	- Responsibility of paying for water + Opportunity to participate in community project
Men	- A lot of difficult construction work + learn new skills for work outside the community	- Takes more time to build + Can stay home with family while working	+ potable water is available + Improved nutrition	+ Don't have to worry as much about the family when away
Household	+ women feel more secure when fetching water + New activity for entire family	+ Women given more time for child care	+ Improved access to water + improved nutrition and better health	+ New activity for children – they can help their mother
Community	+Establish committee for potable water + Learn about govt services	- Many more community meetings to attend	+ More potable water available for all	+ Clean environment + Prestige of the community

4:3 Gender Issues in Water Supply

Water is a limited resource and its supply is increasingly being met *in 'demand-responsive'* terms through the *facilitation* of *integrated programmes*[8]. Focus is also given to the *management and efficiency of use* of the resource and *the impact of its use* on the environment.

Demand responsive approaches should enable women and men in different socio-economic groups and communities to express their social, economic and environmental demands and incentives relative to water, _and_ value and honour them in a balanced way (van Wijk-Sijbesma 1998). However,

it often still happens that while women 'are involved', the nature of this involvement relative to that of men is biased toward voluntary physical work, such as cleaning and greasing hand pumps and collecting payments. Men handle the management decisions, such as the use of collected payments
(Dayal and van Wijk 1999).

The changing role of government from provider to facilitator places greater emphases on community, household and individual capacity to express demand *and* undertake sustainable management options. Capacity building activities should equally benefit women and men to ensure efficient, effective and equitable demand. However in many situations the communication and political processes that exist between the community and local government, particularly through Community Based Organisations (CBOs) are dominated by one sex.

Targeting dominant people, or traditionally 'accepted' groups of either women or men for specific training (e.g. community cost recovery and financial management techniques) or tasks (e.g. participation in labour in kind) risks reinforcing existing inequalities in provision, access and availability of supply. Women's roles in particular are often

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[8] Integrated programme approaches increasingly encompass all aspects of water supply, environmental sanitation and hygiene promotion.

undervalued, underexposed and underrated. Therefore, 'greater participation of women in management should not lead to more work and responsibilities for women and exempt or bypass men, but equitably distribute benefits and burdens between the sexes' (van Wijk-Sijbesma 1998:18).

The integrated approach to water and resource management and the associated inter-sectoral activities favoured by many decentralising governments can tend to see gender in terms of including 'women's' and 'community' needs in project planning, technology choice and so on. Although obviously important also

there is a fundamental need to understand *demand related to type of user*, recognising that a 'community' or a 'household' is not a homogeneous unit, just as 'women' and 'men' are not.

This perspective recognises the need to respond adequately and appropriately to user demand.

Gender issues influence project development and design throughout the project cycle (see Appendix 1: Checklist for Gender Issues in Project Identification and Design). Gender aspects of demand and incentive for improved water supply are far reaching and analysis of these from both women and men's perspectives are vitally important at the beginning of the project cycle.

The results of gender analysis and gender-differentiated target group analysis[9] are specific to each community and include the identification of issues concerning existing and potential resource management and environmental demand. However there are 'typical' gender issues related to the availability of, and access to water supply. In relation to rural water supply project development, these frequently include:

Project activity:	Gender issues:
• *Siting of Water Points*	Impacts on women's time and health in collecting/transporting water over long distances; lost energy/time to undertake other roles, for example supplementing household nutrition through traditional productive roles such as vegetable growing. Girl-children often undertakes collection to help women – impacts on their

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[9]*Gender analysis* explores the relationships of men and women in the community. Through a process involving the triangulation of information it highlights the inequalities in those relationships by asking:- Who does what? Who has what? Who decides? How? Who gains? Who loses? Which men? Which women? Which children?

Gender-differentiated target group analysis is required to overcome the problems of analysing gender in too unspecific groups. For example defining women as a group on their own does not reflect the different roles that they fulfil as farmers or micro-entrepreneurs, growing specific crops or making and selling certain products. Nor does it account for the different levels of privilege that women experience from different socio-economic and socio-cultural settings.

Frameworks, tools and methods to facilitate such analysis encompass visualisation, collective planning, communication, context-specific analysis and monitoring and evaluation (March, Smyth, Mukhopadhyay 1999:18) to inform gender aware project planning and design processes.

	health and access to education.
• *Consultation and Decision Making*	In many communities it is mainly men who make decisions related to water and finance. Women often do not have access to information, knowledge, management options, choice and critically *ownership.* Also men may not have the same incentive as women to invest in improved water supply.
• *Construction*	Men participate in technical and hardware related construction tasks while women often provide physical labour and food/lodgings to siting teams. This impacts on their time, health and ability to undertake existing and demanding triple roles.
• *Operation and Maintenance (O&M)*	Women often have the greatest interest in timely and adequate O&M, yet they often do not have sufficient influence on Water Point Committees (WPCs) etc. to bring this about. For example women often deal with the detrimental effects of poor water source protection, vandalism and poor construction during water collection (e.g. broken windlass, stolen bucket, cracked aprons and stagnant waste-water). Women are also often excluded from undertaking O&M tasks that are often neglected. Women's inclusion could potentially lighten their collective workload.
• *Community Management*	The absence of women and women's voices on WPCs impacts on knowledge of the problems experienced by users, for example WPC 'rules' for payment (cost recovery) and access (amount and frequency) may disregard the needs of poorer female and child headed households. Ownership and control of the resource is often linked directly to individuals on the village councils – again women are marginalised.

4:4 Gender Issues in Sanitation

Existing knowledge of gender issues in sanitation tends to be *related to the on-site disposal of excreta.* However there is a need to understand the implications of *gender in the broader definition of sanitation*[10]. It is also critical to understand that different groups of women and different groups of men favour different behaviours and practices that can exacerbate the exclusion of some in favour of others. This is because

sanitation can reinforce other inequitable social practices that most often undermine the position of women, for example preferential access to education for boys over girls.

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[10] The WSSCC Working Group on Sanitation Promotion (WHO 1998) defines sanitation as: '*interventions to reduce people's exposure to diseases by providing a clean environment in which to live; measures to break the cycle of disease. This usually includes disposing of or hygienic management of human and animal excreta, refuse, and wastewater, the control of disease vectors and the provision of washing facilities for personal and domestic hygiene. Sanitation involves both behaviours and facilities which work together to form a hygienic environment.'*

As sanitation projects look toward being *'demand responsive'* understanding what motivates and raises demand is crucial. As in water projects, gender analysis at the beginning of a project is vital. Reluctance to discuss excreta disposal practices and hygiene behaviours due to cultural and gender boundaries might mean that this is more difficult, however such problems can be overcome[11]. Men and women approach environmental sanitation and excreta disposal from very different perspectives. They also display different levels of willingness to discuss the issues. For example women together are more willing to discuss reasons for latrine building than a group of men and women, or only men.

Women and girl children in particular face severe and detrimental problems of personal safety, hygiene, privacy and health in relation to the use of latrines, at home and school and traditional places for excreta disposal, for example defecation fields. A particular problem is related to the fact that women often have to wait until darkness to defecate and pass urine. This has a number of detrimental effects including security in terms of fear of rape and harassment and health in terms of diet and the risks of infections that may effect future fertility. Equally invasive are issues of privacy and personal hygiene related to menstruation, washing and bathing. At school there are often no facilities for menstruating girls and where latrines exist they are often expected to share facilities with boys. Such problems are compounded where there is also a lack of water for hygiene and sanitation purposes.

A demand responsive approach also means understanding the different technology and design requirements of men, women and children. The cultural behaviour of women as mothers, sisters, daughters-in-law, wives and daughters, relative to men as sons, husbands and fathers impacts on access to sanitation facilities. For example in some societies pregnant women are prohibited from using a latrine. In others daughters may not use the same latrine as their fathers and fathers-in-law. The social seclusion of women in many societies also prevents them from having access to public and communal facilities.

While women may be motivated to improve household sanitation, as with water it is men who often make decisions regarding investment, finances and access to credit. Once again a gender approach to the promotion of sanitation as a benefit and right for all is needed.

4:5 Gender Issues Relative to Hygiene

As hygiene education programmes give way to more innovative hygiene and sanitation promotion approaches,[12] hygiene *need not remain* an issue directed solely toward women.

A gender approach to hygiene offers men and women a role in the promotional work and division of responsibilities for family hygiene practices. It 'encourages shared decision making about resources and the needs of men and women are addressed relative to their own areas of skill, authority and responsibility' (van Wijk-Sijbesma 1998).

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[11] A number of participatory tools exist for the specific purpose of enabling people to 'talk excreta', for example the 'sanitation ladder', the 'diarrhoea doll' used widely in Southern and Eastern Africa.
[12] See Curtis V et al. (1998) 'Happy, Healthy and Hygienic', UNICEF and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, WSSCC (1998) Sanitation Promotion, WHO for such examples.

A gender approach is important in terms of *sharing responsibility* for reducing the risk, occurrence and burden of ill health that causes loss of production particularly among women. Women also bear much of the physical cost of child mortality and morbidity due to water and sanitation related diseases. Given the gender dimensions that affect decisions to invest in sanitation and improved water supply, it would seem appropriate to target men in messages that link the cost effectiveness of infrastructure investments with the health and well being of its users.

Advocating the involvement of men and boys in hygiene promotion demands a wider focus on issues *in addition* to health messages. It should also include 'traditional' male interests such as cost effectiveness, status, house construction, influencing local government. Additionally the need for community role models in practices such as hand washing, the disposal of human faeces, consumption of safe water and food and protection from mosquitoes is a role that men can equally undertake. However this should not preclude acknowledgement and action that demonstrates women too have these interests.

The basic message is that if hygiene promotion is to have any impact at all on the health and well-being of a community, men not just women and children need to change their existing hygiene and sanitation behaviour and practices. In many respects this is currently the biggest challenge for the water supply and sanitation sector. *Hygiene and sanitation promotion* is ripe for the facilitation of new approaches centred on gender (van Wijk 1998).

5:0 Mainstreaming Gender

If understanding the concept of gender relative to water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion is the first step, ensuring commitment to the process that results in the mainstreaming of gender is the second. Here mainstreaming is considered in the context of gender and development principles and approaches.

'Mainstreaming gender' is both a technical and a political process which requires shifts in organisational culture and ways of thinking, as well as in the goals, structures and the resource allocation of international agencies, governments and NGOs

(Kardam cited Baden and Masika 1997). Without the presence of 'changing' institutions gender approaches will remain a 'fringe' activity carried out by a group of enthusiasts (MacDonald, Sprenger and Dubel 1997:106). Change in such institutions hinges on a process of 'learning' (and 'unlearning') to adapt attitudes, practices, beliefs and procedures.

5:1 'Gender Readiness'

Moving gender from the periphery to the heart of development activity is about owning and understanding the process of change. Organisational 'gender readiness' involves more than knowledge of the issues embedded in international development opinion. It is often the case that secondary stakeholders[13] think that they are 'doing gender' yet this self perpetuating belief may translate in practice to be little more than the uncoordinated effort of a few 'enlightened' field based staff. This notion of 'doing gender' is often far removed from reality and is led from the 'top' leaving field based staff with inadequate support, direction, resources, expertise and knowledge.

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[13] Government officials and staff, development agencies and their supporters and advocators.

Unless gender is given the same legitimate consideration as other aspects of development dialogue, planning and design it is neither a panacea nor helpful portmanteau. 'Doing gender' may convey the right political image but is this leading to effectiveness, efficiency or equity?

5:2 Institutional Issues in Mainstreaming

In part, institutionalising gender is about exposing the gender side of the organisation's own principles and enabling action based on them. It is about changing institutions in the interests of women so that women can benefit equally with men from the development process. It is fundamentally about ownership of change.

Just as there is a tendency to seek practicable gender policies, so too is there a desire to find a good institutional model. In the water and sanitation sector such a model has to combine the needs of software and hardware while recognising the realities of the gender differences that operate in all its areas of interest (van Wijk-Sijbesma 1998).

The act of mainstreaming gender presents challenges for a diverse range of institutional functions, behaviours and attitudes, including policy making, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, agenda setting and benchmarking. The challenge can only be met through the involvement of all staff and the pro-active use of operational strategies including; research, advocacy, lobbying, training and education, procedures and guidelines. The diversification in recruitment and selection, the deployment of analytical tools and imaginative country programming and partner based dialogue.

The process of institutionalising gender requires the development of a number of procedures relating to gender responsibility, accountability, co-ordination, monitoring, evaluation and personnel policy.

Empirical evidence suggests that while some development agencies have used a number of measures that have succeeded in institutionalising aspects of gender and development, a gap remains between formal institutionalisation and practice. Co-ordination is often absent, as is dissemination of ideas, while monitoring remains weak (Jahan 1997).

One recurrent problem in attempting to institutionalise gender is that the very concept remains elusive despite efforts to embed its principles. This has a lot to do with the fact that new ideas are imposed upon 'built in disparities' in the gender relations that impact upon how the institution already functions and behaves. This may seem obvious but it is worth considering in light of the re-structuring that is already taking place in water and sanitation related institutions around the globe. Consider, for example, the demands for government institutions to be more accountable, decentralised, transparent, efficient and responsive: facilitators rather than a providers. This has far reaching implication for the institutionalisation of gender if responsibility of government is to be truly shared between the sectors and stakeholders (Jahan 1997).

'Mainstreaming gender is a process, rather than a goal' (Sandler 1997) and therefore is not an end in itself. It should be seen not simply in increasing women's participation in water and sanitation related development. Rather it should concentrate on the *terms, conditions and position* of women's participation, the actual substance of their participation relative to men and the process of fostering change.

Mainstreaming is also about how gender inequalities impact upon the effectiveness of other policy approaches, for example community management, demand responsive approaches, cost recovery, the setting of tariffs and groundwater management.

Mainstreaming is a collaborative effort that is wholly dependent on coalitions, partnership and the participation of actors from the wide range of water and sanitation interested groups. This concurs with the multi-sectoral approach that is being increasingly favoured in water sanitation and hygiene promotion in the rural water and sanitation sector in many African contexts. An opportunity exists to capitalise on the lessons learned about working together on mutually shared goals. Above all the institutionalisation process requires sustained pressure and commitment over a prolonged period of time.

Mainstreaming also requires women, not only in terms of their token roles (as gender advisor, women's officer) but as an empowered group of advocates and champions for change (Sandler 1997). It also requires men who are willing to listen, adapt and contribute.

6:0 Determining Strategy

In the water supply and sanitation sector a number of strategies prevail: integrated approaches, community management, demand responsive approaches, participation and so on. It is within this context that gender sensitive approaches are implemented. The challenge is to develop a strategy that optimises the gender benefits of these policy trends *in situation specific terms.*

Those wishing to do this are not starting with a 'clean slate'. Gender policies and approaches are already being practised particularly at local levels, and the picture can be confusing. For example, 'equity', 'efficiency', 'empowerment' and GAD approaches are described in historical terms but actually 'coexist, either as single policies of a particular government or agency, or mix-and-matched within one organisation, in the hope that they will form a coherent whole' (Anderson 1992 cited March, Smyth and Mukhopadhyay 1999:9). Furthermore, the knowledge required to meet practical gender needs has developed with some degree of confidence while meeting strategic needs and facilitating strategic change is new to many.

A commitment to carry forward GAD principles and approaches provides a considered and constructive start. This commitment needs to be framed in relation to the following:

- conceptual clarity and agreement in terms of overall development goals, e.g. efficiency, effectiveness and equity - knowing where the organisation is, where it wants to go and how it intends to get there,

- awareness of and respect for partners and their position,

- understanding gender concepts relative to water and sanitation – the sector's policies and the gender side of its guiding principles,

- an understanding of gender in the wider development arena,

- a commitment to the development of situation-specific strategies and approaches.

From this position a strategy can be developed that takes account of existing practices and builds upon successful experiences.

A number of options can be considered based upon an open debate of the issues across a broad range of stakeholders and consensus about the way forward. For example,

- the operationalisation of gender approaches throughout the 'parent' organisation (through gender awareness raising, training and organisational mainstreaming) – aiming toward a 'gendered' organisation before expanding to partner organisations and other stakeholders

- the advocacy of GAD approaches in partner organisations (for example Southern NGOs) (through the sharing of experiences, gender awareness raising, training and the encouragement of organisational mainstreaming)

- a staged/multi-level approach to integrating gender across the parent organisation, partner organisations and project planning, design and implementation processes (through pilot projects, lessons learned and considered scaling-up)

- the opening of dialogue and commitment to support two-way informal implementation with efforts to develop structures and monitoring mechanisms (coming simultaneously from the field, the country office and the headquarter).

Such strategies will also need to consider the availability of resources including time and human energy against existing demands. In short the strategy must be SMART (*S*pecific, *M*easurable, *A*chievable, *R*ealistic and *T*imely).

7:0 Implications

So where does this leave those who wish to rise to the challenge of institutionalising and mainstreaming gender? There are a number of pertinent implications.

7:1 Organisational Headquarters

- Gender is already an issue in the field. It may or may not be a supported issue in the wider organisation. If the gap is to be bridged between the field and 'the organisation', open, honest and informed dialogue must underpin initiatives for change.

- New strategies and policy commitment require *flexible* change agents, 'champions' and leadership. Importantly use should be made of staff enthusiasm.

- Analysis of how an organisation is willing and able to adopt gender based strategies must take into consideration the nature and culture of the organisation, its relationship to its partners, their agenda and its own sphere of influence. It must also consider the degree of diversity within the organisation and its ability to translate theory and rhetoric into practice. The presence of a clear gender perspective is a critical precondition for the implementation of gender based objectives (Macdonald, Sprenger and Dubel 1997:10).

- Realistic objectives and expectations need to be communicated throughout the organisation. This will serve to ensure that staff aims are modest yet combined with ambition and that they are clear about the expectations and limitations of their role.

- Gender cannot be simply 'bolted-on' to existing agency values, beliefs, attitudes or practice. Rather a critical examination is required to expose and positively capture the nature of the gender relations that already exist in the organisation, so that they may be harnessed in the strategic direction.

- Project staff throughout the implementation structure will need to be open to mechanisms (training, advocacy, dialogue and resource allocation) that ensure they

are knowledgeable, and adequately and appropriately skilled in gender approaches. This is more likely to be adopted if a 'critical mass' of gender aware people exist in the organisation, recognising that they are part of the overall development mission.

- Approaches, strategies, tools, mechanisms and capabilities must be flexible to the needs of each situation based on a diagnosis of the issues, attitudes and belief systems that prevail. A corporate approach to gender across such diverse situations as those found in developing countries will be problematic.

- Mechanisms will be required to determine the strengths and weaknesses of gender approaches throughout the organisation's sphere of influence and the dissemination of lessons learned.

7:2 National and Country Offices

- Gender is a highly emotive and political concept. It can capture the imagination and equally alienate. Advocacy is key to the process of 'selling' gender to policy and decision-makers. The messages and strategies used to do this must take in to account the gender identities that exist in those potentially willing to champion the cause.

- Dialogue with government and interested parties in the water and sanitation sector has to be carefully developed to take account of policy trends and the influence of donors, lobbyists, political will and so on.

- Agencies can be opportunistic, making gender interventions as and when a common understanding and/or partnership evolves.

- Partnership and multi-sectoral approaches will be essential to avoid isolated or duplicated and uncoordinated initiatives.

- Additional resources (including time and expertise) will be required to support national and project level initiatives.

- Mechanisms will need to be developed to monitor impact.

7:3 Field Based Projects

- Gender concepts are more likely to be embraced if local champions are identified.

- Strategic alliances at a local level will help the facilitation of locally developed approaches.

- Transparent communication will be required to avoid mistrust and alienation.

- All project implementers will require patience, realism, flexibility and a sense of pace.

- Resources including expertise and training capacity will be needed to activate interest and commitment to gender approaches.

- Project log-frames and project cycles will need to be considered in gender terms.

- Mechanisms will need to be put in place to monitor impact.

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Appendix 1: Checklist for gender issues in project identification and design

Assessing women's needs:

What needs and opportunities exist for increasing women's productivity and/or production?

What needs and opportunities exist for increasing women's access to and control of resources?

What needs and opportunities exist for increasing women's access to and control of benefits?

How do these needs and opportunities relate to the country's other general and sectoral development needs and opportunities?

Have women been directly consulted in identifying such needs and opportunities?

Defining general project objectives

Are project objectives explicitly related to women's needs?

Do these objectives adequately reflect women's needs?

Have women participated in setting those objectives?

Have there been any earlier efforts?

How has the present proposal built on earlier efforts?

Identifying possible negative effects

Might the project reduce women's access to, or control of, resources and benefits?

Might it adversely affect women's situation in some other way?

What will be the effects on women in the short and longer run?

Women's dimension in project design:

Project impact on women's activities

Which of these activities (production, reproduction and maintenance, sociopolitical) does the project affect?

Is the planned component consistent with the current gender denomination for the activity?

If it plans to change the women's performance of that activity (locus of the activity, remunerative mode, technology, mode of activity), is this feasible, and what positive or negative effects would it have on women?

If there is no change, is this a missed opportunity for women's roles in the development process?

How can the project design be adjusted to increase the above-mentioned positive effects, and reduce or eliminate the negative ones?

Project impact on women's access and control

How will each of the project's components affect women's access to and control of the resources and benefits engaged in and stemming from the production of goods and services?

How will each of the project's components affect women's access to and control of the resources and benefits engaged in and stemming from the reproduction and maintenance of the human resources?

How will each of the project's components affect women's access to and control of the resources and benefits engaged in and stemming from the sociopolitical functions?
What forces have been set into motion to induce further exploration of constraints and possible improvements?
How can the project design be adjusted to increase women's access to and control of resources and benefits?
Source: Joseph Valadez and Michael Bamberger, 1994.