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WOMEN, BASIC EDUCATION, COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Workshop**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISCLAIMER	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	vi
WOMEN AND EDUCATION IN KENYA.....	1
Introduction	1
Enrolment in primary schools.....	2
Adult education	4
Some of the factors that determine the education girls	5
Gender, education and employment opportunities	7
Women and political participation in Kenya	8
Effects of under-representation of female students at all levels of Kenya's educational system and dropout rates.....	8
Summary	10
WOMEN, BASIC EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS	11
Gender inequalities.....	12
The Way Forward.....	15
EDUCATION AND THE GIRL-CHILD: Interventions beyond research and policy	17
Introduction	17
Primary and basic education	21
Bringing Beijing home	22
Conclusion.....	23
UNECA GENDER CONCERNS IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A Research Agenda for the UNESCO Chair.....	24
Introduction	24
Family/household characteristics and learners' school-seeking behaviour	30
Health status and learner's school-seeking behaviours	34
Research questions.....	35
Personal expectations and learners' school-seeking behaviour.....	36
Methodology	37
Conclusion.....	37

WOMEN, CULTURE AND EDUCATION	39
Introduction	39
Definition and application	39
The gender considerations.....	40
Kinship dynamics.....	40
House hold decision making	40
Violence against women.....	40
Institution of single motherhood.....	41
Poverty conditions	41
Access to credit.....	41
Income-generating	41
Formal Education.....	42
Recommendations.....	42
WOMEN AND COMMUNITY HEALTH.....	43
Introduction	43
Women and community health.....	43
Possible research themes.....	45
WOMEN, NUTRITION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.....	46
Introduction	46
Nutritional status of women.....	47
Women as custodians of household nutritional security and development	48
Strategies for addressing implications of women’s nutritional status	50
Assessment of nutrition status of women.....	50
Poverty alleviation	50
Education.....	50
Creation of awareness in nutrition	51
Conclusion.....	51
FAMILY AND CHILD WELFARE.....	52
Introduction	52
The extended family as the domain for child care and support	52
The value of children	53
Parenting and the process of teaching children life-giving skills	54
The development of new family arrangements and the consequences for child welfare	55
Conclusions and some suggestions for sustainable child welfare.....	56

WOMEN AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT: The unrecognized contribution	58
Introduction	58
Women and Urbanization.....	58
Socio-economic urban activities	60
Water and Sanitation.....	63
Recognizing Women's Contribution.....	64
Conclusion.....	64
WOMEN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	66
Background	66
Constraints in the practice of the methods	68
Challenges for the UNESCO Chair	69
Conclusion.....	70
COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES.....	71
Introduction	71
The mission of the university	71
A methodological divide in social science research: quantitative versus qualitative approaches	72
MOVING FROM MYTHS AND STEREOTYPES ABOUT WOMEN: Towards an understanding of women.....	73
SUMMARY REPORT STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP ON WOMEN, BASIC EDUCATION, COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	77
Women, education and life skills	77
Education and the girl-child	77
Family and child welfare.....	78
Women, nutrition and community development.....	78
Women and community health.....	78
Women and community development.....	79
Gender concerns in sustainable community development.....	79
Women and urban development	79
Women, culture and education	79
Gender stereotypes: women and psychology	80
Community-based research methodologies	80
Development and development-oriented research.....	82
Participatory research	83
Action research	83

Participatory action research.....	83
Viability of participatory action research in Kenya.....	84
The challenge to the Social Scientist	86
REFERENCES	87
Women and Education in Kenya.....	87
Women, Basic Education and Life Skills.....	88
UNECA Gender Concerns in Sustainable Community Development: A Research Agenda for the UNESCO Chair.....	89
Women, Culture and Education	90
Women, Nutrition and Community Development	90
Family and Child Welfare.....	91
Women and Urban Development: The Unrecognized Contribution.....	92
Women and Community Development	93
Appendix 1: action plan	95

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:Pre-primary enrolment - 1996.....	2
Table 2: Boys and girls enrolled by Province in primary schools in 1996 Primary enrolment.....	3
Table 3: Class Enrolment in secondary schools by Form and sex 1992-1996.....	3
Table 4: Boys and girls enrolled by Province in secondary schools, in 1996	4
Table 5: Adult education enrolment by sex 1992-1996.....	5
Table 6: Gender as % of total enrolment in Kenya's educational system in 1996	5
Table 7: Enrolment Ratios.....	13
Table 8: Literacy rates in some selected Districts in Kenya.....	14

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in these papers are solely those of the authors, and not necessarily those of the Department of Sociology of the University of Nairobi or UNESCO.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1992, the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme was launched after being adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 26th Session in 1991. The UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme involves hundreds of universities and partnerships around the world. It covers training, research and information activities in the main fields of concern to UNESCO with particular focus on priority areas of the organization, namely, basic education, water and ecosystems, ethics of science, cultural diversity, information technologies. The programme is two-pronged. One prong is concerned with setting up inter-university networks and twinning schemes and the other involves establishing UNESCO Chairs. UNESCO Chairs are teaching and research units within a university or other institution of higher education and/or research. A Chair includes a 'Chair holder' as an academic head, a number of teachers and researchers from the host institution who are associated with the activities of the Chair and students pursuing graduate studies and higher level training. A UNESCO Chair is generally established within a university Department as a means to reinforce existing teaching and research programmes in a particular field.

In the mid-1990's UNESCO devised a special initiative on Women, Higher Education and Development as part of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme. This particular initiative was set up to strengthen the role of women in higher education and their participation in training and research in a number of key areas including basic education, sustainable development, culture and development, gender, health, science and technology. UNESCO invited the University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya, to participate in UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme and its 'special project' on women. The idea was to establish the UNESCO Chair with a programme of work focusing on women, basic education, community health and sustainable development. More specifically, the aim was to 1) strengthen the capacity of the university to contribute to the formulation of effective policies and programmes for basic education and community health; 2) develop an inter-disciplinary and participatory approach for the identification of constraints, needs, expectations and aspirations for education and health; 3) sensitize and mobilize communities in support of education, health and development through tangible and innovative interventions; 4) build capacity through partnerships and networking; and 5) undertake participatory research, monitoring and evaluation of actions.

In planning the UNESCO Chair at the University of Nairobi, serious effort was made to mobilize Faculty members from a range of disciplines to be closely involved in the activities of the Chair. As a first step in this process, a Strategic Planning Workshop was held at the University of Nairobi from 15-17 July 1997. The workshop was hosted by the Department of Sociology with support from UNESCO. It brought together an inter-disciplinary group of scholars representing fields of sociology, economics, nutrition, education, health, development and African studies, social work, literature and psychology.

The workshop was opened by Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nairobi. The Vice-Chancellor expressed strong support on behalf of the University for the new UNESCO Chair. He was confident that Department of Sociology would effectively coordinate the activities of the UNESCO Chair. On behalf of the Government of Kenya, the Director of Education, Ministry of Education, made an appeal to the university and the new UNESCO Chair to carry out research on declining school enrolments and completion rates especially among girls.

Some twelve theme papers were presented at the Strategic Planning Workshop. These cover a broad spectrum of concerns including: the education of girls and women, genders concerns in community development, women, culture and education, women and community health, women, nutrition and community development, the family and child welfare, women and urban development, women and community development, community based research methodologies and gender stereotypes. Each of the presentations included a situational analysis; discussed data and policy gaps; and offered concrete suggestions on what the UNESCO Chair could do to bridge the gaps. General discussions on the papers were rich. Insights and a range of issues to be addressed by the UNESCO Chair were identified. A lively spirit of openness and participation characterized the deliberations. The theme papers form the basis of this monograph.

Dr. L. Kibera and **Prof. O. Gakuru** present papers on aspects of women and education. It is argued that development efforts in Kenya have fallen short of success due to increasing poverty and people's powerlessness despite the development politics that have been put in place. This contradiction needs to be addressed. It is observed that majority of Kenyans are in small-scale agriculture and menial industrial jobs. About a half of rural Kenyans and nearly a third of urban dwellers live in poverty. Gender disparities exist and cut across all groups in the society, with women more disadvantaged than others. The authors suggest that the UNESCO Chair focus on effective ways to provide of life skills, especially; literacy, numeracy, communication and problem-solving skills. The activities of the Chair can enhance local knowledge e.g. on legal, economic and human rights issues through the use of popular theatre and other participatory methods. There is need to sensitize the public through art and literature, research on gender disparities in education and on women in especially difficult circumstances (such as single mothers, mothers in slums, teenage mothers etc.). Efforts should also be made to counsel girls on existing career options and on sexuality and men-women relationships.

Girl's education is the specific focus of the paper by **Ms. Kavetsa Adagala**. Adagala shows that in Kenya school participation and completion rates of girls are unacceptably low. She calls for the need to examine the role of the government, parents, NGOs, the religious organizations and civic institutions in policies that affect the educational status of the girl-child. A multi-faceted approach is needed when examining issues of girl's education.

Drs. N. Kinyanjui and **K. Munguti** discuss gender concerns in sustainable community development. The key observation is that gender as a social construct should be seen in terms of the invisibility of women in development, subordination and unequal relations and the clear separation of the public and private spheres. These issues have to be addressed if there is to be sustainable development. One must look at symbol, myths and rituals associated with gender stereotyping and socialization such as marriage, and the ways in which communities perceive gender relations. Kinyanjui and Munguti express the importance of learning from success stories of women who have ventured into traditionally male domains. For the UNESCO Chair work plan they suggest research on gender relations in learners' school-seeking behaviours.

Women, culture and education are discussed by **Prof. E. Njeru** who argues that social categories (e.g. men, women and youth) are looked at differently in different cultures and societies. Education, both formal and informal, is seen as being characterized by low female participation due to factors such as kinship practices, male dominance in decision-making, violence against women, single motherhood

arising due to early pregnancies, school drop-out and divorce, poverty leading to preference for boys education, ignorance of women's rights. Njeru identifies a number of critical areas that the UNESCO Chair should address such as the empowerment of both women and men; the promotion of equal opportunities; awareness creation and advocacy on equality and the need to incorporate the role of the 'other generation' in the struggle for gender equality. Also important is the need to lobby for political, legal and agricultural reforms and work for the eradication of violence against women.

The main observation in **Prof. B.M. Nganda's** presentation on woman and community health is that health is a vital component of the development process. Development affects people differently, that is, men and women, rich and poor etc. Very little research has been done in the area of women's health after child-bearing or the role of women in community development and in health. Efforts at community health must therefore focus on women as health consumers. The Chair should encourage a community development approach aimed at involving communities in the identification of needs and in addressing these using local resources.

Dr. W. Kogi-Makau looks more specifically at nutrition and women. In the past the approach to women's nutrition was often guided by the assumption that if the nutritional status of the child was acceptable then that of the mother would be as well. In this regard, it is noted that there is limited data on the nutritional status of adults. The programme of the Chair should examine the nutritional needs of women.

The family as the basic social institution for care and support is the focus of **Professor Suda's** paper. She reviews the situation of the family from a historical perspective. The family in the traditional African society is seen as a care-giving support system with a unique extended family system. The impact of modernization and urbanization on the form, structure and functions of the family is discussed. Suda suggests that the UNESCO Chair address the need to strengthen existing family ties even in a context of poverty to make child care more sustainable at community level. She also raises the need to determine how to value the reproductive roles of women.

Dr. W. Mitullah presents a paper on women and urban development looking specifically at unrecognized contribution that women make to development. Unfortunately, relevant authorities do not plan with and for women. Mitullah suggests that the UNESCO Chair look at how to involve all stakeholders in seeking knowledge on the differential status of women, how to tap existing efforts by women to cope in difficult urban environments, and how to empower women politically.

Prof P. Chitere examines issues relating to women and community development. Chitere discusses participation in terms of a consultative, contractual, collaborative or collegiate process i.e. aimed at enhancing community's capacity. The emphasis is on use of local resources and promoting the development of local human potential. The paper identifies a number of challenges faced in community development efforts that could be address by the Chair such as: enhancing capacity of development agencies to practice community development and participatory action research, looking at ways to adapt community development practices that have worked elsewhere especially on the use of local resources, training civic, church and women group leaders on development ideals, needs and practice and starting community development efforts from immediate problems and moving to the complex ones.

In their paper on the role of the university, **Prof. C. Nzioka** and **Dr. P. Mbatia** discuss the university as a centre of thinking and supporter of community well-being. They argue that universities must shed the 'ivory tower' image and find ways and means to engage in relevant research and activities. They discuss the 'pros and cons' of different methodological approaches to community-based research while underscoring the importance of involving the communities in the research process. Participatory research involving communities is not often practiced by universities. This is due to a number of factors including the 'ivory tower' isolation of universities, the lack of time due to heavy workloads and funding available to university staff and students for community-based research and a history of traditional theoretical orientation of the social sciences.

Prof. P .W. Kariuki discusses gender stereotypes and the starting point for discussion is that gender stereotypes have followed an evolutionary path with the woman being given many tags at different periods of history. It is argued that these tags are based on varying myths about the woman, which eventually lead to action being directed towards oppressing her e.g. most stereotypes look at her in relation to reproduction and the caring role which lead to her being relegated to the domestic environment. Kariuki suggests that the UNESCO Chair endeavour to: promote interdisciplinary research for a better understanding of women; bring women's invisibility to the fore by promoting the understanding of their feelings, needs and experiences and affirm the contributions women.

The theme papers in this monograph have guided and shaped the plan of action for the UNESCO Chair at the University of Nairobi. Appendix I outlines the action plan that was derived from these theme papers. UNESCO is proud to recognize the contribution that the Kenyan scholars represented here have made to the formulation and success of the UNESCO Chair on 'Women, basic education, community health and sustainable development' at the University of Nairobi.

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WOMEN AND EDUCATION IN KENYA

Lucy W. Kibera

Introduction

There is documented evidence that female education is one of the most important forces of development and (King, 1991). Indeed King (1991) notes that an educated mother raises a smaller, healthier and better educated family and is herself more productive at home and in the work place. Women constitute half of humankind and unfortunately, they form 2/3 of the world's illiterates (Mackenzie, 1993:34). Thus, more boys than girls particularly in the less industrialized economies of Africa, Kenya included, continue to go to school and work their way up the educational ladder (Mueller, 1990). In Africa, 64 percent of illiterates are women (Ballara, 1992:6). In Kenya, over 60 per cent of women are illiterate (Republic of Kenya, 1988). The situation is likely to remain the same due to structural adjustment programmes that were introduced in the late 1980's. These have led to budget cuts in education and as a result the education of girls and women has been adversely affected. Most societies worldwide, prefer to educate boys to girls and this is particularly so for resource poor families.

The major thrust of this paper, therefore, is to analyze gender disparity in Kenya's educational system from pre-primary to university level, including other post secondary training institutions. Factors that may impede gender parity in education as well as consequences of gender disparity in education particularly on occupational opportunities for females are discussed. Finally, suggestions towards closing the gender gap in the educational sector are made.

Enrolment in early childhood education (ECD) Early childhood education caters for children aged 3-6 years. Generally, local communities and parents are responsible for establishing and running early childhood education (ECD) centres. They provide land and physical facilities, pay salaries for teachers, sometimes cater for feeding programmes, and provide pedagogical and play materials. Thus, though this sector has been expanding over the years, it has not expanded as much as other levels of the educational system due to minimal government involvement. The majority of children who attend ECD programmes are those whose parents are better-off and can pay exorbitant fees charged in privately run kindergartens or day care centres or nursery schools located in major urban centres. In 1996 the enrolment in ECD stood at 1,033,367. Girls accounted for 49.0 per cent of the total enrolment (Republic of Kenya, 1997a). The enrolment of girls at pre-primary level is very encouraging; it has almost equalled that of boys. However, the data in Table 1 on the enrolment of boys and girls in ECD shows that a serious gender gap at this level exists at regional level and particularly in North Eastern, where only 37 percent of total enrolment is girls. Table 1 presents pre-primary school enrolment of boys and girls in 1996 by the eight administrative regions/provinces of the Republic of Kenya.

Table 1:Pre-primary enrolment - 1996

Province	Male		Female		Total
	000	%	000	%	
Coast	45,006	52.7	40,398	47.3	85,404
Central	76,107	51.4	71,853	48.6	147,960
Eastern	97,661	51.3	92,583	48.7	190,244
Nairobi	18,090	48.2	19,450	51.8	37,540
Rift Valley	145,583	51.2	133,447	47.8	279,030
Western	65,184	49.6	66,244	50.4	131,428
Nyanza	75,975	49.5	77,472	50.5	153,447
North	5,234	63	3,080	37	8,314
Overall	528,840	51.2	504,527	48.8	1,033,367

Source: Ministry of Education Statistic Section

Enrolment in primary schools

In 1963, when Kenya attained her independence, there were a total of 892,000 pupils in primary schools, 34 percent of whom were girls (Republic of Kenya, 1989a). Enrolment of girls in primary schools has continued to rise though it has not equalled that of boys. For instance, in 1996 there were 6,581,253 children in primary schools. Girls accounted for (49.2% of the total enrolment (Republic of Kenya, 1997a). The increase in enrolment of girls at this level of education is very encouraging, however, it is noted that there has been an overall decline of enrolment at primary level from 95 percent in 1989 to 82.4 percent in 1996 (Kamotho, 1996). A decline in enrolment affects more girls than boys. In addition, it is observed that only 35 percent of girls who enrol actually complete primary school compared with 55 percent for boys (Republic of Kenya, 1997a). This is explained by higher drop-out rate for girls after standard 4 resulting from socio-economic and biological factors which will be discussed later in this paper.

While national enrolment figures for girls over the years at primary level have been commendable, they have not been as encouraging at regional level, that is, in the eight administrative regions/provinces of the Republic of Kenya. Table 2 presents the percentage of girls enrolled by Province in 1996.

Table 2: Boys and girls enrolled by Province in primary schools in 1996 Primary enrolment

Province	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Central	452,275	50.0	451,669	50.0	903,944
Coast	199,557	54.2	168,447	45.8	368,004
Eastern	517,558	49.7	524,533	50.3	1,042,091
Nairobi	77,826	50.2	77,120	49.8	154,946
Rift Valley	666,517	51.2	636,540	48.8	1,303,057
Western	393,399	49.6	399,649	50.4	793,048
Nyanza	510,880	51.3	485,794	48.7	996,674
North Eastern	25,343	70.6	10,549	29.4	35,892
Overall	2,843,355	50.8	2,754,301	49.2	5,597,656

Source: Ministry of Education, Statistics Section.

Data in Table 2 indicates that close attention needs to be given to North Eastern, and Coast Provinces when addressing the problem of gender disparity at primary level of education.

With respect to secondary school enrolment, there has been a remarkable rise. In 1963 the enrolment stood at about 30,000 students. The proportion of girls in secondary schools was 32% and had risen steadily to 46.4% by 1996 (Government of Kenya and UNICEF 1992, and Republic of Kenya, 1997a). However, the gap between boys' and girls' enrolment in secondary schools is substantial and steadily increases as girls proceed from Form 1 to 4. Table 3 presents the enrolment of students in secondary schools by class (Form) and sex, from 1992-1996.

Table 3: Class Enrolment in secondary schools by Form and sex 1992-1996

Form	1992		1993		1994		1995		1996	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	97,267	78,081	81,543	69,560	90,774	78,140	96,360	83,650	97,394	85,917
2	91,209	72,774	73,125	61,158	87,993	76,549	88,737	75,961	93,526	81,444
3	84,429	66,189	72,647	55,467	79,067	66,328	82,623	69,876	83,902	71,924
4	80,467	58,646	67,881	49,961	78,605	62,383	74,087	61,094	78,104	66,042
Grant Total	629,062		531,342		619,839		632,388		658,253	

Source: Economic Survey, 1997.

The data in Table 3 reveals that enrolment in secondary schools rose by 4.1 percent from 632,388 in 1995 to 658,253 in 1996. Out of the total enrolment in 1996, 46.4 percent were females. This represented a substantial improvement of female enrolment compared to 1995 which recorded 45.9 percent. Notice that, the rise in enrolment figures for females, does not naturally translate into a narrower gap between the sexes at regional level. Table 4 shows enrolment of girls vis-a-vis that of boys at the regional/provincial level in 1996.

Table 4: Boys and girls enrolled by Province in secondary schools, in 1996

Province	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Coast	20,669	55.3	16,739	44.7	37,408
Central	69,676	48.8	73,082	51.2	142,758
Eastern	59,921	51.5	56,536	48.5	116,457
Nairobi	13,494	59.9	9,036	40.1	22,530
Rift Valley	77,222	52.0	61,642	48.0	138,864
Western	41,910	55.8	38,594	44.2	80,504
Nyanza	66,691	57.6	49,099	42.4	115,790
North Eastern	3,343	53.6	599	15.2	3,942
Overall	352,926		305,327	46.4	658,253

Source: Ministry of Education Statistics Section.

Information in Table 4 indicates that there are large imbalances in enrolment of girls at regional level. The provinces with the largest gender disparities include North Eastern, Nairobi, Western, Nyanza and Coast. However, girls have outstripped boys in enrolment at secondary level in Central Province. It would be interesting to find out why this is so. It would also be important to investigate why enrolment of girls at secondary level has a substantial decline in Nairobi, Western, and Nyanza given that the enrolment of girls at pre-primary and primary levels is quite high.

The low enrolment of girls in secondary schools has devastating effects on female education at University and other post-secondary educational institutions. For instance, out of 40,065 students at public universities in 1995/96 academic year, females constituted 26.4 percent while in the following academic year they comprised 28.8 percent out of 37,973 student enrolment. Even though data for some of the post-secondary educational institutions such as in Diploma Teacher Training Colleges, Kenya Institute of Special Education, Kenya Technical Teachers College, National Polytechnics, Institutes of Technology, Technical Training Institutes are not aggregated on gender basis, it is expected that females are under-represented in these institutions.

Adult education

According to Republic of Kenya (1997a: 207) there were 115,641 persons enrolled in adult literacy classes. In the previous year 116,051, persons had enrolled for adult literacy classes. Enrolment, therefore, declined by 0.4 percent. In fact adult literacy enrolments have dropped drastically from 415,000 students in 1979 to 115,641 students in 1996 (Obura and Rogers, 1993; Republic of Kenya, 1997a). Table 5 presents adult education enrolment by sex from 1992-1996.

Table 5: Adult education enrolment by sex 1992-1996

Year	Male	Female	Total	% of Female Enrolment
1992	25,425	84,049	109,474	76.8
1993	26,027	81,271	107,298	75.7
1994	26,595	87,684	114,279	76.7
1995	27,572	88,479	116,051	76.2
1996	26,612	89,029	115,641	77.0

Information in Table 5 shows that there are more women enrolled in adult literacy classes than men. This is explained by the fact that there are more illiterate women than men. For instance, though the literacy rate in Kenya was at 54% in 1988, 62 percent of illiterates were women. Highest rates of illiterates were and still are in the major pastoralist areas (Waithaka, 1992: 139).

Table 6: Gender as % of total enrolment in Kenya's educational system in 1996

Education level	Males	Females	Total %	Total enrolment % of respective
Pre-primary	51.0	49.0	100%	1,033.37
Primary	50.8	49.2	100%	5,597.70
Secondary	53.6	46.4	100%	658.253
Public Universities	71.2	28.8	100%	37.973

*Sources: * Republic of Kenya, Development Plan, 1997-2001.*

The data in Table 6 clearly shows that gender is a factor in Kenya's education. In addition, boys on the whole outperform girls in all subjects except English in national examinations (Government of Kenya and UNICEF, 1992: 103). The questions then are:

- Why are there fewer girls compared to that of boys at all levels of Kenya's educational system?
- Why do more girls drop out of school than boys?
- Why do girls under perform relative to boys?

To sum up this section, it is clear that gender disparity is a major problem in Kenya's educational system and is likely to persist for sometime in the future. Table 6 carries a summary of total enrolment of males and females in Kenya's educational system in 1996. The next section attempts to address these questions.

Some of the factors that determine the education girls

There are a number of factors associated with lack of concern and investment in the education of girls. First, there are fewer girls than boys in all levels of the educational system chiefly because of culturally perceived importance of the education of boys over that of girls. Families who

cannot easily afford to send both sons and daughters to school reckon that financial returns on the expenditure for girls' education are a good deal smaller than those of boys. The argument is that girls will eventually leave their parents on getting married and therefore, their education is seen as a financial asset to the in-laws rather than the blood relatives.

Second, it is postulated that a woman does not need education to empower her to earn a living. On the other hand, education is important for a man because he is expected to be head of a family and bread earner, while a woman is expected to be a wife, a homemaker and a mother. She is seen as a provider of the non-material services to her family such as love, care and nurturing children while the husband maintains the family materially. This practice ignores the fact that over 30 percent of families worldwide, Kenya included, are now headed by women (Mackenzie, 1993; Republic of Kenya, 1997b).

Third, there is also a prevalent belief held by members of the society and especially men that educated women are less "feminine" and are not easily controlled by men. This is because education enables women to become materially independent of men.

Fourth, girls drop-out of school due to a multiple of factors. Sometimes girls drop out because of pregnancies. In other cases girls drop out of school due to pre-arranged marriages. Such marriages are quite prevalent among pastoral communities in Kenya (Government of Kenya and UNICEF, 1992).

Fifth, girls also leave school because they cannot cope with school work and domestic chores. Girls rather than boys are overburdened with household duties, such as fetching water and firewood, washing clothes and dishes, taking care of their siblings and other household related jobs. These activities rob girls of adequate time to study and as a consequence, they under perform in academic work. Eventually some lose interest and quit school.

Sixth, the majority of girls particularly at secondary level attend poorly equipped and staffed secondary schools. For example, in 1986 there were 635 Government maintained schools and 1,497 harambee schools (355 of the latter were unaided); 47 percent of the girls' schools were not government maintained compared to 35 percent of the boys school (Government of Kenya and UNICEF, 1989). Though current data on this issue is unavailable, it is most likely that the situation has persisted. This situation may lead to dropouts, as students see little or no likelihood of academic success. It is also noted that out of 18 national secondary schools, only 7 are boarding schools for girls, while boys have 9 such secondary schools. The other 2 secondary schools are co-educational (The Kenya National Examination Council, 1996). There is evidence that co-educational secondary schools are not good for girls. Girls are likely to suffer from sexual harassment from their male counterparts (Mackenzie, 1993).

In addition to lack of equipment, facilities and qualified staff in most secondary schools attended by girls, these schools are mostly day and co-educational. While both sexes are disadvantaged in such schools, girls are severely disadvantaged. Day secondary schools are, on the whole,

neighbourhood schools meaning that students commute to school and back home. While at home, girls devote more of their time to household chores rather than to school work. Another problem, which girls encounter in co-educational schools especially boarding schools is that of sexual harassment from both their colleagues and the male teachers. Mackenzie (1993) recounts what she calls a "night of madness", when 271 teenage girls were attacked by their male counterparts. As a result of the attack, 19 girls died and 71 were raped. Sexual harassment may contribute to poor performance of girls in academic work and loss of interest in school. Loss of interest in school work may lead to school dropout.

Kibera (1993) found that girls in co-educational secondary schools have extremely low educational and career aspirations compared to girls attending unisexual secondary schools. Girls attending unisexual secondary schools also have higher educational and career aspirations compared to male students attending similar institutions. Unisexual secondary schools are on the whole well equipped and staffed with the majority of teachers corresponding to the gender of the students. These schools are also mainly boarding schools. Such girls' secondary schools have similar facilities and human resources to those of boys. It is not surprising then that girls educated in quality secondary schools perform as well as boys at public examinations and at times better than boys. The examination results of Kenya Secondary Certificate of Education of 1993 attest to this (Standard Newspaper, 23 February, 1994). This excellent performance of girls is mainly attributed to the conducive learning environment girls enjoy in unisexual secondary schools, free from sexual harassment and overburdening household chores.

The marginalisation of girls in the educational arena leads to the marginalisation in the labour market. Generally, high status occupations are awarded to those with most education and therefore, most women are automatically excluded from such jobs on the account of having little or no formal school education. The next section examines closely the relationship between gender, education and employment and leadership opportunities.

Gender, education and employment opportunities

The majority of women in Africa work in the Agricultural sector (Wichterich Christa, 1985) and Kenya is no exception (Republic of Kenya, 1989b). Agricultural work is hard and underpaid and is usually done by the unschooled or those with little or no education. Women are abundant in these categories.

According to the Economic Survey (Republic of Kenya, 1995) there were 311,000 females (23.1 %) in wage employment out of 1,332,800 regular employees. Educational services, followed by agricultural activities remained the major female employer. Educational services employed 94,400 females (27.2%) of all females in wage employment while agricultural sector engaged 65,500 females (18.8%). The proportion of females employed in industries traditionally

dominated by males such as building and construction and manufacturing continue to have very few females; it stood at 5.0 percent and 12.2 percent respectively in 1995.

Women and political participation in Kenya

Due to their disadvantaged position in education and also as a result of unfavourable social attitudes, women have been slow to rise to prominent positions in modern Kenya. For instance, although politically women are franchised, they have not yet made a lot of impact in the political arena. For example, since Kenya attained political independence in 1963, the only woman Cabinet Minister, was appointed in 1995 to head the Ministry of Culture and Social Services (Weekly Review, 12 May 1995). This is a Ministry which has little power and prestige compared to Ministries of Finance, Defense and Commerce. Politics like other sectors of the society in Kenya are male-dominated. In 1994, only six women (3%) are members of parliament. This was the largest number of women in the Kenyan Parliament since independence, attained over thirty years ago. Hazlewood (1979) summed up the plight of women in Kenya as follows:

If the life of the poor in Kenya is hard, it is particularly hard for poor women. Kenya is a male-dominated society. Yet a large part of the work is done by women. Women constitute a silent majority of the most overworked and underpaid of agricultural workers in Kenya ... women's activities in the rural areas constitute cultivating food crops, cutting firewood, carrying water, household work and taking care of the family.

The majority of these women including the educated ones are without property; family property is usually registered in the husband's name. Consequently, the majority of women are not able to secure loans for economic enterprises because they lack collateral required by financial institutions. Without education, property and political power, women have no access to resources.

Effects of under-representation of female students at all levels of Kenya's educational system and dropout rates

According to the Ministry of Planning and National Development, (Republic of Kenya, 1988) the overall adult literacy rate was 54 percent with female literacy lagging at 40 percent. The situation is likely not to have improved due to structural adjustment programmes which led to reduction of funding of social programmes including education.

Women and girls are denied their human right to education which in turn means that women are bound to be silent because they do not have a language to express their needs, interest and concerns.

Women are not equipped with occupational skills and therefore are excluded from financially well-paid employment. Furthermore, they are also inadequate in handling self-employment because they lack management and entrepreneurial skills. The majority of women in Kenya and their children live in abject poverty.

- They are also unprepared to care for their health and nutritional needs including those of their families. Socio-cultural practices demand that females take care of homes, children and the entire family.
- Women are excluded from decision making positions and politics, partly because they lack education and also due to socio-cultural beliefs that view leadership and politics as male activities.

Some ways of improving the educational, occupational and leadership chances of women

Because of the links between education and the economy, Kenyan women are marginalized in all wage employment sectors of the Kenyan economy. This is further aggravated by the fact that possession of education by women does not eliminate their being victimized due to the well ingrained social cultural beliefs and attitudes that women are unequal to men. All the same, education of women remains the key to socioeconomic and political emancipation. As more women receive formal and higher education, it will become increasingly difficult for societies not to employ the skills and expertise of women in various fields of development. Educated women will become more aware of issues, more adaptable to change and less passive to their conditions.

Towards the goal of educating women, international organizations, governments, communities, non-governmental organizations and women organizations must give top priority to the education of girls. In investment in the education of boys and girls, bursaries should be specifically set up for girls from poor families. When this happens poor families may refrain from withdrawing girls from schools on account of lack of school fees. Members of society at large and especially parents and teachers must be sensitized on the importance of educating girls through the radio, public lectures, and songs.

Research should be carried out in schools and in the communities in order to establish the relative importance of the factors that impinge on the education of girls. Comprehensive data on the situation of girls and women with particular reference to poor rural, nomadic, school drop outs and adolescent mothers should be assembled to facilitate appropriate planning.

Confidence and capacity-building skill sessions should be organized for women and girls. Households and especially those headed by women should be assisted in starting and sustaining income-generating activities so that they are empowered to cater for the material needs of their families. A vigorous career education for girls should be introduced in schools to enlighten them on career options that exist, and their attendant academic requirements especially science subjects and mathematics. Girls do very poorly in these subjects. If this does not happen, women

will continue to aspire for jobs such as teaching, nursing and secretarial work that are traditionally associated with women.

Since girls drop out from schools due to pregnancies, vigorous campaigns to educate girls about their sexuality and how to deal with men/women relationships should be part and parcel of the school curriculum from the upper primary classes onwards. A large proportion of females from primary to university have had their education interrupted and sometimes ended due to unplanned pregnancy.

Adult education should also be revitalized to cater for vast numbers of illiterate women. A bi-annual publication on the status of the education of girls should be launched. Additionally, gender studies should be offered in all institutions of teacher education. Finally, educational materials and textbooks that portray girls and women as able people should be published. Traditional roles should be rewritten in order to provide more balanced role models.

Summary

The review of educational status for women in Kenya has shown that women have been outstripped by men at all levels of the education system and especially at the post-secondary level. This is in spite of the fact that women constitute over half of Kenya's population (Republic of Kenya, 1989a). To ignore the education of women who constitute the majority, is to hamper the country's development. Education of women should be given priority. Towards this end, intervention measures such as bursaries, establishment of quality unisexual boarding secondary schools, career education and sex education should be provided for girls. Additionally, the society at-large should be sensitized about the importance of the education of girls and women and their relation to the overall development of the society.

WOMEN, BASIC EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS

By: Octavian N. Gakuru

There are many perspectives on African development. For example, there is the historical view of Black Africa as the Dark Continent which is being reinforced by the frightening reports about fatal diseases/illnesses such as HIV / AIDS, high mortality rates, famine and starvation, and senseless military and social conflicts. Nonetheless, the region has also remained an attractive destination for all sorts of groups of people either as fortune seekers, tourists, or development agencies such as religious and non-governmental organizations. Many agents of development have the view of a region that is poor both materially and also in skilled manpower which in turn justifies the need for external assistance and intervention. However, the process of development has been subject to the paternalism built into the modernization approach and the global interests of the first world that have created dependence and underdevelopment.

Although the underlying ideology of development is to create better living conditions for all the people, the majority who are also poor and powerless continue to struggle against hardships resulting from the very development policies previously put in place such as human exploitation and vagaries of nature. Consequently, their lives are a struggle for survival and better life, if possible, and based on past performance, it must be questioned how they can benefit from large-scale development programmes which are executed by governments with assistance from development experts.

The capitalist development in Kenya has produced inequalities in wealth, power and social status previously unknown among the indigenous populations. First, there is the minority class of those who exercise control and surveillance over the economy and society at large. This is a multiracial and multiethnic class consisting of Whites, Asians and Africans. The second is a substantial middle class that is a much more diffuse and local social formation mainly found in state apparatus, industry, trade and agriculture. Another category is the management group of NGO's and religious organizations who are actively involved in the development of the civil society. The third is a class of urban workers and those others who are employed in the large farms as casual labourers, or in self-employment. A section of this group is wholly dependent on wages for livelihood while others have access to small pieces of land (Nkinyangi, 1980; Gakuru, 1992).

The fourth class consists of subsistence agriculturalists and pastoralists who together comprise about 90 percent of the population. When Kenya was colonized and incorporated into the world of capitalism, much of the productive land was alienated for white settlement alongside the African reserves which received very little attention except forceful pacification and coercive rule. Consequently, the rural areas, including the former white highlands are now a mosaic of social classes and agricultural categories. These include the large-scale capitalist farmers, a stratum of rich peasants whose farming is essentially capitalist since it involves the process of

control and utilization of wage labour in commodity production. There is also a category of middle level as well as poor peasants and pastoralists and squatters.

Agricultural production, particularly for the small-scale farmers is constrained greatly by major problems including external control of prices for inputs and produce. Poor peasants own land which is hardly productive and in many cases no bigger than a homestead. There are those with large pieces of land but in the arid and semi-arid lands. Landlessness has become a major socio-economic problem in an economy that has literary failed to industrialise in order to absorb the millions who are joining the labour force as a result of the high rate of population growth. The capitalist incorporation of the pastoral regions has equally fragmented the pastoral communities starting with the alienation of good pastures followed by virtual elimination of livestock by diseases, drought and plunder (A wuondo-Odegi, 1990). In the arid areas that cover over 60% of the country, live a million nomads, about one out of twenty of the country population and nearly all are poor (World Bank, 1994).

The country is clearly divided between the rich and the poor classes, initially on the basis of race and now on socio-economic inequalities. According to the recent analysis of poverty, the percentage of the rural population living below the poverty line remained high at about 47% between 1981/2 and 1992 and nearly 30% in the urban areas. Recent reports show that these proportions are on the increase (GoK, 1997). There is also a wide regional variation in the distribution of poverty among the provinces. The prevalence was highest in Western, Rift Valley, Nyanza, Coast, Eastern and Central. Absolute poverty was found to be even higher in some of the districts such as Busia, West Pokot, Kericho, Bomet etc. There is also evidence that about half of the population is undernourished due to a diet that is low in energy intake and deficient in micronutrients and vitamins (Neumann, et al. 1992).

The situation has been worsened by the breakdown of the traditional forms of social organization such as the family, other kinship networks and community ties which provided protection to members against starvation and assistance in times of major hardships. The welfare schemes that have been developed by the government and other development organizations such as food relief and shelter for destitutes are highly inadequate alternatives.

Gender inequalities

Gender, just like social class is equally, if not the most, important basis of inequalities, as it crosses all other key categorizations like age, ethnicity, religion, social class and area of residence. The gender imbalance against women is a reflection of a complex combination of historical, socio-economic, socio-cultural, and past and present policy factors. For example, these factors lead to unequal chances for boys and girls to enter primary school in the first place, to progress through those early years, and to qualify for specific secondary categories which determine the fields of study at the university which, in turn, constitute the main determinant of the location of women on the occupational ladder. It has been found that, due to high attrition rates of female students from disadvantaged social origins, by the end of secondary school,

students of high socio-economic status and the exceptionally high achievers of the low socio-economic status are the ones who survive the selection process in a highly selective system.

The issue of inequalities and discrimination against women is one of the major problems in Kenya. Women are more vulnerable to problems of poverty and illiteracy. In the labour market, women are disadvantaged in comparison to men. For example, women have longer working days divided into work for pay and domestic chores as well as a higher rate of unemployment. According to the urban labour force survey in 1986, unemployment rate of women was 24.1 % compared with 11.7% for men. In the formal sector, women are roughly 20% of the total labour force. Although women work 25% longer than men, they earn 20% less. It is also estimated that the mean monthly income of female headed households is 37% less than of the male headed households (1992).

One of the government's key philosophies for education is the concern that every Kenyan should be reasonably educated. However, only a minority has attained such a level of formal education especially females as the Table below shows:

Table 7: Enrolment Ratios

Education Level	Enrolment (Thousands)		Ratio of Boys to Girls
	1963	1995	1995
Primary	892	5545	1.02
Secondary	30	632	1.18
University	0.571	45	2.79
Teacher Education	4	17	1.05
Technical	1	8	-
Polytechnic	-	8	3.22

Source: National Development Plan, 1997-2001

Review of desegregated enrolment data reveals greater gender disparities in educational attainment. For example, the 1989 census data showed that in the 55-59 age group the level of literacy was 57% for males and 27% for females. Although the literacy rate was much higher for the younger age groups, the overall literacy rate is very low particularly in some regions. In spite of significant gains in school enrolment, overall adult literacy in the rural areas was only 54% with female literacy at 40%.

Table 8: Literacy rates in some selected Districts in Kenya

Group 1:	29-39%	Kajiado, Elgeyo Marakwet, Kilifi, Kwale and Narok
		Baringo, South Nyanza, Busia, Kitui, Siaya, Kericho and West Pokot
		Embu, Kakamega, Nandi, Trans Nzoia, Kisumu, Bungoma, Nakuru, Kisii, Laikipia, Machakos, Uasin Gishu and Taita Taveta
Group 4:	60-74%	<u>Kirinyaga, Murang'a, Nyandarua, Nyeri and Kiambu</u>

Source: GoK and UNICEF, Children and Women in Kenya, 1992.

Education contributes to enlightenment and development in many ways. The most important way is its ability to liberate or free the learner from ignorance and the undeveloped state of mind, body and emotions. Accordingly, education becomes a capacity-building process by contributing to personal development if the educational opportunities are designed to meet the basic needs. Some of the basic learning needs which were formulated at the World Conference on Education-For- All (United Nation, 1990) that took place in Jomtien, Thailand, in March 1990, were as follows:

- i) Essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving).
- ii) Basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning. This type of basic education would therefore empower the individual to think critically and be active in search of solutions to problems.

The value of basic education may be elusive sometimes especially to those of us who are already literate and enjoy a life which is enriched by education. Fortunately, UNESCO, probably better than any other organization has provided leadership in the struggle against illiteracy, ignorance, scientific and culture stagnation. For instance, since the 2nd World Conference on Adult Education that was held in Montreal, Canada, in 1960 (the first was held in Elsimore, Denmark in 1949 and the 3rd in Tokyo, Japan in 1972), much of UNESCO's efforts and those of its Member States on promotion of adult education have been devoted to literacy. This commitment towards the elimination of illiteracy arises from the awareness of the problems associated with illiteracy. A few examples are necessary:

- Illiteracy is a flagrant denial of human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Right of 1948 gave rights of education for all.
- Illiteracy subverts free choice of work. The range of jobs open to an individual who cannot read and write are severely limited to menial labour.

- Illiteracy denies a person "equal protection under the law in contravention of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". One who is illiterate cannot even read the law accused of having broken; he/she cannot verify information in the records.
- Illiteracy encourages exploitation; for example, in trade, middlemen easily cheat illiterates (although in usual circumstances even the literate are forced to pay exploitative prices).
- Illiteracy promotes dependence. An illiterate will always rely on others in checking facts thus being forced to reveal confidential information to strangers.
- Illiteracy encourages undemocratic governments. It is an interference with dissemination and free discussion of facts, ideas, proposals and grievances. The illiterate gets most of the information from hearsay which hinders objectivity in decision-making in important personal and social situations such as electing leaders.
- Illiteracy inhibits development. Society is in motion. Old truths must be questioned and outmoded institutions dismantled. For old truths to be questioned there must be ready access to new ideas. For outmoded institutions to be dismantled, alternatives must be invented and constructed. Illiteracy restricts access to new ideas. For outmoded institutions to be dismantled, alternatives must be invented and constructed. Illiteracy restricts access to new ideas and slows down the invention of alternative institutions. It also prevents circulation of new techniques, thus in general retarding development.
- Illiteracy inhibits culture. We all know of very beautiful stories passed on to the grandchildren by the grandparents. Now that the story-telling is no longer possible, those stories must be written in books. If this is not done, all these cultural wealth, and a lot of our heritage, will disappear. Literacy is one of the main links between past, present and future.

Another major educational problem is the lack of traditional consumer knowledge and civic education in priority areas such as the following:

Contractual relations governing market transactions between buyers and sellers; citizens and the state, etc.

Technical knowledge and practical skills in relevant areas; decision-making and rational management practices.

The Way Forward

The participatory or action-research has the potential for overcoming some of the major development problems such as dependence, and passivity through mobilization of both human and material resources. The power of the participatory method in basic education has been demonstrated through many successful projects. That adult learners take the minimum time to learn reading and writing skills. For example, in Kamirithu, Kenya, women learners took only three months to be literate and none of them dropped out of the programme. Later, the literacy

programme evolved into a cultural theatre which was proscribed by the government after staging a very popular political play (Ngugi wa Mirie, 1979). Action-research is also attractive as a model for the empowerment of women focusing on community mobilization and capacity-building in both human resources and social organization.

EDUCATION AND THE GIRL-CHILD: Interventions beyond research and policy

By: Kavesta Adagala

Introduction

There are two major constraints which are impacting on the life of the girl-child and hindering her development both as a member of the community and as a person. The much cited cultural attitudes and the economic order as stipulated by the World Bank's structural adjustment programmes are working together to subjugate the girl-child. The more conservative the setting, the more the girl is constrained in her performance; the more impoverished the background, the more precarious the life of the girl-child.

After decades of affirmative action on behalf of the girl all the way from primary, through secondary to tertiary education, the cultural biases against the girl-child have been eroded and a semblance parity and equity began to show on the horizon. At the dawn of the 21st century there is no longer a homogenous culture which is biased against the girl-child and in favour of the boy-child. Rather we have regional differences, and, more than this, economic differences which affect the participation of the girl-child in education. The girl-child of better-off households cannot be placed in the same situation as the girl-child from poorer households even if they are of the same culture or are both situated in the urban or rural area. The much maligned African culture is less and less the culprit in the attitude towards the hindrance of the education and achievement of the girl-child. The economic background of the latter part of the twentieth century has had a greater impact on the participation of the girl-child in all aspects of schooling be it enrolment, daily attendance, payment of school fees, continued attendance, performance in examination and progression from one stage to the next of the education system.

With the death of the nationalist-cum-welfare state dream of free education which was the hallmark of independent Kenya, there has been a 20% drastic drop in the enrolment of children in primary school over the past decade. While the girl-child is the major victim of this change in policy, the child in the impoverished family whether boy-child or girl-child, bears the brunt of the changing economic order and the policies of the structural adjustment translated at the household level as cost-sharing. We are, therefore, compelled, as we speak of the girl-child, to also be inclusive and address the situation of the boy-child. The tremendous concern which has been shown towards the plight of the girl-child serves its optimum best when it is considered that in improving the situation of the girl-child, the society as a whole will be bettered.

As we discuss the gender balance in the education system we must recall that we cannot change one side of the gender equation and not the other. If, indeed, the girl-child's participation in education should change and increase, the boy-child also must change and develop. Gender

relations are social relations and need to be dealt with simultaneously in order for us to manage such change well and avoid crisis or upheaval in society.

The three decades after independence showed the closing of the gap in the enrolment of girls and boys in primary school. Many researchers and educationists were beginning to call for universal and compulsory primary education. The fourth decade however, has proved to be one in which many of the advances made under the benevolence of earlier decades have been eroded with overall drop for both girls and boys with about a 3% difference in favour of boys. It can be confidently said that the change in education mostly projects the combined force of affirmative action on the part of the government, and proactive attitude on the part of parents and the girls themselves. In order to raise the participation of the girl-child we need to remove those impediments and hindrances which lie in the part of achievement of education for all by the year 2020. Such hindrances are in the household, the community, in education and the government.

Long before the child reaches the formal school system, both the girl-child and the boy child are moulded by the parents, siblings, extended family and the community. It is here that the girl-child finds her role models and attitudes that determine what she will be. The tendency in this sphere is fall back on stereotypes, many of which are archaic, backward-looking and patriarchal. While the boy-child has empowerment bestowed upon him in all aspects of his life, the girl-child suffers assault and assault is disempowered at every turn of her life.

Parents and extended family members need to be made aware that all children must be brought up in an equal manner. Communities need to forge a forward-looking and future oriented culture rather than fostering a backward-looking, conservative culture oriented towards the nineteenth century. The future of gender relations depends on the reorientation of the home, the community and the culture so that both the girl-child and the boy-child are empowered.

Such a culture has examples in education where we have the girl-child being offered opportunities by parents and community to equip herself with modern skills, information and education to meet modern conditions. For instance in Kakamega, Meru and Taita-Taveta districts where land has reduced due to population growth we find that the enrolment of girls in schools equals or surpasses that of boys. This is attributable to changing economic conditions and an evolution in parental and community attitudes and governmental affirmative action. A girl-child may want to go to school, however, if the parent cannot afford, or will not let her sometimes by use of force, and if the community acquiesces, the child will be stunted. The case of early marriages among coastal and nomadic people is a case in point where parental and community attitudes make all the difference. The vulnerability of the girl-child here is immense: if early marriage, outmoded role model, and archaic attitudes prevail, then the formative years of the girl-child are frittered away one day at a time. These are the most important years of growth and development and the girl-child needs as much support and empowerment as the boy-child in order for them to forge better gender relations.

Parents and the community, each in the particularity of their culture, need to hold dialogue in order to consciously map out forward-looking strategies, attitudes, programmes for changing economic, social, cultural and political conditions. Much as the turning point of the 1960' s and independence years thrust us, culture and all, into the modern era which we wilfully and consciously embraced, so we can take advantage of the new millennium to educate parents and communities to create new opportunities for the girl-child. It is important that parents realize that both sides of the gender equation must change: that the girl-child cannot be moulded in a forward-looking manner while the boy-child lives by archaic patriarchal culture, role model, attitudes and expectations.

Parents and communities need gender education. Fortunately, at this point in history, the average parent of the pre-school and primary school child was born after independence and is likely to be forward-looking, have some exposure to global trends in gender discourse and contemporary role models. If, indeed, we want quality community health and sustainable development, we must ensure that parents and community understand the new dispensation and that the education of the girl-child is vital to quality of life not only of the girl-child and her extended family, but also for the evolution of the community. The early and positive history of Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization which had aggressive and proactive strategies for the transformation of the Kenya households through educating of mothers in improvement of their households and communities, and the affirmative action for the education of the girl-child, has already given us a precedent on the methodology and approach towards the social evolution of Kenya. Although Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization later lapsed into an anti-educated women attitude and it was surpassed by other NGOs, the impact of its early orientation is still felt today. The Forum for African Women Educationists (FA WE) has also demonstrated that collaboration with the community can make a breakthrough in the education of girls. The Samburu case where girls attend school when there is a hiatus in daily chores, that is, in the afternoons, shows that collaboration with the community is crucial in changing attitudes and tradition.

Beyond culture, attitudes and tradition, we need to respond to parents and communities as they struggle with the prevailing new economic order as it impacts upon their lives. The impact of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) of the Bretton Woods Institutions and the collapse of welfare system in Kenya which subsidized the education and health systems and programmes has ravaged the capacity of the household, of parents, of the family, and of the community to educate and sustain the health of its children especially the girl-child. Statistics showing the 20% drop in enrolment from 95% in the mid-eighties when we were nearing universal enrolment to the present 75% is alarming. Parents have demonstrated that their attitudes have transformed and evolved over the past 35 years of independence. This evolution has had government affirmative action, parental pro-activeness and the aspiration of the child. However, poverty triggered by SAPs, has eroded the gains in education to pre-1980 statistics and affected most of the education of the girl-child.

The rural poor child and the urban poor child are caught in the teeth of this change. Neighbourhoods in the peri-urban areas of Nairobi are filled with pre-school: three, four, five and six year old languish playing away their lives while their poverty-stricken parents wait to put them in standard one. Peasants and nomads find themselves constrained to retain their children at home because of the inaffordability of early childhood education and less because of tradition or cultural expectations and stereotypes. The middle class family is straining and struggling to retain their children in private and public nursery schools and university while the elite, the wealthy reap the full benefits in exclusive and expensive local schools and abroad. The statistics by the Ministry of Education reveal that poverty and not attitudes alone are responsible for keeping the child out of school especially the girl-child from the poverty stricken peri-urban, peasant and pastoralist family.

Much effort needs to be put in at the grass-root, community and household levels to empower parents to enrol and retain their children in school especially girls. The case and terminology of the west such as school "drop out" does not apply in poverty infested cases where children do not have such options. Instead, in our local situation the applicable terminology is that children actually "fall out" of school, or are "pushed out" of school by the constant demand of monies and fees that their parents cannot afford, or "pulled out" in the case of early marriage of the girl-child. The inevitable and first victim of these situations is the girl-child. The harsh economic conditions brought about by SAPs in general and cost-sharing in education in particular, force parents to sacrifice the girl-child to alleviate the poverty in the family. In research, women respondents often relate that they had to be pulled out of school to get married in order for the cattle of the bride price or the earning from being a child domestic labourer (maid) could be converted to school fees for their brothers to continue with school. Women respondents also relate how the demands of household chores stunted and stagnated their progress in school till they were forced to leave school. The situation of the middle class family clearly demonstrates that when the family/household is empowered, both the girl-child and the boy-child have equal access opportunity to education and health.

While children from better-off families have access to forward-looking and world class early childhood education in urban centres, especially in Nairobi City, children from poor rural and pastoral areas and urban slums are receiving poor early childhood education in substandard conditions with minimal facilities. While focusing on the plight of the girl-child and ensuring that the girl-child gets early childhood education, communities need to be empowered to formulate programmes for pre-school children. Provision of local infrastructure should be supplementing teaching materials with other teaching aids which enhance learning and creativity. Awareness of educating both the girl-child and the boy-child should be enhanced. Situations of poverty that force parents to relapse into backward and discriminatory practices should be eliminated.

Urban areas are often perceived to have no problems and need to be researched again with regard to early childhood education. In affluent areas, urban poverty is often hidden in pre-school

children who do not attend school being the tell-tale signs of incapacity of the parents to take care of their children's basic needs. Provision of early childhood care and education for children of domestic workers in the affluent areas is an urgent need. This can be achieved in conjunction with churches, trade unions and other community organizations, local government and the UNESCO Chair at the University of Nairobi.

Primary and basic education

The deteriorating statistics of the past decade need to be arrested and turned around for both the girl-child and the boy-child as there is only a 3% to 5% discrepancy between the enrolment of girls and boys. However in the turnaround, it must be ensured that enrolment will not be in favour of boys as it has been the case when there is shortage of resources in the family/household. While empowering supporting families and communities there must be guarantees that access opportunities will be equal for both girls and boys.

The curriculum of primary schools in the 8-4-4 system of education offers gender bias-free opportunities in skill development in the sense that there is not discrimination in the courses undertaken by girls and boys. This is a major advance which has taken deep roots in the society and in the school system over the past decade. No longer are fathers shocked by their primary school sons knitting nor their primary school daughters handling saws and hammers. A quiet gender equality revolution has been underway at the most critical age, and population group. The government shall be commended for this affirmative and forward-looking initiative. The eighties will go down as the most vibrant and optimistic years of primary education when an over 93% - 95% enrolment for girls and boys respectively coincided with a curriculum that offered equal opportunity in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and opportunities.

Specific constraints that affect the access of the girl-child to education such as domestic chores and early marriage, which mostly affect the 6-13 year old girl-child, should be removed through economic empowerment of the family/household and community so that the girl-child is no longer a victim of poverty, deconstruction and reconstruction of the patriarchal family whose structure makes the girl-child a victim, sharing of chores so that the girl-child must be educated to empowerment of family, household and community. All efforts should be made to provide a safety net for the poor pupils who are unable to enrol in school or those who fall out of school through the chasms of poverty.

The UNITWINIUNESCO Chair Programme can be a catalyst for bringing the 21st century to the girl-child. The girl-child needs to have an early exposure to the technology of the next millennium, especially information technology. In order for the nation to be industrialized by 2020, we need to have the weakest link in the technology network strengthened and this is the girl-child of poor urban, rural and pastoralists. Wherever there is infrastructure, information technology facilities should be provided especially for the girl-child, and, by extension, for the boy-child and, therefore, the school system as a whole. Mothers of such girls should be informed of the benefits of this. If this does not happen, the girl-child will be marginalized even in those

skills which are predominantly female such as secretarial and nursing professions. Gender bias in content and images in the curriculum has received fledgling criticism and attention. Images and role models in texts need much more radical overhaul in order to provide visions and skills for the future of the girl-child.

Bringing Beijing home

In Kenya, a higher number of girls enrol into primary schools as compared to boys. But girls fall out rate is higher than that of boys. For example, the National Development Plan 1989/1993 showed that, of all the girls who enrolled in Standard One in 1989, only 34% completed standard eight, compared to 48% boys (Republic of Kenya, 1989). The fall out rate for girls in secondary schools continues to be higher than that for boys. Reasons for this fall out rate include: teenage pregnancy; early marriages; lack of motivation and socio-cultural attitudes that undervalue girls education; and poverty. The girl-child's educational performance is in addition adversely affected by the common acceptance of her role as a 'mother-helper' and therefore the desperate need to fall out of school to sell her labour (as housemaid for instance) to earn a living.

Actions to be taken

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl-child in the country.
- Implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls.
- Remove educational barriers and develop programmes that enable girls to develop self-esteem.
- Promote positive images of girls and boys in the media.
- Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training.
- Ensure universal primary education (UPE) by the year 2005 and Education-For-All (EFA) by 2015.
- Eliminate discrimination in health and nutrition. Design quality health care programmes for girls and training programmes for health planners on girl's special needs.
- Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young women at work.
- Define a minimum age for child employment and ensure adequate work conditions, social security, and continuous training and education.
- Eradicate violence against girls. Pass laws to protect girls and young women against all forms of violence.
- Pass and strictly enforce laws on minimum legal age at marriage. In this regard, raise and maintain the minimum age where necessary.
- Develop and implement policies to protect the rights of girls and ensure equal opportunities for them.
- Encourage efforts to promote changes in negative attitudes and practices towards girls.

- Develop and adopt curricula to improve opportunities for girls in such areas as maths, science and technology.
- Promote an educational setting without barriers.
- Develop policies and programmes giving priority to formal and informal education for girl-children.
- Provide public information or remove discriminatory practices against girls in food allocation, nutrition and access to health services.
- Take appropriate measures including legislative and administrative, to protect the girl-child at home and outside.

Conclusion

To act as a catalyst for the evolution of gender relations, the UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair at the University of Nairobi needs to focus on the girl-child, the parent, the family/household and community and help in galvanizing the educational system into the new millennium.

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UNECA GENDER CONCERNS IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A Research Agenda for the UNESCO Chair

By: Mary Njeri Kinyanjui and Kaendi Munguti

Introduction

Gender is a socially constructed concept which addresses the unequal relationships between women and men. The gender approach to development (GAD) emerged from approaches of the 1970s and early 1980s which looked at women in/and development. The inherent shortcoming of the WID/W AD approaches was that emphasis was placed on addressing women's immediate needs and not the underlying basis of inequalities in society. Gender as an analytical concept seeks to address strategic needs of the members of a community paying attention to the inherent inequalities which tend to disadvantage many women thus making sustainable development impractical.

UNDP (United National Development Programme) defined sustainable development as the opportunity to have choices in various spheres of life. Choices in the development process mean that women and men can use the opportunities available to them to ensure progress (development). The World Commission for Environment and Development defined sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.

Our interest in gender concerns in sustainable development include articulating gender concerns in communities' economic, social, cultural and political decision making. Gender concerns are moulded and configured on relations between men and women. The subsequent product is a human social order whose basic tenets are masculinity and femininity (Scott, 1990). In our communities, femininity and masculinity are described in relation to expected behaviour and characteristics of a given gender. In Swahili, for example gender is referred to as 'Jinisia'. 'Jinisia ya kiume' describes the behaviour and characteristics of the male gender while, 'jinisia ya uke' defines behaviour and characteristics pertaining to the female gender.

Past researchers have shown that 'jinisia' has been key in directing and structuring communities' development processes. Since the work of Boserup (1970) which illustrated the disadvantaged position of women in developed economies, several other works corroborating this evidence have emerged. They include the works of Adagala, 1986; Ritter and Robicheau, 1986; McCormick 1988, 1991, 1992; Obura, 1991; Njiro, 1992; Kithinji, 1992; Ngau and Keino, 1992; Nzomo, 1992; Ongile, 1993; and Nasimiyu, 1993. Fundamental concerns revealed in these works include: invisibility of women, in all spheres of the economy; subordination/unequal relations; separation of female and male production spaces.

This chapter argues that for development to be sustainable, gender issues have to be taken into consideration. This, of necessity, means that women's participation in the various spheres of

society is important if we are to achieve sustainable development. The deliberate inclusion of women in the development process is important as it is a well-known fact that many women do not control productive resources such as land while others do not have access to education and credit.

Arguably sustainable community development is contingent upon these gender concerns. Sustainable development must meet the needs of both female and male gender to ensure visibility and equity of both genders. This is realisable through a development process imbued with an ideology that ensures participation, ownership and distribution of resources between women and men.

In order for these to be achieved, we need relevant information on communities' constructions of 'jinisia' and its impact on sustainable development. We also need to understand the learning processes of becoming male and female, review symbols, images, rituals and mimes that are used in imparting knowledge or in gendering behaviour and characteristics. Take for example the send off a girl is given by her parents during her wedding. Often the girl's parents send her off with the following: bed, cooking pot, cooking stick, 'kiondo' and 'Panga'

What does this send off and the symbols involve? Is the send off empowering or disempowering? Arguably, the symbols define her role as mother, wife and worker.

Bed	signifies sexual and reproductive roles
Kiondo and panga	tools of agrarian production
Cooking pot and cooking stick	symbols for caring and nurturing

We also need to understand how communities reward men and women and in what areas they are expected to excel. How do these reward systems and areas of excellence intervene, influence or distort the distribution of surplus or gain from the community development process? There is need to learn from success stories. For example, in a study of vehicle repairers in Ziwani, Nairobi and Kigandaini in Thika, we observed women who have broken barriers, and entered vehicle repair industry. We need to understand how/why they have succeeded in this trade. Ciru, is learning wiring in Ziwani, she is the only female but she is managing. One of her fighting tools is a message on her overall: 'public enemy'.

- Why has she printed this message?
- Who is being addressed?
- What reactions/responses is it supposed to elicit?
- What networks does she use in obtaining information and making transactions?

Finally, we shall need to make communities appreciate gender concerns as their own. A large number of critics have argued that gender concerns are externally generated and locally perpetuated by elite women. This will involve deconstructing gendered typologies using case studies and local evidence of gender concerns.

Education and health are used as case studies for setting the research agenda for the UNESCO Chair. This is because education and health are important aspects for human resource development. In order to carry out this research, we need to state research problems which strike a balance between the need for knowledge and the experiential needs of the community. We also need to restructure and reorient our research assumptions by combining communities' experiences, philosophies and ideologies with existing bodies of knowledge. We need to diversify our sources of knowledge by looking for meanings in symbols, speech, rituals, expressions and images.

In education, we propose a study on gender relations in learners' school-seeking behaviour. Learners' school-seeking behaviour is reflected in progression, retention and performance in primary, secondary schools and even tertiary levels of education. Learners' school-seeking behaviour is contingent upon a variety of factors including the learners' school entry characteristics, physical and cognitive development, family/household characteristics, culture, health status and personal expectations. Arguably, the impact of these factors on learners' school-seeking behaviour is not necessarily a direct cause effect relationship. Rather, it is one where factors may act in combination to determine the extent to which a learner progresses, performs or is retained in the schooling cycle. There is also a likelihood that the intensity of impact varies at different levels of the education cycle as well as between male and female learners.

Education observers, researchers and workers report that girls' attrition rates are not only higher than those of boys both at primary and secondary level in Kenya but girls also perform less well. This phenomenon is attributed to several factors including, negative attitude towards educated women, early marriages, child labour, family economic problems, parental attitudes, gender division of labour in households, and differentials in expected gains from investing in girl's and boy's education. Other factors comprise the predominance of male teachers in schools and textbook content and images.

While not undervaluing this evidence on girls' attrition rates and performance in the Kenyan education system, there is not enough ground to categorically suggest and conclude that the causes advanced are gender specific. Valid as these factors may sound; their gender specificity in impacting on learners' schooling behaviour as well as extent is still somewhat unclear. Besides, their locality or community specificity weakens the extent to which generalisations can be made in a multi-ethnic society with varied social organisations. Further, the lack of integration of these causes to the overall behavioural processes of learners' personality formation, development and maturity weakens their application in logical intervention processes. Questions arise from the evidence provided in some of these factors. For example, would boys from poor families be retained in school because they are boys while girls from similar positions drop out? Further, would girls taught by a predominantly female staff perform better than ones taught by a predominantly male staff? Several other questions could be raised with regard to all the other stipulated causes.

It is argued here that workable intervention policies are only feasible if they are integrated within the overall 'behavioural process of learners' personality formation and development. Interventions that do not assume that the school system is par excellence but ones that aim at integrating the parent into the learning process as well as making the school environmentally and culturally-friendly. For these to be achieved, the degree of gender specificity of these underlying causes needs to be re-validated within a behavioural context.

It is in the light of these contextual observations that the problem of this study is conceived. That gender specific intervention programmes perceived or structured outside the overall process of learners' school-seeking behaviour will not ameliorate the gender imbalances. For example, how can we keep a girl in school who feels that she is mature enough to start a family or one whose cultural practices have initiated and trained her to serve different roles rather than those being defined in school. In other words, how do we minimize conflicts and dissonance created by the school, the social cultural environment and household characteristics? For reasonable conclusions to be drawn, we need to delve deeper into the processes and institutions involved in the formation and development of personality. These are: household characteristics, health status, cultural factors and personal expectations.

Gender specificity of factors impacting on differentials in attrition rates, performance and progression from one grade to another between boys and girls in Kenyan schools is more often than not likely to be visible in an analysis of institutions and processes that shape or determine learners' school-seeking behaviour. Specifically, the study will involve analysis of learners' school entry characteristics, physical and cognitive development, family and household characteristics, cultural factors and images, health status and personal expectations.

Analysis of this kind is different from allusions that the child drops out of school because she or he is being taught by a male or female teacher or reading text books with gender stereotyped images. These allusions assume that the girl is impervious to the processes of social cultural environment, biological and physical changes as well as cognitive development taking place in her. All of which determine her general behavioural practices of which school-seeking behaviour is a part of. Parents and teachers, key actors in the education processes are inadvertently vindicated in the analysis. It is common knowledge for example, that a significant proportion of parents in rural areas in most parts of Kenya are themselves illiterate yet they enrol their children in Standard One. It defeats logic that these same parents cease to be supportive of their child as she progresses in the school cycle. Furthermore, there is evidence that there are girls who progress and are retained in the school cycle, yet they are taught by male teachers and have read gender stereotyped textbooks. The female learner is depicted like a hollow pipe or a black box unresponsive to the schooling process - a socialisation process with anticipated behavioural changes.

This study, therefore, argues that the learners' school-seeking behaviour moulded over time determines their progression, retention and performance in primary and secondary schools in

Kenya. This learner's school seeking behaviour is first determined by the learner's school entry characteristics and is subsequently shaped by physical and cognitive development, family household characteristics, health status, cultural factors as well as personal expectations from the schooling system.

However, the gender specificity of these factors can only be determined if the analysis is learner-centred. That is, differential impact on male and female learners is mirrored in school entry characteristics, physical and cognitive development, health status, environmental impact, family/household characteristics, cultural factors and personal expectations. This study, therefore, seeks to identify and analyse gender-specific differences in learners' school entry characteristics, physical and cognitive development, health status, environmental impact, family and cultural factors, and personal expectations. These gender-specific differences will also be analysed in terms of school types and regions, rural, urban and intra-urban locations.

- Do learners' school entry characteristics differ by gender
- Does the physical and cognitive development of learners in Kenyan secondary schools differ by gender?
- Do family/household factors impact on learners differ by gender?
- Do cultural factors and images impact on learners differ by gender?
- Do personal expectations or anticipated gains from schooling differ by gender?
- Are there differences in learner's health status on the basis of gender?

This section will involve an examination of the parents' preparedness for the learner to join a new school, learner's pre-school attendance, personal characteristics of age, weight, and height as well as health factors such as sight, hearing abilities and anxiety levels. It is assumed that the learners' entry characteristics into the new school environment will have a bearing on their progression and performance in school. Starting school is by nature very stressful. It involves waking up early, changing eating habits and for some walking long distances. It also involves interacting with strangers without parental supervision for the first time. This change, most often than not, will influence learners' liking or dislike for the school and might later affect their ability to stay on or perform.

Thus, a child who is not adequately prepared through counselling or supply of resources may not cope with the new environment and may not be interested in learning. Similarly, an unhealthy child with, for example anaemia, underweight, stunted in growth or malnourished will not cope with the new stressful environment involving travelling to school every day and waking up early. Likewise, a child with undetected hearing or sight disabilities may find the classroom environment an uncomfortable place to be in. Such a child may turn out to be a slow learner not because of her or his mental capacities but because of these physical and nutritional handicaps. Such children may drop out early or persist in school due to parental pressure or peer influence but eventually perform poorly.

Gender differences are anticipated because in patriarchal communities, a male child is more valued than a female one. Hence, boys with problems are unlikely to go on undetected until school-going age. Parental expectations from investing in the boy child may also contribute to gender disparities in learner preparedness for school entry. If gender differences in these characteristics are detected at the point of entry, they could be ameliorated early enough to control for attrition, progression, and performance later in the school cycle.

The specific objectives of study in this section are:

- Do parents prepare female and male learners differently in terms of counselling and resources allocation before joining primary school for the first time?
- Do learners' personal characteristics of age, weight, height at the point of entry differ by gender?
- Does learners' health status differ by gender at the point of entry?
- Does pre-school attendance differ by gender?

Objectives

The specific objectives of study in this section are:

- To identify gender differences in learners' preparedness in terms of counselling and resources before joining primary school for the first time.
- To determine gender differences in learners' characteristics of age, weight and height at the point of entry.
- To identify gender differences in learners' health status at the point of entry.
- To examine gender differences in preschool attendance.
- To examine regional, rural and urban, and intra-urban locations and variations in learners' preparedness for school entry.

Hypotheses

- Learners' preparedness in terms of resources and counselling at the point of entry in school vary significantly by gender.
- There are significant gender differences in learners' age, weight and health at the point of school entry.
- There are significant gender differences in learners' health status at the point of school entry.
- There are significant gender differences in pre-school attendance.

There are significant regional, rural, urban and intra-urban variations in learners' preparedness for school entry, personal characteristics, health status and pre-school attendance.

Family/household characteristics and learners' school-seeking behaviour

In this section an investigation will be carried out on the effect of family/household characteristics-size, composition, income and parental occupation of the learners' school-seeking behaviour. The analysis will also involve an examination of the impact of parental allocation of time and resources to learners by gender. The influence of social and knowledge distance created between the child and the parent as the former progresses in school and the impact of parental career gender stereotypes' on the learners will also be examined.

Family and household characteristics are not only crucial in moulding a child's general behaviour but are also relevant in shaping the child's school-seeking behaviour. Household size, income, occupation, level of education, female and male-headed households, participation in a child-learning activities, allocation of time and resources in a child in learning activities, and parental expectations from investing in the child's education have a bearing on school-seeking behaviour. It is assumed here that the effect of these household characteristics on learner's school-seeking behaviour is likely to vary by gender and region. Further, variables such as parental income, occupation and level of education will impact on the children differently depending on which parent possesses these characteristics.

Although an education act exists, there is very little evidence of its implementation to ensure that all children are enrolled in school. In spite of this, every year, parents enrol children in primary schools. To some extent, parents enrol children in school regardless of their occupation, levels of education, household composition or geographical location. The issue therefore is: what drives these parents to enrol their children in schools? Is it because others are doing it or because of perceived benefits to the child from the school or due to the need to get rid of young ones from home into another environment where someone else will take care of them before they are old enough to fend for themselves or acquire their social cultural roles? In other words, are these enrolments opportunistic or blind conformity to perceived social norms or compliance to government pressure as in the case of pastoralist communities.

While the parents make this initial move, their inability to sustain this initiative needs investigation. For example, is the inability to sustain these initiatives a result of the social and knowledge distance created between the learner and his/her parents with progression in school. Do parents feel alienated from their children who now speak English and have acquired new skills which they do not have? If schooling creates such a social and knowledge distance, how do parents cope with it? For instance, how would a parent from a slum locality and living in a carton box or mud house react to a situation where an enthusiastic child comes home and says papa or mama this house we are living in is not a house? We learnt in school that, a house is made of corrugated iron roof, bricks or timber and has a door and windows. Similarly, how would a single parent react to a child who after a lesson on the family reports to the parent that a family should have a father and mother? Should a parent in both instances say that the teacher is wrong, then the child is likely to loose faith in the teacher or the book with the said pictures. The parents

reaction in these cases may have a bearing on the child's future school-seeking behaviour. Do boys and girls bring such learning experiences at home and how do parents react? Further, do parents respond in the same manner to the children's new knowledge regardless of gender?

In communities where premium is placed on the boys and not girls, it is expected that allocation of time and resources will be biased in favour of the boy? In this case, an investigation will be carried out on whether boys are allocated more time to study, do homework or relax after school than girls. This analysis will also involve a determination of resource allocation as a proportion of family income between boys and girls.

Parental career gender stereotypes may also have a bearing on a learner's school-seeking behaviour. This could apply in cases where parents transfer their gender career stereotypes to the children thereby affecting their learning-seeking behaviour. For example, parents who already have gender stereotyped career positions may not put the same emphasis on performance for boy and girl learners. Thus, a parent who believes that only men should become medical doctors and girls secretaries may encourage the former to pursue science subjects while encouraging the latter to study hard in languages, literature and other art subjects. In addition, female and male future achievements and roles are determined in households. Most often girls are not expected to be high achievers, and their roles are confined to household activities of cleaning, cooking and taking care of young children and households. Their success and achievement is also determined and regulated by their relationship with men. It is first determined by fathers, or brothers and when married, by their husbands. This being the case, the girl may not be encouraged to work hard in school and excel like a boy. Because, after all, her future role and success is mirrored in being a mother and home maker. These roles do not necessarily require high levels of education and skills.

- Why do parents enrol children in schools and who makes the decision to enrol them?
- What are the parental expectations in enrolling children in schools and are there gender differences in the preferences in the enrolment and expectations of gains to the children from the schools?
- How do parents cope with the increased social/knowledge distance created between them and their children with the latter's progression in school?
- How do parents allocate resources to learners and what factors affect the allocation and are there gender differences in the resource allocation?
- Do parents possess gender career stereotypes and do they transfer these stereotypes to their children?

To determine the parents' reasons for enrolling children in schools and also examine the parent responsible for decision-making.

To determine parental expectations from investing in a child's education as well as determine the gender preferences in enrolment and expectations. To examine the parents' ability to cope with

the increased social/knowledge distance between them and their school-going children and whether it is easier for the decision-maker to cope with the increasing social/knowledge distance.

- To examine parental allocation of resources to learners and the underlying factors.
- To determine parents' gender career stereotypes and examine the extent to which they transfer these stereotypes to their children.
- There are significant variations in the factors that make parents enrol children in schools and these reasons vary by gender.
- Parental expectations from investing in children's education vary by gender and the family social economic status.
- There are significant variations in parents' ability to cope with the increased social/knowledge distance between them and their children and this social/knowledge distance significantly by gender.
- There are significant variations in parents' resource allocation to learners by gender.
- There are significant variations in parental gender career stereotypes and there is significant variation by gender on the way parents transfer these career gender stereotypes to the children.

Writings abound on the effects of cultural factors on girls' education. Notable issues raised often dwell on cultural gender stereotypes, division of labour, and early marriages. The specificity of these factors in impacting on girls' and boys' school-seeking behaviour is still somewhat unclear. The collision between culture and education is in itself a paradox because education is a tool of cultural transmission from one generation to another. In essence, it would be interesting to know the type of cultural aspects transmitted by the education system in Kenya. The presentation of culture as being anti-change raises significant questions especially with regard to the universality of principles and values acclaimed in these cultures. The extent to which Kenyan cultures are undynamic vis-a-vis other cultures despite the acculturation processes that have taken place in Kenyan communities through the colonialism and modernisation processes of the 60s and 70s are to be contended with. Furthermore, do these forces or individuals that use these cultural practices for their own gain at the expense of others and more so use them to the disadvantage of the female learner, for example, do Kenyan community cultures acclaim the same principles and universal values regarding humanity? Moreover, education is essentially a tool of transmitting culture from one generation to the next. This being the case then, what type of culture do schools transmit?

While not wishing to dwell on culture and change in its totality, the specificity of cultural attributes impacting on girls' and boys' school-seeking behaviour has yet to be discerned. What are the cultural attributes regarding girls that conflict with their learning process? Where and when do they conflict? Are there no cultural practices for nurturing talent that could be incorporated into the school system? If such cultural practices exist, are they only applied to boys?

Before a girl child is married off, there are observable cultural attributes that tell or signify that she has come of age. Would for example, a girl who is stunted in growth or slow to mature be married off because it is culturally acceptable? In order for this to happen, she must have exhibited an observable behaviour in the cultural perspective to tell that she is now ready for marriage. If this is the case then we need to document and understand these signals and investigate the extent to which they conflict with the school system.

There is therefore a need to investigate issues related to coming of age such as initiation rites or rites of passage. Initiation into adulthood in most Kenyan communities signifies that the individual can now take up adult responsibilities. It also means abandonment of all child activities such as group play and also differentiation of the initiated from non initiated ones. Ideally, the culturally acquired sense of responsibility and accountability through initiation could improve on learners' school-seeking behaviour especially with regard to discipline and performance. The converse could also be true especially in a school system where a learner is always perceived as a child until graduation. It could also generate conflict in personality formation in a situation where a learner is expected to play an adult role outside the school environment and behave like a child in the school environment. The issue therefore is: how does a child play his adult role outside school while the school perceives him as immature? What mode of discipline should be used if for example he/she is late for school? Should an initiated learner be punished in the same manner as the uninitiated ones? Can a school appoint uninitiated learner in the midst of initiated ones to be a class prefect, or school captain? What about when an initiated learner performs poorly vis-a-vis the uninitiated ones?

The foregoing discussion reveals that the coming of age rites may force a learner to live in two different worlds. At one point he/she is expected to behave like an adult while at the other he is expected to behave like a child. The individual's ability or inability to integrate these two worlds will have a significant bearing on school-seeking behaviour. It is also argued that girls are less unlikely to integrate these two worlds in their personality formation and will therefore drop out of school or perform more poorly than boys. Another issue worth investigating is the nature of learners' school-seeking behaviour in communities where rites of passage are not dramatised or are non-existent.

In agrarian economies, a marked gender division of labour exists. Male roles are male roles and female ones are exclusively female. Perhaps, the impact of this gender division of labour on a learners' school-seeking behaviour has nothing to do with mere performance of these jobs but rather on the time spent on the jobs, job description specificity, location and expected job performance, the challenges and thought processes provoked by the type of job. For instance, a male child's job may involve grazing while a girl's job may involve taking care of a younger sibling. The place to graze the animals is likely to be away from the homestead, may involve walking and while the animals are grazing the boy has time to do his own things as well as exchange ideas with friends. The girl's job confines her to the house and there is no specificity in the time limit involved in the job performance. The girl may not have time in between to rest and

do her own things. Child-caring in itself is stressful and causes a lot of anxiety. Besides, this particular type of job is usually combined with other household activities.

The likely impact of such gender division of labour on learning-seeking behaviour may be in relation to the fact that a boy-child is exposed earlier than the girl to an environment outside the homestead. He is likely to have interacted with others while grazing and this in turn helps to cultivate independence and decision-making skills. The girl confined at the homestead is unlikely to have had similar experiences like those of the boy. Subsequently, her job roles are incongruent with the school experience. That is, the mental training in her job roles including patience, tenacity and ability to act in crisis situations are not encouraged in the school system.

The importance of lineage and family reproduction over generation is an important consideration in most Kenyan communities. It is the boys who propagate the family tree and not girls. Girls marry and leave the homestead. The issue, therefore, is whether families are culturally obliged to reinforce and encourage boys' education because they will perpetuate the family line. Does the girl feel an outsider and is she denied similar attention such as that of the boy because she is not part of that family? Are parents likely to feel the same if the boy-child performs more poorly than the girl? What measures do they adopt in case such differences occur.

The specific research questions are:

- How do learners respond to cultural perspectives of coming of age (initiation rites/passage rites) and do boys respond differently from girls to these rites?
- Do learners from communities with no dramatic rites of passage exhibit different school-seeking behaviours from communities with such practices?
- Does the gender division of labour impact differently on girl and boy learners?
- Does lineage and family reproduction impact on learners' school-seeking behaviour on the basis of gender. Objectives:
 - To examine whether learners respond differently to cultural perspectives of coming of age (initiation rites/passage rites) by gender.
 - To determine the extent to which the gender division of labour impacts differently on learners' school-seeking behaviour by gender
 - To analyse the extent to which lineage and family reproduction, over generations impact on learners' school-seeking behaviour.

Health status and learner's school-seeking behaviours

There is evidence that suggests the existence of gender variations in health status in adult population. The female gender is said to exhibit poor health status than the male gender while the converse is true in early childhood. Although these observations have been made with regard to the adult population, and early childhood, their presence in the young population cannot be ruled out and the extent to which such variations in health status could impact on learners' school-seeking behaviour should not be assumed. The health status of the school-going age population

has not however been given significant consideration. Perhaps, boys stay on in school and perform better because they are healthier than their female counterparts.

For analytical purpose, gender variations in learners' health status will be examined in weight, height as well as in disparities in haemoglobin levels, sight, speech and hearing abilities. The analysis will also involve an investigation of gender disparities in medical history in terms of number of visits to the doctor, type of complaints and duration of hospitalisation within the past year. Further, comparisons of stress levels and anxiety between boys and girls especially during examinations will also be examined. Variations in the action taken by parents when a child is sick will also be examined. This is because parents are likely to respond differently when a boy child is sick than when a girl child is sick.

Research questions

- Are there variations in weight and height between boys and girls in Kenyan primary and secondary schools?
- Are there gender disparities in haemoglobin levels, sight, speech, and hearing abilities?
- Are there gender disparities in boys' and girls' medical history?
- Do actions taken in the case of a reported illness vary by gender?
- Do stress and anxiety levels of boys and girls vary?

Objectives

- To examine variations in weight and height between boys and girls in Kenyan primary and secondary schools.
- To analyse gender disparities in haemoglobin levels, sight, speech, and hearing abilities.
- To analyse gender disparities in boys' and girls' medical history.
- To examine variations of actions taken in the case of a reported illness by gender.
- To examine variations of stress and anxiety levels of boys and girls in Kenyan primary and secondary schools.

Hypotheses

- There are significant variations in weight and height between boys and girls.
- There are significant gender disparities in haemoglobin levels, sight, speech, and hearing abilities
- Gender disparities in boys' and girls' medical history are significant.
- Significant variations of actions taken in the case of a reported illness by gender exist.
- Stress and anxiety levels of boys and girls in Kenyan primary and secondary schools vary significantly.

Personal expectations and learners' school-seeking behaviour

Learners' expected gains from the schooling processes are likely to have a bearing on their school-seeking behaviour. It is argued that learners who are aware of the returns to schooling and have high expectations are likely to progress, remain in school as well as perform well. These expectations are contingent upon environmental factors and likely to differ by gender. This analysis involves an examination of what learners perceive themselves to be after schools and the forces that underlie these perceptions. The underlying factors that will be investigated will include: sources of the learners' school-seeking behaviour, the neighbourhood effect, awareness of successful role models, and learners' levels of awareness of career gender stereotypes.

The specific research questions are:

- What are the learners' perceptions of returns to schooling and do these perceptions differ by gender?
- What factors underlie these perceptions?
- What are the sources of school-seeking behaviour?
- Does the neighbourhood effect influence learners' perceptions of returns to schooling?
- Does the neighbourhood effect differ by gender, family/household characteristics and location?
- Does awareness of role models influence learners' perceptions of expected gains?
- Do learners' level of awareness of career gender stereotypes influence their perceptions of returns to schooling and does it vary by gender, family/household characteristics and location?

Objectives

- To examine learners' perceptions of returns to schooling and to determine their variation by gender.
- To determine the factors underlying these perceptions.
- To determine the sources of school-seeking behaviour and the extent to which they differ by gender.
- To analyse the neighbourhood effect on learners' perceptions of returns to schooling and the extent to which the neighbourhood effect differs by gender, family/household characteristics and location.
- To investigate the learners' awareness of role models on learners' perceptions of expected gains and the extent to which this awareness differs by gender.
- To investigate learners' level of awareness of career gender stereotypes and the effect of these stereotypes on perceptions of returns to schooling.
- To determine the extent to which career gender stereotypes vary by gender, family/household characteristics and location.
- Hypotheses
- The neighbourhood effect on learners' perceptions of returns to schooling varies significantly by gender, family/household characteristics and location.

- Learners' awareness of role models differs significantly by gender.
- There are significant differences in learners' level of awareness of career gender stereotypes and the effect of these stereotypes on perceptions of returns to schooling differs significantly by gender.
- Learners' career gender stereotypes vary significantly by gender, family/household characteristics and location.

Methodology

Studies on learners' school-seeking behaviours have significant methodological problems. Dropouts often relocate. They may marry outside their home village or seek employment in other rural areas or in towns. Most often than not schools do not keep records on dropouts. Analysis of performance is usually carried out after an examination when a learner has already moved to another class, repeated or even dropped out.

In this analysis we assume that every learner enrolled in class one has a potential to complete school if they are adequately prepared for school entry, are healthy, have supportive household and cultural environments, and are aware of what to expect from the schooling process.

In order to examine gender specific differences in the above factors, the research will use a variety of data collection methodologies and sources. Except for the research questions on health status where medical examinations and observations will be carried out on the respondents, a combination of survey research and ethnographic data collection techniques will be used for the other research questions. Data will be obtained from secondary sources mainly official statistics and data from schools. Interviews will also be carried out with key informants who will provide local historical overviews of gender school-seeking behaviour. Such key informants may include retired school heads, teachers and education officers, school board and committee members. These groups of people have first-hand experience in Kenya's changing education system, first, as students and then as actors in the changing education system. Further, detailed studies of female and male learners and households will be carried. Learners to be interviewed will be selected from Standard One, Four and Seven, Form One and Three.

Conclusion

Health research should combine scientific medical research of disease control and drugs development with social and cultural aspects of disease and health-seeking behaviour. It should be directed towards the understanding of health and health-seeking behaviours of the Kenyan population. For example, are there differences in actions taken at the household when a female or male member of household falls sick? This calls for an analysis of morbidity and mortality by gender. Further, in the case of drugs for fertility control a combination of scientific and social cultural aspects of health-seeking behaviours could develop a contraceptive that could be used in split households, or one that could be used by women engaged in heavy manual work. Research could also be directed to the development of effective but simple technologies that can be used to detect diseases such as cancer, diabetes, malaria, eye diseases and hearing impairment or even

pregnancies at the filter or rural health centres. There is also need for policy research on a viable national health insurance scheme. Existing employee health schemes offered by employers could also be reviewed to see how they fit in within the demands of the SAPs era.

Health research could also target the defeminisation of health care, and encourage men to take more active roles in parenting and reproductive roles and sexual behaviour. It should also consider possibilities of creating a health institution network that is gender-sensitive specifically addressing issues of locals and grading of health institutions. In the issue of filter clinics in health care delivery, for example, what should be the composition of health care personnel running such clinics?

Examinations could also be carried out to investigate whether there is a likelihood that fewer women, than men survive common diseases or whether health institutions treat more men than women. Does the hierarchical grading of hospitals enhance accessibility to health care for both men and women? Are more women treated at the lower grade hospitals than men? Are there gender differentials in seeking treatment in private hospitals? Other issues that could be investigated relate to occupational health by gender and availability of treatment for illnesses related to the type of job.

WOMEN, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Enos H.N. Njeru

Introduction

In this preparatory phase of the establishment and regularization process regarding the UNESCO Chair on "Women, Community Health and Sustainable Development" to be housed in the Department of Sociology, it was deemed necessary to hold a multi-disciplinary Strategic Planning Workshop to deliberate on the modalities of expediency in the management of the Chair in question. These brief notes are a response to this need, tailored specifically to addressing the theme 'Women, Culture and Education ', as an integral component of the basic issues around which the activities of the Chair revolve and evolve. This paper examines in broad outline, the role of culture and education against the opportunities and involvement of women in health-seeking behaviour and community health promotion within an overall context of sustainable development.

Definition and application

Culture is defined simply as all human behaviour that is not biologically determined, thus acquired through education or socialization. Culture, as such, refers to all human behaviours that is learnt, shared and socially transmitted through observation, imitation and instruction by other members of society. Culture thus entails an educational process that is both formal and informal. It broadly encompasses a process of social influence following socially constructed rules of the game. The rules in question are the societal norms, values and beliefs.

These rules apply at both the general level of human behaviour in society and also at the individual or specific societal level. At such specific societal levels, the definition of culture is further qualified to bear reference to the traditional ways of doing things in a particular society .In this sense the tradition refers to a patterned, repetitive and fairly predictable behavioural process over a notably reasonable time period that is long enough to produce behavioural stereotypes and socio-cultural identities. The time factor is an essential factor in the adequacy of this definition. The society as an entity, on the other hand, is seen as a group of people sharing a common culture and sense of identity. Both culture and identity develop as functions of the socialization process and in effect the educational process through which new knowledge is imparted to the members of society who include women and youth.

In the context of this presentation, education at both informal and formal levels is viewed as a critical factor in either facilitating or handicapping women's participation in distribution, utilization and management of resources at the disposal of a community (UNICEF & OOK 1992). In the following sections of this paper, the interplay between culture and education is presented within a gender perspective, i.e. showing the structure, considerations and differential

application of societal rules in which women are either marginalized or incorporated in roles and behaviour that add to their relative deprivation and exploitation by the male counterparts. This underdog status of the women in community issues and resource use and management has negative implications for their social, psychological and physical well-being and overall health status either as consequences of the resultant economic deprivation or a combination of the physical and material outcomes of the unbalanced social exchange relations between the male and female members of the communities.

The gender considerations

The gender relations framework is a useful conceptual approach to the structural inequalities that characterize the relationship between men and women in their day to day activities and expressions. Rather than dwelling purely on the male/female sexual differences, the gender relations approach here refers to the substantive issues arising from the structurally perceived and socially constructed role expectations and differences in diverse social settings (Njeru, 1995). It is such social structural linkages that explain the African women's underprivileged status and relative deprivation in various sectors of livelihood as compared to their male counterparts. Specific contexts are presented below, as exemplification of various forms of the interplay between culture, education and development perspectives in which the women's rights are either abused or unrecognized and inadequately incorporated, quite often with clear cultural sanctions that justify such unequal situations.

Kinship dynamics

The kinship principles in many African societies take the form of unilineal descent systems that are patrilineal, resulting in patriarchal authority structures, hence male dominance and male chauvinism. Women are thus junior partners in decision-making.

House hold decision making

The cultural sanctions allow male dominance in which the woman is junior partner.

Violence against women

This includes all gender-biased violence that results or is likely to result in physical, psychological and other forms of harm or suffering to women at the family, community or national levels (Wangoi Njau and Njeru, 1997). Specific cases of such violence against women include: forced child marriage of girls; female circumcision; wife inheritance; wife beating or

domestic violence against women, rape and other forms of sexual abuse; forced prostitution; and religious discrimination against women.

Institution of single motherhood

- Resulting from social and cultural forces of unequal exchange between men and women.
- Divorce, with women on the receiving end -marital pregnancies.
- School drop-outs.

Poverty conditions

- Inadequate educational opportunities given to girls due to preference for boys doing better, leading to poorer income generation opportunities for girls and women.
- Political participation
- Women are less-privileged.
- Women often accept inferior political privileges with some women saying that "women should not eye the seats of their fathers".
- Policy dimensions
- Legal statutes, e.g. inheritance and succession
- Violence against women.
- Divorce.

Access to credit

- Women's access is limited
- Women may lack collateral.
- Women may be required to have men as guarantors or have men's authority to use family assets as collateral to secure credit.

Income-generating

Many women are in menial jobs and others that lack prestige, e.g. commercial sex work or prostitution.

Many women are in the informal small-scale sector where credit facilities are more difficult to procure, while the economic risks are higher, with poor potential for expansion.

Start-up capital is also difficult to access for the women entrepreneurs venturing into business.

Formal Education

There are many cultural and social hurdles for girls and women to overcome, mainly due to gender biases, with girls and women being under-represented in educational institutions.

Recommendations

Empowerment of both men and women and promoting participatory involvement through:

- Equal opportunity in educational development.
- Legal reforms to improve on the status of women.
- Participatory approaches to encourage men and women to take up joint ventures
- Awareness raising and advocacy efforts to promote gender equality among men and women.
- Political reforms that promote women's participation.
- Agricultural reforms, property relations and division of labour that allows women's equal participation in utilization and management of available resources.
- Reduction of all forms of violence against women.
- Promotion of women's participation in income generating activities, e.g. through commercial enterprise in small scale and medium-sized business or larger enterprises.
- Involvement of women representatives in policy formulation and implementation.
- Promotion of gender equalities and participation in development matters on health, economy, politics and education at all the levels: household, community and national.
- Promotion of equal property ownership rights to be enshrined in legal statutes.
- Promotion of abandonment of cultural practices that are harmful to women's health and participation development

WOMEN AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

Benjamin M. Nganda.

Introduction

The health of populations and individuals is inextricably bound up with development. Development itself, in the most general meaning, entails change and is often perceived to result in alterations of peoples' living environment for the better. In the past, commentators on development (particularly economists) only focused on quantifiable aspects of development such as increases in per capita incomes or the Gross National Product (GNP). Today, however, development is generally recognised to be a complex process that improves the quality of all aspects of human life _ Besides, it is now largely acknowledged that the health status of the population in any particular place or country influences and itself is influenced by development. It can promote or retard development. However, it is largely difficult to provide an unambiguous generalisation between economic development and the health status of a population. But the development process affects individuals and groups (of populations) differently, the commonly used example being the rich and the poor. Less discussed are the differential impacts of development on men and women. Worse still, until recently, attention to women's health and their contribution to community health has commonly focused on the reproductive process and organs, on the child-bearing period, and so on. Little attention has gone into understanding how women can and do influence developments in community health.

Women and community health

In order to place women in context in relation to community health we need to understand what is meant by community health so as to understand how women can be affected by developments thereof. Community health can be defined in three ways, depending on the perception of community participation adopted.

In the medical approach, health is generally perceived as the absence of disease, and is achieved largely through medical interventions based on modern science and technology. Under this community participation is a means by which the medical professionals can increase the efficiency of the health services they deliver. For example, lay persons may be used to supply contraceptives to fellow members (with guidance from the professionals); local Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs), local leaders, etc., may be used to reach immunisation targets. The role of the community in approach is largely passive because the health programmes are planned and implemented within vertical, top-down structures, largely manned by health professionals.

The second perception (of community participation) is given by what is known as the health planning approach, which is extensively used in tackling primary health care (PHC). It is based on the view that health is the outcome of appropriate health services

delivery strategies. The view recognises the scarcity and the inequitable distribution of health resources. Consequently, the health sector must be restructured to provide the most benefits to the greatest number of people. The approach incorporates both ends and means of objective participation: locals must participate in activities that affect their health if they are to be committed.

The third approach, community development approach, believes that health improvements are not solely dependent upon direct health sector activities --- they can only be achieved through better living conditions. This approach therefore stresses that programmes for community participation must start with awareness creation and that project activities should be developed in response to felt needs and self-help. The approach is generally perceived as a bottom-up approach that takes participation as a long-term process in which community confidence, solidarity, responsibility and autonomy are gradually built-up.

Irrespective of whichever definition of community health one adopts, efforts addressing community health issues must recognise the special roles and status of women in efforts to improve health because they participate, and often manage, many activities that affect the health and well-being of their families. In particular:

- i) Women perform an estimated 70-90% of all agricultural activities in this country, thus placing them in an important position for contributing to food security.
- ii) Women are also largely responsible for fetching water and firewood, which places them in an important position to ensure safe drinking water and adequate cooking and preparation of food.
- iii) Women make health decisions for the majority of the population because they decide not only on how to treat themselves but also how to treat their children. In particular, women make most of the decisions regarding two vital aspects of health: nutrition and immunisation.
- iv) Women also frequently decide alone whether or not to use contraceptives as most husbands are often against the idea. This is important in research concerning family planning.
- v) Also, (and this may be an issue for empirical verification in Kenya), women appear to be more inclined to make use of modern health facilities.
- vi) Finally, but not least, we ought to take note of the fact that when it comes to carrying out lengthy, in-depth interviews and - many participatory research instruments tend to be so - women are the ones most willing to be available.

Besides these intuitive reasons for making a case for increased focus on the role of women in enhancing community health, there is extensive empirical evidence to go by. Research on the determinants of infant mortality shows that the mother is the most important health worker for her children (and by extension, the community). A good illustration is given by the correlation between the education of the mother and health that is now an established reality. In

communities where women are disadvantaged as a result of poor educational opportunities, the reduced access to education, information and knowledge means women are often poorly informed about health issues, how their bodies function and how to protect themselves from disease, and are disadvantaged in their ability to recognise and act on signs and symptoms of illness. In such communities, the call for better educational opportunities is usually premised on the fact that educated women are better mothers, who raise fewer, better educated and healthier children. It is also recognised that women with higher formal and non-formal education may also have greater family (and community) decision-making power on health related issues such as nutrition, using modern health care facilities, following doctors instructions, etc.

Women opportunities in the job market and the possibility of obtaining jobs that provide adequate wages are also, at least, partially linked to education. However, education itself is often an important factor underlying the present status of women in the job market. The education curricula has often encouraged women into some limited job markets e.g., as teachers, nurses, etc.

Possible research themes

Research is now needed in a number of areas in relation to women's contribution towards health:

Systematic barriers: national and domestic problems affecting empowerment of women in society. Here, attention can also be focused on restructuring of governance, traditional patriarchical family system, religious and economic fundamentalism.

Problems that hamper the functioning of potentially beneficial policies e.g., absence of gender perspectives in public policy formulation of health policies.

Positive directions: documenting the changes that have occurred, e.g., now that a few women now hold more positions of power, what role have/can they played/play in putting pressure on policy-makers and legislators to improve women's advocacy skills?

Transformation of the economy and control of the private sector. To achieve women's rights to health, and control over reproduction and sexuality, an agenda that focuses on the impact of the liberalisation process on women's health is needed, particularly to focus on the mechanisms that can be used to control and regulate the functioning of the private sector in order to enhance its responsiveness to women's health needs.

Ways of strengthening women's movements in order to build women's capacity to face and overcome the challenges they face - within their communities as well as in their homesteads.

How women can build and negotiate alliances and partnerships with other sectors carefully and strategically.

WOMEN, NUTRITION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

By: Wambui Kogi-Makau.

Introduction

A person's nutritional status results from the interactions of many complex factors. However, most immediately, nutrition is a consequence of the level and quality of food intake. In this scenario, lack of income/poverty is acknowledged as a critical underlying cause of malnutrition while non-nutrient food attributes are also recognised. These include: time and care to prepare food or feed young children; provision of water; sewerage; nutrition information; and the health status of mother and child. Hence strategies that address any of these are expected to have an impact (World Bank, 1995). Currently, the way forward in addressing nutrition issues in Kenya is reflected in the National Plan of Action for Nutrition (GoK, 1994). The following is a backdrop against which the nutrition action plan was formulated.

In December 1992, over 1300 delegates from 159 countries, which included Kenya, gathered together at the first global inter-governmental conference on nutrition popularly known as the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN). The ICN culminated in the World Declaration on Nutrition in which participating countries and NGOs pledged to substantially reduce or eliminate within this decade starvation, widespread malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. Following the ICN, the Government of Kenya formulated a Plan of Action for Nutrition as an expression of its commitment to address the problems of hunger and malnutrition (GoK 1994). Therefore, for consistency with what is already taking place within communities, conceptualization of nutrition-oriented activities for the UNITWINIUNESCO Chair project should consider the existing plan of action. As a guideline, the eight themes on which the plan of action is based are: 1) assessing and monitoring nutrition situations; 2) incorporating nutrition objectives into development programmes and policies; 3) improving household food security; 4) prevention of specific micronutrient deficiencies; 5) promoting appropriate diets and healthy lifestyles; 6) improving infant and child-feeding practices; 7) preventing and managing infectious diseases; 8) caring for the socio-economically deprived and nutritionally vulnerable groups.

Despite the aforementioned declaration on global determination to eliminate hunger and reduce all forms of malnutrition, the latest evidence suggests a slow-down in the rate of nutritional advance in many regions of the world and a downturn in some of the Sub-Saharan Africa (SCN, 1997). Kenya is one of those countries in which the trends in nutritional status has been deteriorating (World Bank, 1995).

In discussing women, nutrition and development in this paper, the term nutrition assumes a two-pronged context. Nutrition in the context of actual nutritional status of women and in the context of the role of women in ensuring nutritional security of household members and as it relates to development. Apart from contributing directly to national development as producer of wealth, women are the principal custodians of human resource development. Ensuring nutritional security for household members is one of the critical ways in which women fulfill this role. The

other ways in which they indirectly ensure nutritional security and health of Kenyans is through their role as mothers: nurturing children, preparing food, caring for children and being health managers at the household level (seeking treatment and effecting preventive measures i.e. immunization, participating in health education activities and attempting to sustain a hygienic home environment).

Nutritional status of women

On the premise that nutritional status of young children (aged below five years) is reflective of that of the general population, assessment of nutritional status of other age groups has been largely ignored and women, despite their vulnerability to nutrition-related risks, have not been spared. Little is, therefore, known about the nutritional status of ordinary women because focus on them has only been in the context of their physiological condition; either as pregnant women or lactating mothers. In this context, small studies have been carried out among the pregnant women mostly with the aim of confirming the common view that this indeed is a group at risk. On the basis of such a widespread view and evidence from such studies, supplements in form of pills are given to pregnant women with iron tablets being the most commonly distributed. Otherwise, maternal nutrition interventions are often dismissed as too complicated or too expensive. Nonetheless, female malnutrition is responsible for a broad range of short or long-term negative consequences, such as; reproductive risks, maternal and infant mortality, anaemia and low birth weight babies.

Disaffection with the view that knowing nutritional status of children alone is adequate is emerging as curiosity and realisation of the limitations related to information gaps on the nutritional status of other groups increases. The prevalence of malnutrition among women in Kenya is largely unknown GoK UNICEF (1992). However, according to the 1993 Demographic Survey, 10% of mothers have a body mass index (BMI) below the 18.5 cut-of-point which indicates underweight and hence, some degree of increased risk. The prevalence of anaemia as indicated by localised surveys (for no national micronutrient surveys have been done) show that about 60% of women are anaemic (World Bank, 1995). Related to the nutritional status of women, are increased risk exposure of other household members. For example, newborns of undernourished women are likely to have low birth weight (whose incidence is about 15%) and are at a greater risk of dying when compared to children of well-nourished women. The nutritional status of pregnant women has implications not only on the health and maternal mortality but also on that of children. Nutritional well-being of women has implications on their productive capability because the well-nourished have a higher work output than those that are poorly nourished.

There appears an urgent need to consider the nutritional status of women not only in specific physiological conditions e.g., during pregnancy or lactation but also in different cultural, ecological and climatic contexts. For example, populations living in drought-prone areas are at

higher risk of food insecurity and not only are many of those affected likely to be women (they constitute over 50% of the Kenyan population) but the impact is also likely to be more severe on women. Due to lack of studies there is no evidence on whether intra-household distribution discriminates against women although studies among children have shown that there is no sex based discrimination in food distribution among them. Nevertheless, it is commonly believed that there is a negatively charged self-inflicted discrimination by women (on themselves) as they neglect their own food intake in favour of other household members.

Women as custodians of household nutritional security and development

The government aims at ensuring that all people at all times have access to sufficient and nutritious food. While appreciating that food security does not necessarily depend on producing adequate food, because foodstuffs can be purchased in the international markets, Kenya's economic realities do not permit for purchase of foodstuffs from such markets. Hence, not only does food security in Kenya remain heavily dependent on local production but also its economic development; which is also dependent on agricultural production. Most of agricultural production in Kenya is done by women; thus both economic development and nutritional security are primarily in the custody of women.

Despite the government's effort over the years to achieve food security, fluctuating rainfall patterns, recurrent widespread droughts and economic crunch have resulted in deficit per capita food availability. As a result, dietary energy intake is generally insufficient exposing about one-third of the Kenyan population to the risk of deficient nutrition. Although protein-energy malnutrition is evidently the cardinal problem facing the population, micronutrient deficiencies and diet related non-communicable diseases are emerging as serious problems that also need to be addressed. At the forefront of micronutrient concerns are Iron, Iodine and Vitamin A deficiencies.

For many African women, however, under-nutrition begins early in childhood and is a lifelong phenomenon. At this point, it is important to mention that nutrition has a direct implication on school performance and thus education attainment of individuals. In general, under-nourished people are unable to effectively participate in national development; at one level on the basis of their education achievement and at another general level on the basis of their work output which is directly or indirectly related to their nutritional status (directly through energy intake or indirectly through illness). Thus, women subsisting in poor nutritional environments have low work output and are also more susceptible to illness which leads to diversion of time from productive activities and reduced capacity to work. Thus under-nutrition of women translates into lost economic productivity, time wasted in search of health care and resource in paying for health care. The relationship between nutrition and development thus can be considered

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Strategies for addressing implications of women's nutritional status

The question of whether Kenyans should remain oblivious of the nutritional status and its trends among women in different physiological, ecological, cultural, economic and seasonal settings is pertinent. The government's nutrition plan of action in which assessing and monitoring nutrition situations is advocated does not specify population groups hence the fear that this may encircle only children as has been usual.

Assessment of nutrition status of women

Appropriate interventions to address poor nutritional status depend on knowledge of prevalence and types of malnutrition, appreciation of who (among the women) is affected, how many are affected, where they (in geographical terms) are located and why they are malnourished. The "why" addresses the factors affecting their status in a particular household, community, etc. This implies that intervention must be desegregated to the community and household levels and at the latter level, targeting of individuals which must include women.

Poverty alleviation

Although poverty in general should be addressed as an underlying cause of malnutrition, this section focuses on women-headed households. Overall, about a third of rural households are female-headed. These, as defined by World Bank (1995) are households in which there is no adult man living with the woman or supporting her from elsewhere. Twice as many female-headed households compared to male-headed ones are poor. Since poverty is the underlying cause of malnutrition, then female-headed households are at a greater nutritional risk compared with the male-headed households. The cause of high poverty prevalence among female-headed households are numerous but ownership and access to land is a critical factor (World Bank, 1995). It is then likely that legal and customary rights that aim at improving access to or placing assets, such as land in the hands of women may have a significant positive implication on, not only nutrition, but also on poverty alleviation.

Education

The World Bank (1995) describes the relationship between nutrition and education as synergistic for not only is nutrition beneficial to school performance but educated persons understand awareness messages better, are able to take advantage of services especially those that are provided free-of-charge by government and are able to act quickly and decisively to avert a problem (Onian'go, 1992). For example, it has been established that the children of uneducated mothers have lower immunization rates and higher risks of mortality (World Bank, 1995). Thus,

the conclusion that of all possible interventions education of females has the most wide-ranging impact.

Creation of awareness in nutrition

A 1964 study led to the conclusion that malnutrition results from ignorance and the subsequent prescription of nutrition education. Nevertheless, in the last decade or so it has become evidently clear that the solution to nutritional problems does not solely lie in ignorance and, hence, the shift in means of addressing the problem. Nutrition education, as researchers are now confirming, has not solved the problem of malnutrition. Thus, the current issue is how to close the gap between nutritional knowledge and its application while continuing to provide nutrition information (Bengu, 1995, Waihenya, et al, 1966). The following are examples among many in support for continued nutrition education:

- Nutrition education on weaning practices (a woman's domain) is an important intervention as child nutrition is seriously affected as a result of feeding and weaning practices. The rate of stunting doubles from 25% in the first year of a child's life to 40% in the second year. This is the period when the process of weaning is completed.
- The quality of nutritional status of household members largely depends on women's ability to optimise nutritional benefits from the resources available to them. Because nutrition education teaches women efficient budgeting, provision of nutrition information is an important strategy for addressing nutritional insecurity.

Conclusion

Generation of nutrition related activities for the UNESCO Chair should be done on the premise that national data on nutritional status of women is non-existent, that a national plan of action for nutrition exists and that the nutritional status in Kenya is deteriorating. The latter is occurring as a spectrum on which at one end is the problem of under-nutrition and at the other are the nutrition-related problems associated with affluence and the consequential lifestyles.

FAMILY AND CHILD WELFARE

Collete A. Suda

Introduction

Despite the diversity in its forms and features in both traditional and contemporary Africa, the family remains the most basic and fundamental social institution in every society. As a basic social unit, the family continues to serve as a major child-rearing agent and provides a natural and immediate environment for the growth and well-being of children and, indeed, all its members if that environment is conducive to growth and if it is characterized by love, happiness, respect and understanding. While one can never fully define a family because there is no ideal family form and what may be considered as ideal in one culture could be an exception in another, the effort to do so is valuable for several reasons. One important reason is communication. Cultures are communication systems of understanding. The family and its functions is part of our cultural knowledge of the moral imperatives of parenting, on the one hand and children's rights and obligations within the family and society on the other.

The traditional African family was a relatively stable social unit with a wider network of relatives who served as a system of social support. The traditional family was built around the need for production, reproduction and the provision of care, support and protection to children and all other members, particularly those who were challenged by economic, social, psychological and spiritual deprivation. The possibility of an authentic dialogue between scholars and researchers interested in the subjects of family and child welfare can be enhanced by a deeper understanding of the value of children in the African family life and the cultural connection between family ties, responsible parenthood and child welfare. However, many of the pillars found in the traditional family system are systematically being swept away or transformed by increased economic pressure, an obvious clash of family values, changes in the aspirations and expectations of parents and children, changes in child-rearing practices and changes in the role and status of women, among other forces. The new family structures which have emerged are relatively weak and less capable of providing sustainable child support. Most of them are fragile and tend to produce children in difficult and deprived circumstances. The task of this paper is to address these issues and to explore ways of strengthening the family capacity for sustainable well-being of all its members, particularly children.

The extended family as the domain for child care and support

The extended family system was a distinctive feature of family and community life in Africa. It was, and still is, an extension of the nuclear family of husband, wife and their offspring. Based on the principle of consanguinity and conjugal ties, this system, in its traditional configurations, brought together an array of inter-generational relatives whose interactions were based on the traditional ideals of caring and sharing both in good times and in times of crisis. This was a social and moral obligation borne out of the desire to sustain life, maintain contact and hold the

family together as the very fabric of society. The care and support also reinforce the feeling of relationship and of being one. Under the traditional economy, the extended family served as a viable system in the procurement and distribution of goods and services for sustainable livelihoods by allowing, for example, the young and those who were relatively deprived to develop their productive capacity and survival techniques and skills and also to support them in their efforts to realize their potential both for their personal good and for the good of the family and the clan (Mutuku and Mutiso, 1996). To concretize his thesis about the extended family system as a significant social support network within which fortunes and misfortunes are shared, Reisman (1992: 181) refers to one of the Fulani proverbs expressing what it means to be a relative. The proverb goes something like, "Whatever happens to a relative must happen to yourself also". The extended family, therefore, provided a social environment where children were cared for, brought up (rather than put up) and supported.

Kilbride and Kilbride (1990) argue that one of the most significant functions of the extended family system is that it serves as a barrier against child abuse and neglect mainly because it provides material, affectional and emotional needs of children but also because it is a primary type of relationship that tends to endure for long periods of time. Kalule (1986) also notes that in the traditional Kamba society a child never refused food except by a witch and that child-rearing was not the responsibility of the nuclear family but also of the clan in which the family was embedded. Through this network of relatives, children and young people were taught how to become responsible members of society based on the cultural knowledge of what was perceived as right and wrong behaviours as reflected by the kind of propriety in the social and moral life of a community or society. In traditional Africa, there was an elaborate system of socialization and training young people to grow up into disciplined, morally upright and productive members of society. This was largely an informal kind of education that was expected to be provided by each and every adult member of the family and community before, during and after initiation ceremonies (Kearney, 1996).

The value of children

The ideal in nearly all traditional African societies was to have as many children as was physically possible. Children were, and still are, highly valued in Africa and variously perceived as a source of wealth, a status symbol and a blessing from God and the ancestors. Large families were desired and the value of children had much to do with their parent's future expectations.

Traditionally, the flow of wealth was from the children to their parents. The girls were valued mainly because they brought in bride-wealth to their family. The value of male children was derived from the expectation that they would provide security to their aged parents and be married. As Bahemuka (1992: 130) has pointed out, male and female children in East Africa are valued differently and young children are socialized to believe boys are preferred over girls. Patriarchy is the main reason for the preference of boys. Many African women are still therefore

expected to continue with child-bearing until they produce at least a boy. The search for boys has always been one of the reasons for the persistence of polygamy and large families in much of rural Africa. It was therefore in terms of what children do or bring to their family that the differential value of boys and girls can be understood. This utilitarian perception raises a fundamental question of whether African children are really valued and appreciated as people in their own right or as economic assets or liabilities. The wider implication of this traditional cultural perceptions are reflected in the overall status of girls and women in contemporary African families and societies.

Parenting and the process of teaching children life-giving skills

The importance of children and the joy of being a parent remain very central norms in the African cultural ideology and family life. For most African men and women and under the right circumstances, being a parent is not only considered as a blessing but also as a great responsibility, a source of identity and a sign of social completeness. And for the majority of African women, even those experiencing single parenthood, the simple fact of having a child is important and gives them one of the greatest pleasures of their lives.

Mothering is a natural experience which is deeply personal. Nurturance is a cultural issue which usually involves the expectation that parents should be responsible, responsive and compassionate to the needs of their children, sustain life and teach the children life-giving skills required for their overall well-being and work in their future stations in society (Suds, 1996; Whiting, 1996). As part of their nurturing role to provide support and moral guidance to their children, most parents devote a lot of their time and energy promoting the welfare of their children by helping them to achieve quality education, health and nutrition among other basic necessities of life. Parents also have the primary responsibility to teach their children appropriate skills and proper conduct in addition to other qualities which may be considered desirable according to the oral standards of a particular culture.

In general, this informal skills training usually covers a wide range of domains and include such behaviour patterns and characteristics as self-reliance, respect, hard work, obedience, premarital chastity, honesty, discipline, restraint, tolerance, courtesy and forgiveness, among other moral and ethical values. This training which starts in the family is essentially a life-long process and is reinforced in schools and other social institutions and continues throughout adulthood. At the family-level, these child capacity-building efforts are most effective in an environment of love, peace, happiness and understanding (Blanc, 1996). This is because sustainable child welfare is not just about training children in certain skills but also creating a family environment or atmosphere in which children would wish to stay or return and share those skills with their younger siblings. Traditionally, the responsibility to shape their character and provide them with life-giving skills was not necessarily limited to parents but was generally a family, clan and community affair. It was, in many ways, a collective social and moral obligation. In single parent

families, the absence of one of the parents is not only physical and 'financial' but also social, psychological-and spiritual as well. Parents and other senior members of the family were looked upon as role models. This implies that the training was carried out in a context where the actual behaviour of the trainer was more important than the verbal instruction. Such a context reinforces the view that modelling is not about "doing as I say but rather as I do". This is the essence of moral authority. And this authority can be weakened by evidence of double standards.

Although the younger generation of parents may be divided on the question of morality. The desired qualities, traits and skills recommended for children as summarized above generally fall within the normal range of a "good" child and responsible parenthood. If these qualities are taken less seriously today than they were previously, it is indicative of the emerging conflict in family values and changes in child-rearing practices which are now part of the changing African social ecology and family life.

The development of new family arrangements and the consequences for child welfare

Like other social institutions, the family is in a constant and considerable state of flux. Traditional family structures are increasingly being challenged by new pressures, re-evaluated against emerging values and practices and replaced by new arrangements in contemporary urban settings. Among the key factors associated with the development of new family arrangements are limited employment opportunities and deteriorating economic conditions, changing of the role of women, rapid urbanization and the urban housing crisis, financial uncertainties in a weak cash economy, social disintegration, the influence of Christianity, formal education and exposure to what is happening with family life in other parts of the world (Suda, 1993; Kilbride, 1990; 1994; Kearney, 1996; KEF AN, 1996). These and other changes have contributed to the emergence of new family types and categories of children on both sides of the rich-poor and rural-urban divide.

The changing trends have also presented many people, especially women, with new challenges as a number of them seek to make adjustments in their daily lives in order to combine their careers with family responsibility without much support from other family members mainly due to increased economic hardships and weakening family ties. More concrete results which have been produced by the wider socio-economic and cultural changes outlined above include extreme poverty, domestic violence, family instability, increasing numbers of children living in difficult and deprived circumstances, rising cases of child abuse and neglect, a growing desire for smaller families, a shift in the focus of marriage from an alliance between two families to an affair between two individuals, rampant individualism, single parenthood, changes in child-rearing practices, cohabitation, a growing tendency to combine formal monogamy with clandestine polygamy involving mistresses or "outside wives", weakening parental authority over children and emerging cases of elder abuse. This list is by no means exhaustive. It is merely an attempt to show the changing complexion of the African socio-cultural ecology and the general erosion of

the family as a viable support system and the implications of these for the overall well-being of children.

Most of the factors identified in this discussion tend to act co-jointly through complex dynamics to produce new structural conditions which prompt readjustments in family life, its meaning and purpose. There is, for example, a strong move towards companionship, personal fulfilment and satisfaction as the basis for modern marriages and family relationships as compared to the traditional emphasis on procreation and the need to set up a moral net for the provision of care and support. Although the changes and new family arrangements affect everyone, women and children are usually more adversely affected primarily because of the continuing gender disparity in the allocation of resources and life's opportunities.

Culturally, care-giving responsibilities and the provision of life-giving skills for African children continue to fall largely on women. Under conditions of severe economic deprivation and social dislocation, many families are faced with the difficulty of providing adequate food, clothing, education, health care, housing, love and other basic needs to their children and themselves. When the supportive role of the family is diminished by cultural, psychological and structural changes, some children tend to leave and seek alternative survival strategies outside the home and frequently end up on the streets and engage in some behaviours which are generally considered hazardous to their health and lives (Suda, 1994). Street life is always replete with multiple challenges but the children do "survive" which perhaps indicates that the human spirit has the ability to triumph even under adversity

Conclusions and some suggestions for sustainable child welfare

Despite the changes in family structures, increased family instability and the establishment of new family varieties, the family remains the central institution where children can be taught life-giving skills in a sustainable way. Although women's roles have changed dramatically as their labour force participation increases, their family lives continue to revolve around their children's welfare. One of the ways to help women and their families become more effective in promoting their welfare and that of their children is to strengthen their capacity through a variety of strategies including gaining more access to education, training, job opportunities and credit schemes.

Culture is a vital issue in all these capacity-building initiatives. Women and the society in general should be dissocialised out of thinking that women's child rearing role is of less value than their productive work in the public domain. This belief lowers the dignity of mothers who are not involved in market work. I share Bahemuka's view that women should be educated to appreciate their work, their God-given freedom, their talents ... " (1992: 133). But equally important, society should appreciate women's work in child care and assign a social value to it which is comparable to that of market work. There is nothing intrinsically inferior in child-

rearing. It is the cultural definition as a female domain which accounts much of its low status. Child support programmes, like fostering, when based on existing family ties are more sustainable but require considerable economic back-stopping from public and private sectors as well as civil society organizations in much the same way as these organizations support many children's rehabilitation programmes in Kenya. There is, however, some evidence that many rehabilitation programmes do not work very well. The interventions are not sustainable. Sustainable child welfare can also be greatly enhanced through the involvement of all stakeholders, including children themselves.

Children should be educated and sensitized to appreciate the role of their families in their upbringing and the unique role of a mother to produce and sustain life. In the context of ever-widening social, ideological, generational and, sometimes, geographical gap between parents and their children, there is lowered expectation of respect and help from children and a feeling among some parents particularly those living in rural areas, that they have been abandoned, abused and neglected by their own children who they have spent more than half of their life time caring for. This trend is unlikely to provide any incentive or motivation for some parents to invest their resources in the welfare of their children if what they expect to get is a future relationship with minimal contact and little to share. This is part of the logic that underlies reciprocity. It also expresses an important reality of African family life and the essence of human relations and kinship ties of which family-hood, parenthood and childhood are embedded for sustainable care and support.

WOMEN AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT: The unrecognized contribution

By: Winnie Mitullah

Introduction

Women play a key role in development, both in the rural and urban areas. In these areas women ensure the livelihood of their households as manifested in their role of producing and/or fending for food and its preparation. In addition, women ensure that the required household energy and water is available; are entrusted with caring for the sick, elderly and the young. In urban context, although women constitute a small percentage of the total force, their contribution is substantial. In addition to their traditional roles, they have to take up extra responsibilities including both wage and informal economic activities.

The contribution of women in development has largely remained unrecorded and unrecognized. The Seventh Kenya Development Plan notes that development projects have tended to marginalise women thereby isolating them from participating in development and decision-making at national level (Republic of Kenya, 1994). This is in spite of the fact that women have been active in ensuring the survival of households and families. Although women make great contribution, they predominantly operate in marginalized areas of the economy. This has at times been justified by their comparatively lower level of skills compared to that of their male counterparts. This is in turn attributed to low levels of education and their inability to find time to participate in training programmes. The fact that justifications and attributes have been used for over three decades shows the level of neglect of issues affecting women.

It is known that apart from the above, institutional, cultural and other socioeconomic barriers keep women out of active economic life. Approaches currently being applied, for example, creating women's desks in key sectors such as health, agriculture, environment, population, planning and education as noted in the Development Plan only tend to marginalise women further. The key aim should be mainstreaming and not isolation into parallel institutions in the name of sections, units, centres and bureaus among others.

Women with low levels of education, few modern skills, low income coupled with negative societal attitudes have a limited range of productive and commercial activities that they can participate in. In order to have efficient human capital, the right knowledge, skills, attitude and values have to be in place, factors, which are largely lacking in the case of women.

Women and Urbanization

In order to appreciate women's role and position in urban development, there is need to appraise their initial interaction with urbanization as a phenomenon. En-mass urbanization did not take place in Kenya until the penetration of colonialism, with its thirst for raw materials and labour from African males. The preference for male labour within the urban areas and the policy of

vagrancy which ensured that non-employed individuals could not reside in urban areas was indeed hostile to women. The colonial urban policy provided only shared single rooms with only bed spaces. This was based on the assumption that the African male workers were transient urban dwellers who belonged to the rural areas. They were thus not meant to bring their spouses into urban areas, which were advantages mainly for colonial administrators and their employees (Mitullah and Kibwana, 1998) Parker (1948) who was one of the early researchers on urbanization in Kenya notes that other non-formally employed population was not catered for.

In response to lack of planning for the non-formally employed, individuals built their parallel city on the periphery of the official city. This was the origin of informal settlements which accommodate a large percentage of poor women and men. Residents of these settlements are involved in informal activities ranging from commercial sex work, to hawking vegetables and to artisanal manufacturing (Parker, 1948). The few women who managed to be within the urban areas were largely viewed as 'prostitutes'; although in reality they were extensively involved in types of economic activities not recognised by the colonial state. Indeed, it is also difficult to draw the line between prostitution and a woman merely having 'a good time' after a hard day's work.

The colonial policy did not allow African men to move into urban areas with their wives. This was reflected in plans for African residential housing, which had only bed spaces for individual workers but not families. The African was viewed as rural based and living in urban areas was only temporary. Since housing was not planned for families and/or females, most of the pioneer females and unemployed males had largely to fend for themselves. Since the activities of those not employed by the colonial government were not recognised, they were viewed as a nuisance to urban management. In the case of women, their being on their own and fending for themselves, to some extent was used as a justification for branding them prostitutes. What should be noted is the fact that women who pioneered into urban areas were not merely coming as sex workers but to search for meaningful economic engagement. However, they faced challenges of taking up new roles which were largely unfamiliar. An isolated number could have ended up engaging in a loose sexual life by exploiting the large percentage of the male labour force who were either single or had left their spouses the rural areas.

Examining the role played by women in urban development requires an appreciation of the multiple roles and activities women have traditionally played in the rural parts of Africa. In typical urban planning, the type of activities women engage in rural areas such as fetching water, food and fuel are assumed to be easily accessible. This is based on proper planning and availability of adequate income for purchasing the commodities. For example, properly planned residential units should have water and households should be able to afford fuel in form of oil, gas or electricity.

The above assumptions do not apply in the case of informal settlements where women struggle to purchase food and look for water and fuel. Majority of those residing within informal

settlements do not make adequate incomes and can hardly satisfy their basic needs. As opposed to rural areas where women are able to produce their own food, within the informal settlements they cannot even access pieces of land to undertake kitchen gardening as their other colleagues in other parts of the urban areas. In the case fuel, most families use charcoal. A research conducted in 1987 (Lee-Smith et al, 1987) showed that 82 per cent of urban households in Kenya use charcoal whereas 19 per cent use fuel wood. This finding is contrary to what the building by-laws stipulate that households should use oil, gas and electricity as sources of domestic energy. Charcoal which is predominantly used by the urban poor has been noted to be more expensive compared to other sources of energy such as paraffin and gas. However, for use of paraffin or gas, one must first purchase the relevant cooker, which is often beyond the financial capacity of the poor. The charcoal cooking stove is comparatively affordable. Overall, women suffer within the informal settlements because they have to fill the gap and provide services which are not planned for and/or are beyond the means of the households.

Production and provision of food which historically has been a women's task is very different in urban areas. Instead of producing food from available land, they have to purchase food out of their earnings. This responsibility is key and affects their participation in other areas. McCormick et al (1995) notes that:

... the responsibility to put food on the family table each day may affect women's choices of the business activity and their future planning. Women may feel obligated to choose an activity that generates a steady stream cash, rather than one with an irregular pattern of receipts, in order to ensure that they can meet their family obligations.

Indeed women are largely unable to divorce themselves from the social aspects of life (Rono, 1997). Day to day ad hoc demands and caring for families prevent them from serious long-term economic planning (Republic of Kenya, 1987). Research has also shown that economic efforts of women are geared towards ensuring that the households are well-kept, a fact which is not always true if analysis of their male counterparts is done.

Socio-economic urban activities

Employment opportunities are limited in Kenya and yet employment is the cornerstone for enhancing human welfare. The Kenyan economy creates an average of 240,000 jobs annually, of which 26,000 are in the modem sector and the rest within the informal sector (Republic of Kenya, 1997). The informal sector which provides the highest percentage of employment accommodates most women within the urban areas. It provides more employment opportunities than the formal sector. In 1995, the sector employed 2,200,000 whereas the formal sector employed 1,600,000. The growth of employment opportunities within the informal sector has also been higher than the formal sector. For example, the current Development Plan notes that

between 1991 and 1994 the informal sector grew by 16.1 per cent on average compared to the modern sector which experienced only a growth rate of 1.9 per cent (Republic of Kenya, 1997).

The government estimates are thought to be an under-estimate. The Gemini studies conducted in 1993 and thought to be the most comprehensive examination of Kenya's micro and small-scale enterprises estimated that over 900,000 micro and small enterprises employ nearly two million people countrywide. Over three fourths of the enterprises are based in rural areas.

Whole-sale and retail trade predominates accounting for 61 per cent of the enterprises and 53 per cent of the employment. Women constitute 46 per cent of the enterprises and 40 per cent of the employees of small-scale enterprises (Parker, 1994) Another study conducted in Nakuru, one of the major urban centres showed that 65 per cent of those residing within the informal settlements depended on the micro and small-scale enterprises for employment and income (Syagga and Malombe, 1995).

The Government of Kenya has recognised the major role played by the informal sector. Sessional Paper No 2 of 1992 on Small Scale Enterprises and Jua Kali Development in Kenya provides the policy framework for promoting small-scale enterprises. This policy is still to be adequately translated into tangible benefits to those operating within the informal sector. Support systems are still to be put into place, especially for the marginalised aspects of the sector such as informal retailing (hawking), where women predominate. The story of women petty traders with children on their backs engaging in running battles with city askaris (policemen) is known to most Kenyans. Instead of coming up with realistic policies, both the central and local government have opted for punitive measures that increase the level of urban poverty.

Employment within the informal sector is by its very nature insecure and at the same time does not pay well mainly because of low productivity. Women, operating on the lower end of the informal sector hardly have savings. Most of their activities are concerned with mere survival and replenishing of stock. A study conducted in 1990 showed that most hawkers operate on small-scale, meagre capital with most entrepreneurs earning below KShs.2,000 per month. They allocate a low proportion of their profit to increasing stock or banking with most being allocated to subsistence (Mitullah, 1991).

Studies (Mitullah, 1991, Robertson, 1992; Parker and Torres, 1994) on women's economic activities within urban areas show that they are mainly found within the micro and small enterprise sector. Parker and Torres (1994) have noted the important role women play within the Kenyan micro and small enterprise sector. They point out that:

... women constitute 46 percent of all entrepreneurs and provide 40 per cent of employment within the sector. Women-owned enterprises (416,078) outnumber men-owned enterprises (362,361) countrywide. However, due to lower expansion rate, women-owned enterprises contribute 32 percent of the total employment created in the sector compared to 43 per cent created by the enterprises of their male counterparts.

Most women have limited economic opportunities, which range from informal self employment to home-based production for middlemen/traders and to domestic paid labour. In the past, their actual economic activities included mostly petty trade in green groceries, fresh and prepared food and brewing of alcohol. Women restrict themselves to most of these activities because the capital requirement is low and they can be conducted in areas which are physically convenient for women. This enables them to both satisfy their productive and reproductive role in society. Balancing these roles makes women accept economic activities within easy reach from their place of residence, irrespective of whether it is the most profitable or not (Muller, 1990; Parker 1994).

In recent times, women have started getting into other sectors such as garments, sale of building materials and other non-food consumer products. In the garment sector women are actively involved in making cheap garments and selling second hand (mitumba) clothes and shoes. There are also isolated cases of women being involved in metal work, motor vehicle repair and woodwork. In the latter areas and the building material industry, women are few and operate on the lower end of the industries. For example, a study conducted on informal settlement in Kisumu shows that among the entrepreneurs dealing in building materials, only 8 per cent were females (Syagga and Malombe, 1995). Lee-Smith (1992) has noted that it is difficult for women to look after their children when they also have to earn a living. This fact seems not to be taken into account by zoning regulations which prevent women from carrying out business in residential areas. The lack of planning for day-care centres within the informal settlements puts even more pressure on women who have to literally do everything with infants and children around them, or in case where they do not have them, it is their other children who look after their younger siblings. This pattern has contributed partly to the increase of children in the streets (UNICEF, 1984). Those who lack parental care and parents cannot afford school fees end up in the streets.

Despite knowing the role women play within the urban economy and the nature of their operations, there has been limited policies and interventions aimed at supporting them. Instead, women have developed their own coping mechanisms. They have responded to the situation by forming social and economic groups. These groupings are a bedrock for security and can be based on kinship, friendship, neighbourliness, similar economic activities among others. The support provided by these groups range from looking after each other's children, borrowing ingredients for a meal, or lending money, assisting during sickness, special events and ceremonies. These types of support networks are very essential for households with low or irregular incomes and are indeed a contribution to the urban economy.

During the seventies, Nelson (1978) noted "clusters of sisters" in beer brewing in the Mathare Valley of Nairobi. These were largely women heads of household who lived close enough to form enduring units of social and economic cooperation. These types of groups are still predominant, especially within low income areas. Some of them have moved into the manufacture of building materials such as bricks, as a source of income generation, whereas

others cooperate to build houses. At community level, women lead in mobilising the community to address issues not catered for by planning authorities, such as day care centres. Most activities being undertaken by women seem to be ignored by planners and other urban authorities. Adequate planning has to address what women do in their daily activities

It has been noted that within the informal settlements where there is less local authority control, women form about '14 of the property owners (Muller, 1990). In some cases, women have made savings and invested in immovable assets such as housing, plots and land. This reveals that if opportunities are provided to women, they would operate at par with their male counterparts. For example, in Dandora Site and Service Scheme, Phase 1, women showed their ability to effectively participate in house building and improvement as well as ability to service their mortgages. In comparison to men, they have been noted to be more prompt in paying their monthly loan instalments. This is true of female-headed households and married women, vested with the responsibility of paying mortgage (Muller, 1990).

Water and Sanitation

Adequate water and good sanitation are important in urban development. Women have been noted to be the key players in ensuring that water for household use is available and sanitation within the residential areas is at an acceptable level. Most urban low-income areas where women conduct their economic activities have inadequate water supply and poor sanitation. In addition, a large percentage of the informal settlements are located on poor terrain and services are hardly provided.

Water is one service which is available, albeit inadequate within informal settlements. Most households rely on communal water points and provision through water vendors. Most of the communal water points are located within reach, but in many cases either the pressure is low or the taps are dry. This makes women queue for a long time or move to other neighbouring areas in search of water. There are also cases where water has to be purchased from vendors, regardless of the source of their water supply. Both communal water points and water from vendors are comparatively expensive. Poor people cannot afford individual connections as required by urban authorities.

In cases where water is easily available, managing sanitation has been difficult and a threat to health, especially child health. Most children play in open community dug drainage, exposing themselves to water borne diseases. The drains are often blocked with garbage and are a sore eye, especially during rainy seasons. Solid waste disposal is also poor with many households using the 'wrap and throw' method (MATRIX, 1993). The few poorly constructed latrines are neither adequate nor sufficient with 25 households with about 50 people sharing a single toilet. Whereas adults may know how to take care

of themselves in such messy sanitary situations, women have to ensure that children are kept out of danger. This is a difficult task since majority of the women do not have house help and would prefer children playing within a clean environment as they go on with other household chores and economic activities. This has pushed women to spearhead communal cleaning operations supported by NGOs.

Recognizing Women's Contribution

Recognising women's contribution does not merely mean including them in government statistics and indicating that they will be given a consideration. It means addressing the issues which directly affect women and designing plans and programmes which take into account women's multiple activities and roles. In order to satisfy this goal adequate knowledge and information on women's activities and roles has to be available to planners and programme designers and managers.

The above task can be achieved through continuous proper record-keeping and research at all levels. UNESCO Chair has the potential for setting this process rolling by involving all stakeholders. The UNESCO Chair process should tap on the exiting efforts already being exerted by different stakeholders. A good example is the coping mechanisms which women have developed across urban areas. This is a good approach linking academic research to real issues of development surrounding ordinary citizens.

At a more practical level, for women to participate effectively in urban development, planning of facilities within residential areas should take their interests as a priority. Zoning regulations which do not allow women to conduct their businesses within their households and/or surrounding areas should be reviewed. In any case, women have ignored these regulations for decades exposing themselves to harassment and confiscation of commodities of trade.

Above all, women, be they in rural or urban areas need political motivation in order to participate in politics. Women need first to recognise their potential and exploit it for accessing resources. Over 90 per cent of women effectively participate in social and economic life but only a paltry 5 per cent are effective in political life. This is indeed a contradiction since social, economic and political aspects of life are linked and inseparable. The fact that women are very active in both social and economic life is indeed a justification for effective participation in politics. Thus there is need to undertake studies examining factors that keep women out of effective political participation.

Conclusion

The types of activities women are involved in within urban areas are beyond the traditionally recognised roles which they are familiar with. Women have to ensure the upkeep and survival of the family in an unfamiliar environment which does not consider their activities and interests.

Even in cases where their spouses are employed, as they manage household chores, women have to learn to budget in order to satisfy household needs. Many have been pushed to get into petty trade in order to supplement family income. This is done in addition to the normal daily activities, inferring that women have to know how to divide their time between household chores and economic activities.

Restricting movement to urban areas were abolished. However, the idea of women being enabled to effectively participate in urban development has not been given serious thought. In order for women to effectively contribute to urban development, their daily activities have to be reflected in planning and division of labour within the household.

A study (Mitullah, 1997) of Dandora Site and Service Scheme clearly indicates that although women are busy in other economic activities, their spouses and other male citizens only acknowledge their role within the household. This is in spite of appreciating the income they contribute to the household through their petty economic activities. If women's role and activities were to be appreciated, they would get adequate support within the households. This should in turn be translated into adequate planning backed up with income and employment opportunities. This would ensure that food, water, fuel and services such as day care centres are available to women.

WOMEN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

By: Preston Chitere

Background

Participation of people in research and development (R & D) projects in ways that can help to ensure effective improvement of their lives has been the concern of community development in Third World countries such as Kenya. In this paper, the nature of community development as an R & D method and its practice in relation to women betterment activities are explained. Community development projects as noted by Biddle and Biddle (1965) and others are those which make people to become aware of themselves and their situations and to take actions aimed at their own betterment. Put another way, community development is a method for bringing about people's growth as they carry out self-improvement activities. A community development project is one whose implementation is based on assumptions, principles and practices of the discipline. In other words, the project according to Biddle and Biddle (1965) Wileden (1970) and others must meet the following criteria:

- Must be encouraged or assisted by a community development worker.
- Relies on local resources as far as possible. Outside assistance should be minimal and not lead to dependency.
- Education for self-reliance - people are the most important resource and are encouraged to grow in the course of work with them.
- Ensures identification and development of local leadership.
- Ensures growth of local organizations.
- Observes the philosophy "learning by doing"; that is, knowledge that is acquired be applied so that it is not forgotten. Adults learn better when they are given a chance to practice what they have learnt.

The underlying philosophy of community development as is the case of extension is "helping people to help themselves". Thus, a community development worker works with people up to a point where they can help themselves and gradually withdraws leaving them to continue the actions. They may at a later point ask the worker to assist, but this must be on a temporary basis and for a short time.

By emphasizing education, community development is an 'eye opener' enables people to see what they did not see before. Or, in the words of W.I. Thomas (1968), it helps people to re-define many of their life situations which they often take for granted. Note that community development has been perceived differently by different professionals; that is, as a process, an end, a programme and as a means. Our conception of community development is that it is a means, a method or an approach or a strategy for ensuring people's betterment. Right from the beginning, the success of community development projects depended on people's active participation in them. Pioneers of community development such as Chadwick (1950) mobilized and involved members of communities in self improvement activities. Thus, community

development can be perceived as a method that democratizes and humanizes the process of development. Or, following the words of Rogers and Stevens (1972), it is a 'people-centred' approach. Indeed today there is a lot of talk about participatory development and scholars such as Chambers, Pacey and Thrupp (1989) emphasize 'putting of people first' or 'bottom-up' development.

Today we also hear of methods such as Rapid or Participatory Rapid Appraisal, Sondeo, SARAR (Self-esteem, association strengths, resourcefulness, action planning and responsibility) and others. These participatory development methods entail other specific methods such as socio-metric ranking and community mapping. Put another way, R & D methods differ in their levels of generality: general, intermediate and specific. Community development is a general method whose practice entails the use of intermediate and specific methods. For example, by carrying out a PRA, a community worker generates data that helps in designing an intervention strategy or serves as a basis for assessing project impact. The worker will use SARAR approach when holding participatory training workshops for various target groups (Srinivasan, 1992). Today community development appears overshadowed by participatory or people-centred methods. There are, however, similarities between community development and participatory methods which include:

- Both methods are concerned with democratization of R & D processes.
- Participatory methods 'put people first'. Proponents of community development have also been concerned with people-centred development.
- Freire's emphasis of education for self reliance is the same concern that community development has laboured with from its beginning.
- Both methods are collaborative encouraging various stakeholders to work together for their betterment.
- Like community development, participatory methods are also based on the principle of 'learning by doing'.
- Specific methods used such as PRA, workshops, etc. are common to both.

The differences between the methods include: 1) participatory methods place more emphasis on the interface between "research" and "action"; 2) community development emphasizes work with whole communities or groups while participatory methods emphasize work with the poor or disadvantaged groups and the need for their empowerment.

Overall, many NGOs have emerged in the arena of R & D and have used the terms community development and participatory-action-research interchangeably. In fact the term participatory action research or participatory development has become popular in the 1990s. Our view is that, community development being a broad method subsumes participatory methods. Whereas participatory methods have added flavour and dynamism to community development, our view is that the terms community development and participatory development are synonymous.

Constraints in the practice of the methods

It is important to clarify that participative development does not necessarily mean conscientizing people and getting them to rise against the forces in power. It is a process which attains better results over time. People can be encouraged and assisted to carry out many self-improvement activities within their reach. As they grapple with problems that unfold during the process, and as they gain confidence about themselves and get to know about the oppressive forces around them, they will act accordingly. There are also situations where members of a community may find itself at the mercy of some dominant forces, the community developer will mobilize and educate them about various options open to them. He/she can refer them to sources of help. But the actions when eventually taken will be taken by the people themselves. Implicit here is the fact that the researcher is only an enabler and works through other enablers such as community workers. He/she helps in empowering the community to be its own enabler and withdraws as such capacity is acquired.

Despite the fact that these people-oriented R & D methods have been implemented in African countries such as Kenya for nearly half a century, many communities and groups remain poor. The main reason is that the methods are not practiced as ideally conceived. A few examples serve to illustrate this point:

- 1 Community development as a general approach entailing work with self-help including women groups has been practised in Kenya since the colonial period (Chitere, 1988 and 1994). In 1986, there were nearly 15,000 women groups registered by the Department of Social Services and engaged in various self-improvement activities. Apart from these groups that are registered and which constitute the formal women's movement, there are also thousands of informal women's groups which either on their own or with the support of churches and other NGOs carry out various types of self-improvement activities. Like other organizations, women groups exist to meet goals. In our study of women's groups in Machakos, Nyeri and Kakamega districts, most of the groups were weak and were not benefiting their members. The Department of Social Services and supporting NGOs did not emphasize education for self-reliance for group members. Some of the problems of the groups included:
 - Differences in the interests of groups and those of their individual members.
 - Politicization of some of the groups, Lack of reliance on local resources; some of the groups depended on outside assistance.
 - Lack of effective support by men.

Despite these shortcomings, a number of the groups were becoming entrepreneurial and building up their capital-base fast. In a few isolated areas, the groups were taking on a number of projects and helping to ensure integrated development of their areas as their experiences increased.

Above all, the movement was increasingly making women aware of themselves and their various problems and making it possible to collectively plan and solve the problems.

- 2 Women in development projects in health, water, etc. of many NGOs tend also to operate in ways that encourage dependence. Facilities such as water pumps are provided to groups but there may be no capacity for maintenance or if they break down, the groups will not be in a position to purchase replacements.
- 3 The Neem Awareness Project being implemented by ICIPE (International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology) was launched in 1994. It has used workshops as the main means of spreading awareness among East African peoples about the neem tree. Of the 300 people that have been trained, only 15% are women. The tree is important in human health, crop storage, etc. Yet women who are so important in health care and storage are not participating as much in the project. There are many examples of this type which help to explain the widespread lack of participation of people in R & D projects.

Challenges for the UNESCO Chair

One of the major challenges for the UNESCO Chair is that of finding ways for assisting development agencies to develop capacity for practicing community development or participatory methods as ideally conceived. A needs assessment can help show capability of the staff of these agencies in terms of their understanding of these methods and how they actually practice them. It can provide information that can serve as a basis for enhancing capacity of the agencies' workers.

A second challenge is that of assembling experiences in community development and participatory development from Asia, Latin America and elsewhere. A lot of work has been done in India, Bangladesh and other countries. For example, the experiences of the Grameen Bank micro-finance model in lending to poor women using each other as collateral. Experiences in participatory training methodologies by the society for participatory research which is based in New Delhi can also be very useful. Other experiences can include the efforts of one retired UN dignitary who started an NGO known as 'development alternatives' which strengthens local craftsmanship and encourages the making of local materials such as tiles or bricks or cloth using low-cost technology.

A third challenge is that of bridging the gap between practical development activities and social science theory and methodology. Today there is so much implementation going on and many fashionable ideas coming into R & D literature. Little effort has as yet been made to critically link these empirical happenings with social science theory and methodology. Finally, at the local and national level, leadership has been a main constraint to our development efforts. Training of local leaders --- civic, women groups, church, etc. would be an important step toward achieving participatory development.

Conclusion

Community development is an education method to betterment and subsumes participatory methods. As already noted, it is based on an important principle of 'learning by doing'. Once learners gain know-how about a technology like neem, they adopt it and as they use it, it improves their lives. Many development agencies with women in development programmes in health, water, agro forestry, family planning etc. use this method but not as ideally as presented in this paper. There is need for enhancing their capacity for practicing the method in its ideal form. When ideally practiced, community development can help women to understand themselves and their situations better and to take actions which help them to grow as persons and to become self reliant.

COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

By: Charles Nzioka and Paul Mbatia

Introduction

The mandate of the UNESCO Chair is to bring together collaborative efforts between and among higher institutions of learning in a bid to seek practical ways of ameliorating the status of woman. In locating the Chair in an African university, UNESCO is consciously and deliberately targeting a continent where the status of the woman is precarious and problematic. Most certainly, this is not the only continent where women continues to occupy such a subordinate role, but relatively speaking, it is a continent where female abuse and subordination is rampant.

In modern times, education provides the most viable avenue for social, political and economic empowerment. Due to lack of education, women have not been able to articulate their rights or even to access to fora that tap their potential. Thus, they have limited access to economic opportunities, and as such are an oppressed social category. Without education, women cannot gain access to economic opportunities, and this often leads to lack income which leads to poor diet, and ill-health. Statistics also show that, while the population ratio of men to women is about 1:1, there are more women suffering from HIV / AIDS in Africa than men (Sai, 1995). This is not only attributable to the early physiological maturation of women but also to economic disempowerment of women which inhibits them from making demands of safer sex even when the risks of HIV infection are apparent (Nzioka, 1997).

In this paper, we discuss 'community-based research methodologies' with a view to recommending appropriate tools through which the mission of the UNESCO Chair can be achieved. Since the UNESCO Chair is to be housed, and managed within a university environment, it is important, first to discuss the overall mandates of universities. We understand that all universities are not alike, but their basic philosophies are largely similar. We thus proceed on that assumption.

The mission of the university

For a long time, universities have often been dubbed 'ivory towers'. Whether or not this label is justifiable depends largely on one's standpoint. There is, however, consensus that universities exist to promote thinking (Nzioka, 1991). This thinking could be about things which exist, happen or have never happened. It could, in a sense be abstract thinking or practical thinking. The pursuit of practical thinking could be aimed at looking for solutions to more immediate and practical problems. However, abstract thinking could be just for the sake of knowing more about things (Nyerere, 1970). At the more pragmatic level, universities are there to produce relevant manpower, relevant research and training, appropriate skills and potential innovators (Mazrui and Kipkorir, 1978: 1). In discharging this onus, universities have to be responsive to the local needs, and should emphasise on works and subjects of immediate use and concern. This in part serves to justify the heavy investments put in them by governments or local communities (Nyerere, 1970). To the degree that universities fail to respond to local needs, they then

justifiably become irrelevant, and can be termed as 'ivory towers'. For example, the mission of the University of Nairobi according to the University of Nairobi Act (1985) Section 7(b) is to:

Participate in the discovery, transmission and preservation of knowledge and to stimulate the intellectual life and cultural development of Kenya ...

Regardless of whether the mission of the university is spelt out in the statutes, universities ideally should be involved in the generation, storage, and dissemination of knowledge. In this pursuit, they should be centres of academic excellence, producing refined knowledge and high level manpower armed with appropriate skills. To that extent, they should provide leadership in technological advancement as only in doing so can they be relevant, justify their existence and command respect as institutions of higher learning.

A methodological divide in social science research: quantitative versus qualitative approaches

Looking at social science research, a divide emerges among scholars based on methodological particularism. This methodological particularism has created 'camps' which inhibit researchers from examining substantive issues of interest that cut across disciplines (Ragin, 1985). More specifically, Ragin (1985) identifies a tussle between proponents of qualitative camp over which methods can produce more reliable and representative data (Clyde-Mitchell, 1983). The debate between quantitativist and qualitativist researchers has been described 'as a dialogue between two deaf people' (Ragin, 1985: 172).

Quantitativists on the one hand, are interested in (1) measuring variables, (2) testing hypotheses, and (3) constructing statistical models to analyze their data. Their ultimate aim is to select a representative sample whose findings are generalizable to the entire population of interest or the universe. Qualitativists, on the other side of the divide, advocate for the use of cases or case-studies to illuminate the understanding of social phenomena. Instead of using complex statistical techniques, qualitative researchers make use of rich descriptions (in the form of narratives and the history of events) to inform about the subject of interest. The main concern for qualitativists is to produce knowledge relevant to specific situations (Ragin, 1985 :458). This methodological divide over which method is superior to the other clearly reveals a lack of appreciation of the unique strengths of each approach among scholars. But as Burgess (1987: 143) observes:

... No method is considered superior to any of the others for each has its own strengths and weaknesses, especially when considered in relation to a particular problem ...

Besides, Silverman (1985) notes that arguments about which research method can be considered to be superior is nothing short of 'methodological red-herring'. However, research interests are better served by adopting anyone or both research approaches depending on the nature of the research problem and the data needed (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992: 198; Nzioka, 1994:52). For example, in a situation where the interest is to understand the complexity of a particular case, then qualitative research may be more appropriate. On the other hand, if the goal of research is to gain understanding of a case in order to generalize for the population, then quantitative research may be suggested.

MOVING FROM MYTHS AND STEREOTYPES ABOUT WOMEN: Towards an understanding of women

By: Priscilla Kariuki

Development agencies and indeed the World Bank have recently publicly recognized and stated that the key to rural and urban poverty alleviation is the education of women. What this statement formally acknowledges is the fact that while much of the world's population is poor by western standards, the poorest of the poor are women. A famous feminist postcard points out that:

Women constitute half of world's population, perform nearly two-thirds of its work hours, receive one-tenth of the world's income and own less than one-hundredth of the world's property.

The information on which this text is based is taken from a 1980 United Nations report. Little has changed since that date, although in the crucial area of public debates and discussions about development the issue of gender has become central. It is pertinent to briefly examine the psychology of the woman who has become such an important issue for discussion in many forums but whose life does not appear to change significantly as a result.

Almost every woman alive is aware that she is part of some huge problem. Almost every magazine published devotes large amount of space to this problem. Alternate solutions that are offered with great passion range from salvation in the market place to fulfilment in the supermarket. Yet, it is only recently that the professional literature of psychologists has begun to address the issue; here, the problem of the psychology of women has never become a widespread issue. Women are however, not a homogeneous group. Many factors determine their different living conditions, lifestyles, and organization of time and activities. They vary in age, economic, social, marital and other status as well as their creativity, self-esteem, aspirations and perceptions of their situations. This is one of the reasons why during the past decade, courses on women have appeared on campuses all over the country. These are expected to bring the experiences of women out of the oblivion of neglect into the various disciplines. Similarly, they are expected to change old biases and inform students with new insights and perspectives as well as generate further research.

It is important however, to understand life as it has been and still is for most women.

This means that, in order to assist and empower women, we also need to know where they are coming from. The hope is that in seeking to understand women, as women, we can find ways to help with the psychological as well as other problems of women. By the same token, a valid understanding of the forces at work for all women ought to lead us to an understanding of the nodal point for change and advance. We, therefore, need to briefly examine some of the myths and stereotypes that have been advanced in order to keep women down.

Over the years, women have been variously observed, understood, misunderstood that derived wisdom recorded in literature, art and religion. Mostly, understandings of women have taken the form of strongly held beliefs that serve to validate and to order experience, or emanated from such authoritative resources that few would question them. Thus, women have been seen as incarnations of both the highest good and basest evil, of chastity and of lust, of virtue and deceit, and of the sacred and the profane. Men and women, who are co-opted by the prevalent male view, have rarely been able to perceive women simply as human beings with the same range to idiosyncrasies as themselves. Rather they have had to make myths to explain their awesome differences and their strange powers. Occasionally, in time of great stress, when women's brains, hands and backs are needed to win a war, they are seen for a while as simply human.

The analogy between woman and the earth as sources of life has always inspired the myths and poems of men and caused them to create their earliest religions and figures of worship. A curious reciprocity pervades the mythic concepts of woman and nature. The fecundity of nature, earth bringing forth fruit and grain, sea and river yielding their fishes, all are symbolized by woman. One could find hundreds of examples of comparisons of woman and her various parts to the flora and fauna of nature. The identification of nature with woman and the description of woman in terms of nature suggest an affinity between the two.

Myths of the woman who enchants man with her magic charms and seduces him away from high paths of his holy mission are as old as communication and as persistent as the sex drive itself. Mythic enchantress, bent upon diverting man from his noble tasks causing him to abandon reason, and eliciting his essential wickedness, which he had repressed with such pain, are part of our earliest chronicles. The common motif in such accounts is that a woman otherwise powerless gets what she wants by using devious, cunning means in which her sexual attraction is a strong element to effect the downfall of her prey, man.

The perception of woman as necessary evil, an inferior, insignificant non-person who is barely tolerated for the services she performs, is true misogyny. Necessary to perform the functions of a sex object and child bearer, she is otherwise unimportant, rightfully excluded from the company and affairs of man. While the fortunes of women have varied in different societies at different times, it is a universal observation that men have held women to be lesser persons than themselves and ascribed to them an inferior status.

The seeming perversity of a woman's behaviour, the wonderment she excites with, her strange powers, the ways she was different from man gave rise to another myth, which was that her mental processes, her behaviour and the whole of what she was, made up a feminine essence which was beyond the power of ordinary philosophers and scientists baffled man to understand. Just as there were other natural phenomena which did not yield to reason or empirical science, so there was woman, with her unpredictable ways and her enigmatic face. If he cannot understand her, she cannot be understood, and authenticity cannot occur in the absence of understanding. By defining her as mysterious, man spares himself the necessity of analysing her behaviour and

understanding it as a consequence of her position vis-it-vis him. To do that would require acknowledgement of her oppression, and a possible shift in their power relationship. The price would be too high.

The model of virtuous woman has occupied writers, priests and moralists for many years. Throughout history there has been remarkable agreement on her characteristics. She is faithful, loyal and a submissive wife; a dedicated, loving mother; a competent, diligent housewife; and an unquestioning supporter of the moral and religious values of her society. These qualities have defined her place. But this elevated status had very little material reward or prestige, other than that ascribed to her by her husband's position. She had no legal or political power, very little personal freedom, and no way to achieve economic independence.

Psychology is the field of study whose goal is to describe, understand, predict, and control the behaviour of humans and animals. These myths are important to consider since they have largely been part of the western civilization which we are quickly and unquestionably taking on. Until the late sixties, there has been little attention to the scientific study of women by psychologists, except for continued interest in the topic of psychological sex differences. Since then, research has begun to move beyond the mythic and stereotypic ways of viewing a woman, toward a sounder understanding of the real determinants of her behaviour. By studying the psychology of women, we shall appreciate the kind of person 'woman' is and together chart out ways to work together.

We must from the foregoing, consider that to understand one woman is not necessarily to understand any other woman. Women today are becoming conscious of themselves, of their commonalities and of the influences perceived and articulated by large numbers of them, which have affected their lives and their destinies. Women have begun to reflect upon themselves and their lives, to formulate their own questions to study women and to tell what they know. Women have been marginalised largely due to remnants of these myths which persist in some societies.

In order to understand Kenyan women and to make accurate reflections of their real conditions we have to design creative methodologies that give voice to the voiceless. We have to shed off any elements of academic arrogance and ethnographic bias that tend to creep into even the best intended research reports. This is one of the ways through which we can begin to appreciate the resourcefulness, clear-sightedness and the courage of Kenyan women.

In order to achieve the goals set for the UNESCO Chair, we need to use interdisciplinary conceptual tools and methods that will illuminate the dark spaces in our understanding and knowledge about women. Psychology can contribute to this effort by suggesting methodologies that indicate a willingness to listen to what women have to say about their experiences and what they mean to them. Such methodologies as projective techniques would assist in exploring the origins, complexities, motivational links and ramifications of the behaviours and attitudes under investigation. They would help to expose women's needs, aspirations, expectations and

perceptions of their situation. This approach attempts to overcome the fact that many times, women's views and evaluations with respect to development have been depicted and explained from the point of view of those conducting the research.

Other methods would include in-depth life histories, and the use of photo stories and focus on the most dramatic changes in women's lives. The indirect approach to problems ensures a spontaneous and representative response which reflects inner feelings and reproduces people's cognitive world. It also helps to penetrate the barrier of awareness as respondents describe photos, for example, without being consciously aware that they are projecting their own needs, motives and aspirations, as well as those of their families. The ultimate goal of the above tools and methods is to apprehend comprehensive situations and reflect the dynamic interplay among variables. This also requires comprehensive analytical categories able to reflect systems of inter-relationships. Through this approach, the researcher is transformed from expert to facilitator of the process. The method allows for the involvement of respondents in the whole research process.

SUMMARY REPORT STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP ON WOMEN, BASIC EDUCATION, COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

For three days, 15-17 July 1997, over 20 participants gathered at the Vice-Chancellor's Parlour to begin exploring new avenues for interdisciplinary cooperation. The workshop was organized within the framework of the UNITWINIUNESCO Chair, and hosted by the Department of Sociology, University of Nairobi, following financial assistance from UNESCO. The workshop aimed at bringing together scholars from diverse disciplines so as to discuss issues pertinent to the subject of the Chair and was guided by the theme Women, Basic Education, Community Health and Sustainable Development. The workshop participants were drawn from the Departments of Sociology, Economics, Applied Nutrition, Education and External Studies, Community Health, Institute for Development Studies, Institute of African Studies, Social Work, Literature and Psychology.

Women, education and life skills

- The need to revisit our development ideologies.
- There is a need for research on the reasons why in some districts boys are also dropping out of school.
- We should re-examine the method of classifying people in society.
- The time dimension in imparting the life skills needs to be considered.
- There is a need for an education revolution since the educational system has failed.
- There is a need to examine the traditional values and see what can be borrowed.
- Women need to be empowered.

Education and the girl-child

- There is need to have policies to ensure that the Global Platform for Action is implemented.
- We should examine how religion and culture impact on the education of the girl child.
- There is need for us to be self critical, for example, many households employ very young girls as housemaids thus denying them education.
- We should examine how possible it is for us to transplant models into the modern society so as to benefit from the 'safety nets' that existed in the traditional society.
- We need to find a balance between the matriarchal and patriarchal society.
- The schools' basic facilities such as proper sanitation, water, dormitories, books, etc. have to be addressed.
- We need to examine why some girl schools lag behind even after support and why in other areas boys, are left behind in education.

- We need to appreciate the wealth of knowledge of our grandparents in our search for technology.
- A women's writers workshop should be launched to change the ways in which women are portrayed in books.
- There is a need for a profile of women achievers comprising of women who have ventured into areas deemed as male domains.

Family and child welfare

- How child care can be localized considering that everyone is affected by poverty and changes that are taking place.
- There is need for sustainable child development and not merely backstopping.
- There is need to understand ethnic and class differentiations in child welfare programs.
- There is need to find out the forces which can confer values on children and people.

Women, nutrition and community development

- Adolescent boys in communities such as pastoralist who expect them to fend for themselves yet the food source (forests) is depleted.
- Development approaches that do not take into consideration women's reproductive and productive role and thus end up overworking them even further leading to malnutrition.
- Multidisciplinary research on people's nutritional status.
- The cultural attitudes related to feeding and the gap between nutritional education and nutritional practices.
- The empowerment of women through supporting their income-generating initiatives.
- The use, by the elite, of nutrition supplements.

Women and community health

- The need to examine the crucial role that women play in community health.
- The need to focus on broad-based education for women as this may reduce ill-health and the other associated problems.
- There is need for the promotion of interdisciplinary health research for more comprehensive findings.
- Problems that hamper gender-friendly health policies should be identified while at the same time documenting positive changes arising from health policies.
- Examine the impact of health reforms associated with SAPs and the coping mechanism that women have adopted.

Women and community development

- The need to move from what the community knows in order to address the problems inherent in development.
- Ensuring that men are not left out in the development process.
- The need for technological alternatives through research by university staff and students.
- Revisiting the training of the CD workers since they may not be effective.
- Research on policy implementation needs to be conducted.

Gender concerns in sustainable community development

- The importance of incorporating men in the development process.
- Women need to be empowered both economically and politically.
- It is crucial to understand why parents are often not willing to assist in the development activities of their schools.
- There is need to examine why girls drop out of school to be married to 'poor' boys.
- Women's perception of the informal sector needs to be brought to the fore.

Women and urban development

- Importance of looking into activities such as urban agriculture and the related issues e.g. land ownership, marketing, reaction of the relevant government agencies, health implications, etc.
- Examining issues related to women's participation in voluntary associations e.g. informal sector, informal credit groups, self-help, with the view to strengthening them.
- Examining women's coping mechanisms in the informal sector and how the sector can be supported.
- Developing strategies for dealing with the complex urban community.
- It is important to examine the gender relations within the framework of urban power dynamics.

Women, culture and education

- The need to undertake research on the communities perception of the issues labelled 'harmful'.
- It is important to identify, with the communities, alternatives to some of the harmful practices e.g. female genital mutilation while still retaining the educational aspect of the practice.
- The role that religion plays in oppressing women needs to be highlighted.
- Re-socialization of the society needs to take place so as to 'unlearn' the negative attitudes.
- We need to deal with the emerging issue of , role less' men and with problems of ethnocentrism and development.

Gender stereotypes: women and psychology

- The need to demystify the woman and to look at the invisibility of the woman through the eyes of women.
- The importance of examining religion and gender-stereotyping and the interplay between psychology and women in politics.
- The need to identify the yardstick that should be used when clamouring for change.
- The intricate dynamics of gender should be looked into e.g. some women also oppress men.
- The use of psychology to reduce dissonance in schools.
- There is a need to incorporate counselling, peer evaluation, counselling to promote healing/therapy.
- The traditional rites of passage should be researched.

Community-based research methodologies

- There is a need for participatory action research which is collaborative, with the communities being the lead persons.
- The levels of participation need to be identified, that is, who is participating in the development process and at what levels.
- The researcher may in certain cases assist the community to identify their needs.
- Some of the research biases may actually be useful strategies
- Research which is developmental has to look at development and who the beneficiaries are.
- There is need to incorporate gender-sensitive research methodologies.
- Participatory action research introduces the problem of power and politics, hence, the need for a critical analysis of the same.

Based on the foregoing presentations and discussions, the participants engaged in a discussion on the plan of action to be adopted for the Chair. The following was the agreed upon general plan:

The main objective of the UNESCO Chair: Women, Education, Health and Sustainable Development is to contribute to the achievement of Basic Education for All in Kenya through community-based actions that enhance the quality and conditions of learning in disadvantaged areas and provide a safety-net for basic education of "fall-outs II especially girls.

1. To strengthen the capacity of educational institutions especially universities to contribute to the formulation of effective policies and programmes for basic education.
2. To develop an inter-disciplinary and participatory approach for the identification of constraints, needs, expectations and aspirations for education of learners, parents and other members of the community.
3. To sensitize and mobilize communities in support of education through the development of tangible and innovative interventions aimed at improving educational access and participation.

4. To identify stakeholders in education at all levels including teachers, educational authorities, teacher unions, civic bodies, etc. and to enhance their capacity through partnership-building and networking.
5. To mobilize resources and advocate for policy formulation and implementation.
6. To undertake participatory monitoring and evaluation of actions and to measure the impact of activities in terms of results and sustainability.

Form an Interdisciplinary Steering Committee and set up a management centre for the implementation of the UNESCO Chair programme.

- i) Identify the stakeholders in education.
- ii) Organize capacity-building workshops to create a forum for information exchange, programme design and planning and assess whatever progress is being made.
- iii) Organise sensitization workshops for the stakeholders within higher education institutions, government and non-governmental organizations and other agencies
- i) Prepare policy briefs and other information for dissemination.
- ii) Conduct a systematic review of existing data and information.
- iii) Assess and develop rapid appraisal techniques and other community-based methods including oral traditions to access indigenous knowledge.
- iv) Select sites, pre-test instruments, and devise a sampling procedure.
- v) Conduct participatory needs and constraints assessments.
- vi) Analyse and interpret data.
- vii) Dissemination sessions for consensus-building and resource mobilization in the communities with the stakeholders to identify the priorities.
- viii) Plan interventions, determine roles and responsibilities of the main actors and resource requirements.
- ix) Foster and strengthen institutional collaboration among stakeholders (e.g., parents, PT As, school boards and management committees, head teachers' associations, science teachers' associations, religious teachers' associations, etc)
- x) Lobby from grassroots upwards (government, NGOs, international organizations, etc.)
- xi) Mobilize resources at various levels in terms of quantity and quality (e.g., education training).
- xii) Sourcing and accessing resources outside the community.
- xiii) Rationalization of use of resources collaboratively with stakeholders.
- xiv) Systematic information gathering, recording and management.
- xv) Participatory development and performance indicators.
- xvi) Use of measurable parameters and indicators.
- xvii) Development of impact assessment methodologies.
- xviii) Assessment of the impact (periodic, continuous and summative) for sustainability.
- xix)

Development and development-oriented research

The UNESCO Chair is being housed in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Nairobi. Given the state of underdevelopment in Kenya, the main challenge to the Chair and scholars in this college will inevitably be 'what is the contribution of social science research to development?' Besides, despite the acknowledgement of the role of 'pure sciences' in the development process, there is now an appreciation that social sciences offer alternative strategies to the acceleration of the development processes in third world countries. We need, for example, to know about peoples' cultures and value systems in order to know how to accelerate the adoption of contraception or new farming technologies. Most donor agencies (bilateral, international organizations or local) are increasingly appreciating the role of social sciences in development. These agencies are asking: how does research contribute to the development process? More specifically, the outcomes of the research process in these countries are expected to improve the welfare of the participants.

The emphasis then seems to be on applied research where the outcomes of the research are problem-focused i.e., they are used to solve a given problem in a society. In setting research priorities in these countries, funding agencies ask: how does research contribute to the development process? Or are the outcomes of the research process capable of improving the welfare of the participants? Therefore, the challenge of the UNESCO Chair would seem, at least to use and to show how social science research can be tapped as a development strategy. As Kabwegyere and Migot (1981:1) observe, development is a value-loaded term since it has to do with the improvement of peoples' lives. Since peoples' lives are different due to social, political, cultural and environmental conditions, the term development connotes different things to different people. However, despite this variance in the conceptualization of the term development, Kabwegyere and Migot (1981) identify three conditions which they hold as necessary and sufficient for development to occur. First, they observe that development involves growth i.e., increase in certain capacities depending on what is being developed. The second component of development is participation or involvement of the people (to be developed) in the generation of growth. The third necessary component of development is distribution of the consequences of growth to those who have participated in the generation of growth. To make the research process developmental, we would suggest that these three components of development be included in the research process.

But how can the research process and/or its outcomes be developmental and benefit the communities being researched? Those who have conducted research are aware of the tough task of linking research with the needs of the researched. The researched will always insist on being told what they stand to gain after they are involved in the research process. Confounded with this unexpected question, most researchers will say that 'data obtained from the respondents will be used by the government to formulate policies that can help to improve the living conditions of the researched.' However, in Africa, the 'promised' benefits of most research are rarely realized by the researched - especially given that most researchers have no control of what happens to their data/findings after submitting the final report to the funding agencies. In our universities, research reports continue to gather dust in the shelves of university libraries even when keen

effort has been put in them by the researcher(s) and when such research has been funded with taxpayers money in countries which can hardly afford such opulence. This suggests that there is need to devise ways of filling the gap between researchers and respondents after research. This raises the fundamental question of how to bring together a range of disciplines from the two social science methodological divides. We see the challenge as one of bringing together scholars from disciplines such as literature, education, sociology, anthropology and so on which carry with them inherent methodological biases and to ensure that they all remain relevant in the implementation of the UNESCO Chair agenda - which entails the involvement of community action.

Special research techniques have been suggested that attempt to bring the researched (communities) in the research process. These techniques include: participatory research, action research, and participatory action research. A brief review of these techniques is presented.

Participatory research

This form of research is characterized by the strong involvement and degree of participation of members of organizations or communities in the research process (Whyte, 1991). Members of the group to be studied are encouraged to participate actively with the researcher(s) throughout the study. This involvement starts with the problem identification through to the stage of publication of results of the study (Sarantakos, 1993).

Action research

This method entails the application of fact-finding to practical problem-solving in a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it, involving collaboration and co-operation of researchers, practitioners and laymen (Burns, 1990;252; Sarantakos, 1994:8). In this research, action is situational (it diagnoses a problem and attempts to solve it), its collaborative (since it requires the efforts of researchers and practitioners), its participatory (in that researchers take part in the implementation of findings), and its self-evaluative (for it involves a constant evaluation of its process and modification to adjust research and practice, Burns, 1990). Action research challenges the conventional social science research which is based on the authority of the outside observer and the independent experimenter, and it claims to reconstruct both practical expertise and theoretical insight on the different basis of its own inquiry (Winter, 1987 :2).

Participatory action research

In realizing that would-be-beneficiaries are rarely involved in the conventional survey method used by most social scientists, Chitere and Mutiso (1991) have proposed the use of participatory action research (PAR). The philosophy behind the PAR is that people (the researched) are a

resource that should be recognized and utilized as an ingredient in the development process. However, Chitere and Mutiso (1991 :2) observe that 'to most Kenyan policy-makers and implementers, huge monetary contributions to development projects are all that development is about.' These authors argue that planning and implementing projects without the involvement of the local people nurtures dependency rather than self-reliant development.

The participatory action research (PAR) entails the involvement of the researched (mainly local communities) in all stages in the planning and implementation of the development/research project. The involvement of the people ensures that their full potential is realized. In addition it is action-oriented because it focuses on a particular problem and tries to mobilize resources (including the researched) to solve it. The guiding principal in the PAR is that as much as the researcher is well-versed with some technical issues, the researched (mostly the local people) are more informed about the local reality that the researcher attempts to unpack and comprehend. Both parties are expected to learn from each other through the research process. Importantly, as emphasized by the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) (cited in Chitere and Mutiso, 1991 :2), by adopting the PAR, the researcher must be willing to:

- Go to the people.
- Live among the people. Learn from the people. Plan with the people. Work with the people.
- Start with what the people know. Build on what people have.
- A logical question that emerges from the discussion on PAR is whether or not PAR is readily viable in Kenya or Africa?

Viability of participatory action research in Kenya

PAR may sound less demanding on the part of the researchers, but in practice, it is a radical approach that challenges conventional research assumptions. For example, the approach challenges the erroneous assumption that in a research situation, the researcher is the 'expert' to teach the 'locals' or more euphemistically the 'native.' In the PAR, the researcher is expected to empathize in order to share the same understanding of the reality with the local communities. However, Chitere and Mutiso (1991 :3) observe that:

In Kenya, participatory-action research is not readily possible given the isolation of educational institutions like universities from the development process ...

How valid is this observation today? The isolation of our universities from communities and from the development process, largely explains why most of us (scholars) are always labelled by the local media as people who live in the 'ivory towers' and who have lost touch with the local reality. Further, it has also been observed that our university curricula rarely reflect the demands of the labour market. Accordingly, the mis-match between what our universities teach and the

type of skills needed in our labour market, helps to explain the increasing problem of unemployment among university graduates.

From experience, it is clear that the researched are eager to see the benefits they can derive from participating in the research process. We imagine also that researchers are also keen to see the researched get involved in the research process, and also benefit from their research findings. This is as it should be, and more so, if the research is applied research. We have witnessed inter alia the transfer and application of new technologies especially in the informal sector, and the successful use of new crop varieties in the agricultural sector developed by our local universities to improve crop yields. This implies there is need to forge closer linkages between the university and the researched to develop a relationship which is mutually beneficial. The continued use of the researched only as respondents only exacerbates suspicion, however noble the intentions of the researchers. To the extent that the public cannot see in concrete terms what universities produce save for an elite crop which is alienated from the plight of the majority, universities will never cease to be viewed as 'ivory towers'.

The situation is even more pathetic in the social science departments. Scholars in these disciplines are more inclined into developing theories which seek to explain social phenomenon rather than producing tangible benefits. The question is, how can social scientists get more involved in participatory action research or in developmental research. But as Nzioka (1991) observes, the degree to which universities can participate in community-based research activities can be controversial. First, university staff and students may not have the time to participate in action-oriented research. Those who have experience in our local universities can attest to this 'reality.' Academic programmes have become so crowded that neither the students nor the lecturers get time to engage in any meaningful research activities, let alone long demanding community research activities. When a semester has to end on a Friday and the next begins on the following Monday, that is not very encouraging news for proponents of action-oriented research. Secondly, most universities in Africa, and Kenya is no exemption, are surviving on very thin budgets. Hopefully, this may not be a major bottleneck to UNESCO Chair, if external resources were to be readily available. Thirdly, it may be unlikely that university staff have the capacity to mobilise action given that this has never been the prime consideration in recruitment into university service. Fourthly, social scientists, by their disciplinary calling, more inclined to engage in theoretical rather than practical/applied research, how can they adhere themselves to the researched if this were to remain the trend? Is inter-disciplinary participatory research possible, and if so, how can it be enhanced? Do we rely on undergraduates who neither have the capacity nor the time to do long-term research or do we involve graduate students only? Besides, how long is a reasonable period for participatory action research to merit the use of even graduate studies? How do we determine who is to, and who has the capacity among the researched to participate effectively in PAR?

These many limitations present a formidable challenge to the UNESCO Chair. But all is not lost. If other universities in the world have been successfully involved in participatory action research,

and with relative success, then there is still a glimpse of hope. The inevitable challenge is whether the UNESCO Chair is willing to learn from other universities' experiences, take up the challenge and implement similar programmes. We think these are inter alia the major challenge in preparing the 'terms of reference' for the UNESCO Chair.

The challenge to the Social Scientist

Our deliberation should inter alia reflect on the following question: How can we bring our universities closer to the local communities in order to orient university research to the needs of the local communities? To overcome this challenge, we need to identify the constraints that continue to accentuate the gap between the researchers and the researched (communities). We should also identify the various methodological biases that impede outsiders' contact with rural poverty in general, and with the deepest poverty in particular (Chambers, 1983) Chambers (1983) has also documented six biases that prevent researchers from reaching those who really deserve to be studied first - given the deplorable life conditions that they live with. These six biases include: 1) spatial biases (such as urban bias which concentrates on rural visits near towns and tarmac roadside biases); 2) project bias (concentrating research in rural areas where it is known that something is being done); 3) person biases (use of biased samples composed of progressive farmers and opinion leaders as the main source of information and leaving the poor who rarely speak for themselves); 4) dry season biases (avoidance to do research in some seasons for the convenience of the researcher); 5) diplomatic biases (based on politeness and timidity of the researcher); and (6) professional biases (based on professional training, values and interests all of which force researchers to have a narrow perception of community-based problems). Thus, according to Chambers (1983: 25), researchers with keen interest of improving the lives of the rural people, should desist from conducting community-based research as 'rural development tourists'. That is the position as we understand it.

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Appendix 1: action plan

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the last three years, the College of Humanities has been trying to come up with a programme which would bring together the different disciplines in an effort to bridge the gap between the university and the local communities.

The idea was mooted by my predecessor, Prof. Joseph Nyasani. He wanted to have an institute where women's studies would be incorporated in the teaching programmes of the college. After consultations, members of the faculty felt that an Institute for Gender Studies may not be the answer to the growing concern of the university over its impact being felt by and in the communities.

As discussions went on, a new vision was emerging where the communities were seen as important stakeholders within the university education. In order to reach the communities, women were selected as an important social category.

After several months of discussions, the Department of Sociology was approached and asked to put together a proposal that would bring together all the ideas articulated by the concerned parties. The outcome was the proposal to UNESCO which coincided with the Fourth World Congress for women held in Beijing, China late last year. The proposal had, therefore to address issues relevant to the proceedings of the Beijing conference.

The UNESCO Chair on Women, Basic Education, Community Health and sustainable Development was requested for by the Kenyan Official Delegation to UNESCO in 1995. For the last one and a half years, modalities for the management of the Chair have been discussed and, at this point, the current workshop will be discussing issues related to the strategic planning for the management of the Chair.

Through the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, various departments in the universities have played, and will continue to play, a significant role in the proposed initiative. These departments are: Institute of African Studies, Literature, Sociology and the sub-department of Social Work.

The college backs this initiative fully. I appreciate, and wish to acknowledge, the co-coordinating role played by the Department of Sociology through the Chairperson who made this workshop a reality.

It is my hope that the deliberations of the workshop will culminate to a blue-print outlining the ways and means of transferring expertise from institutions of higher learning to the community. I look forward to a successful workshop.

Lastly, let me now take the pleasure of calling upon the Vice-Chancellor to officially open this workshop.

Director of Education

Principal, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Dean of Faculties

Dr. Susan Nkinyangi

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour that the University of Nairobi and, specifically, the Department of Sociology has been identified by the UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair Programme as a Centre for the development of an innovative programme concerned with Women, Education, Community Health and Sustainable Development. Participating in the UNITWIN Chair Program should provide us an opportunity to rethink, redefine and, hopefully, renew our approaches to teaching, training, research and service to our community. This is indeed a major challenge for the university to contribute concretely to actions aimed at improving the delivery of basic educational services.

As a partner in the UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair Programme, we can test new approaches to working with communities and creating meaningful relationships with these communities.

Despite progress in many areas of human endeavour, the challenges facing universities today are formidable. The main global trends show a series of concurrent, sometimes contradictory trends of globalization, regionalization, polarization, democratization, marginalization and fragmentation. Equally important, however, are the shifting imperatives of economic and technological development, the modifications in development strategies which would pursue sustainable human development, in which economic growth serves social development and ensures environmental sustainability.

If we look at the communities around us, it is clear that a new vision is needed. The kind of education we provide should not only be relevant, it should also be quality education. This calls for a fresh thinking and a re-evaluation of our educational programmes. The UNITWIN Chair provides us with this opportunity. I am hoping that the Chair will synergize and jog any doubting minds that the university education can be shared, that it is both exciting and convincing and that it can help communities achieve sustainable development.

My hope is that we can find more effective ways to provide basic services namely: education to our people. In this way, we can work with communities to develop effective formal and non-formal education programmes especially for girls and women. We have the human resources and the intellectual capacity that can be channelled for this new programme.

I hope by the end of this workshop that you will have developed a concrete plan of action for the Chair on Women, Education, Community Health and Sustainable Development, and modalities for evaluating the effectiveness of the Action Plan.

I am happy to see Sociology pioneering the re-conceptualization of the role of our university in the renewal of basic education.

When the Action Plan evolves we can then reach out to other universities in the region and encourage them towards this new approach to education.

Vice-Chancellor, Prof FJ Gichaga Deputy Vice-Chancellor

College Principals

UNESCO Representative Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be with you this morning to share some thoughts on the direction and challenges of higher education as it pertains to Kenya in general. University education in Kenya has seen marked growth and currently the 5 public universities have a total enrolment of 41,500 students. The demand for university education has risen with the expansion of primary and secondary education and the increased demands of a country that is set to industrialize by the year 2020.

Ladies and gentlemen, although the government policy at the moment is to give greater emphasis on the provision of basic education, university education is still considered crucial for meaningful industrial development.

In this connection the government will continue to allocate resources to the sub-sector while ensuring greater interval management and administration limitations in availability of public resources, universities and sustainable income generating projects which include promotion of our local universities to the outside world. The importance of the UNITWINIUNESCO Chair cannot therefore be over emphasized.

The ministry would like to commend both UNESCO and the University of Nairobi for coming up with this noble idea. I am particularly impressed by the University of Nairobi's initiative to bring the institutions of higher learning close to the community.

Ladies and Gentlemen, looking through the documents of UNESCO, and especially those documents dealing with higher education, I have been impressed by the emerging concern for blending the theoretical with the practical aspects of education. In the 1995 UNESCO document to celebrate the 50th anniversary it is argued that:

'The UNESCO has a common goal, agreement between minds can be reached spontaneously, not on the basis of common speculative ideas, but on common practical ideas, upon the affirmation of a single body of beliefs for guidance in action. No doubt, this is little enough, but is, nevertheless, enough to enable a great task to be undertaken'. (Jacques Maritain, 1995)

I note that this thinking has influenced the vision and mission of UNITWINIUNESCO Chair Programme.

I am pleased to note that the Chair on Women, Basic Education, Community Health and Sustainable Development is guided by simple realities of the Kenyan situation and is aimed at education and training programmes that emphasize practical life skills. Indeed this is in line with the current policy on education in Kenya since the adoption of the 8.4.4 education system which emphasizes education and training for self-reliance and self-employment.

An attempt is being made to impart special skills to the learners through vocational training as we move towards an industrialized nation status. This vision calls upon educators, especially - university educators, to come up with bold programmes, which will have far reaching ramifications for the educators and the educated at all levels to increase the number admitted to the universities.

I understand that the theme of Chair is, "Women, education, Community Health and Sustainable Development". This theme touches on timely and topical issues, given that all of us in our respective

areas are trying to enhance the status and conditions of women and eventually the communities in which they live.

It is my belief that these and other efforts directed towards the woman are the key to sustainability. It is in this connection I hope that the UNITWINIUNESCO Chair activities will address other issues of inequity, besides gender. These include cultural, regional and economic factors that contribute to inequitable gross enrolment rates at all levels.

The Ministry of Education supports your endeavour and wishes you well as you plunge into this noble idea between the universities and local communities. In addition the government is concerned about making education affordable at all levels by ensuring quality and relevance at well rationalized and established unit costs.

It is only through such measures that we can hope, as a country, to provide quality education and training to the increasing number of Kenyans.

The government will continue to support endeavours such as the UNESCO Chair and to welcome innovative ideas that will assist us to compete favourably with other countries of the world in terms of development.

On behalf of the Ministry of Education I would like to take this opportunity to wish you success in your planned activities.

Ladies and gentlemen, with these few remarks, I now have the pleasure of declaring this workshop officially open.