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Gender Awareness
In
Japan International Cooperation Agency's
Development Assistance

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Junko Matsui

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For my parents
Michiko and Nobuo.

Abstract

In the past, development efforts have failed to bring about genuine women's development which concerns both women's well-being and their status in the Third World. In order to achieve women's development, thorough understanding of the causes of women's underdevelopment, sound conceptualisation of women and development and strategies to bring about women's development are required. States and development agencies have specific perception on women and conceptualise women and development in various ways. From the different concepts we could expect different outcomes. In this research I look at implications of Japan International Cooperation Agency's women in development policy concerning women's development in the Third World.

In the first part of this research, I discuss concepts and strategies for women's development. The earlier thought on women and development, emerged in 1970s, attributes failure of past development efforts bringing about women's development, to preconceptions policymakers and planners have about women's roles in their families communities and nations. However, women's issues and women's projects were often continued to be marginalised within the development efforts which is informed by the perspective. Another perspective identified women's subordination to men as the fundamental cause of women's disadvantages they face.

Strategies for women's development are suggested based on the perspective problematising women's subordination in this research. The strategies must involve the improvement of women's immediate conditions and the change of unequal gender relations. Women's needs to achieve their well-being and ones derived from their tasks need to be identified and addressed. It is recognised that improvement of women's status is necessary to achieve their well-being. Women's needs could be addressed through both women specific projects and mainstream projects. In order to alter women's subordination to men transformative intervention was suggested. The transformative intervention seeks to address women's interests in transforming gender relations in a project addressing women's material needs. Moreover, in order for women to become

agents of their development and to alter power within gender relations, women's self-empowerment process must be encouraged. Self-empowerment is regarded as complementary to the strategies. Self-empowerment includes conscientisation about oppressive structure, and mobilisation of women to meet their own needs.

JICA concerns about women's participation in development projects, identification of gender division of labour and improvement of women's well-being in the Third World. However, JICA's concept of Women in Development is grounded on the perspective advocated in 1970s and is not informed by the failures of attempts made during 1970s and 1980s. JICA fails to problematise unequal gender relations and to develop strategies to transform gender relations. Hence, self-empowerment and transformative intervention are not recognised. JICA also lacks awareness toward marginalisation of women's issues and women's projects in development operation. Women's subordination in planning procedures reflects in the number of WID-related projects implemented and the kinds of needs addressed through development projects.

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Abbreviations

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSW	United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
CCIC	Canadian Council for International Co-operation
DAWN	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
FY	fiscal year
GAD	Gender and Development
GNP	gross national product
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JOCV	Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NZODA	New Zealand Official Development Assistance
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD/DAC	Development Assistance Committee of OECD
OECF	the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund
SAP	Structural Adjustment Policy
SID/WID	Women in Development caucus of Society for International Development
WAD	Women and Development
WID	Women in Development
UN	United Nations

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Women's living conditions and status in the Third World are still devastating. Many women face disadvantages as a result of their gender, and their life opportunities are limited. What attempts have people made to improve women's condition and status? Women have been, to varying degrees, a subject of consideration on the international agenda for years. United Nation's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was formed in 1946. The principle of equality of women and men is recognised in both United Nation (UN) Charter in 1945 and UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. In the 1950s and 1960s, a chief concern was improving the status of women. Several UN conventions of particular concern to women were held, that included:

1949 Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the prostitution or Others

1951 Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value

1952 Convention on the Political Rights of Women (source Brett 1991: 1).

This effort was carried on to the convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women, in 1979. However, these promises made to women during these conventions are still unachieved not only by way of implementation but also by the further commitment of many nations. In fact forty-six years after the first convention, in 1995, the CSW still "found it necessary to adopt a resolution on traffic in women and girls" (Steady 1995: 13)

Although, the conventions focused on the particular issues, more comprehensive way to understand women's situation and approaches for improving women's material conditions and status derived from a debate on women in development process, Such approaches have been suggested from several different perspectives. It was in the early 1970s within a development context, the global community affirmed centrality of the

issue of equality between women and men. International advocates, such as Women's movement, UN mandate and Development Assistance Committee of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC), started demanding for national governments and international development agencies to adopt special policies, strategies and measures to promote women's advancement. Four World Conferences on Women were organised by the UN –in Mexico in 1975, in Copenhagen in 1980, in Nairobi in 1985 and in Beijing in 1995. They have propelled an integration of policies, which share a certain perspective called Women in Development (WID). Till now such policy is often called WID.

The effectiveness of WID policy and measures in promoting women's advancement and gender equality have been well researched over time. Perspectives of WID which sees women's problem as lack of political and economic power has been reconsidered.

Development aid is provided through various forms of international aid agencies including bilateral (e.g. United States Agency for International Development) and multilateral donors (e.g. the World Bank). Among countries extending financial and/or technical aid, Japan is one of the largest donor countries.

Japan has allocated Official Development Assistance (ODA) since 1954. Japan's ODA extends to over 150 Third World countries in Asia, Africa, South Pacific, Middle East, Central and South America and Europe. Japan became the world's top donor country in 1989 and has retained that position since 1991 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan ((MoFA)) 14 Oct 1998). Japan's ODA is significant to recipient countries in terms of its budgetary scale. In 1993, Japan's ODA shared 20.2% of world's ODA in net disbursement base (MoFA 1995b: 1).

Japan expressed its intention to assist the social development sector which addresses poverty alleviation through addressing so called basic human needs, as well as the other key sector of economic infrastructure. Japan's ODA support of the social development sector shared 22.6% of Japan's bilateral ODA in 1993 (MoFA 1995b:1). The issue of

WID often appears in Japan's aid policy dialogue, sometimes as an issue under social development. Japan's efforts towards social development was again emphasised when it announced the reduction of ODA expenditure in 1996. Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs when budgeting for ODA said it was seeking quality than quantity. Women's development was articulated as an important sphere of this quality assistance. Thus, WID is regarded as an important policy concern by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Japan's ODA integrated WID policy much later than some other aid agencies, as for example, Canadian International Development Agency's WID integration in 1976. The Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs established WID Steering Committee and also appointed a staff each to all division within the Economic Cooperation Bureau of MoFA to take charge of WID promotion. In terms of Japan's other aid implementation body, the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the substantial WID promotion started in 1990s.

Research Aims

In this study I examine the WID or gender-awareness policy in Japan's grant aid technical co-operation, which is dealt by JICA. I aim to identify to what extent JICA's co-operation contributes to women's development. This research consists of two parts. Firstly, scrutinising the past experiences and philosophy as well as current thought, approaches and strategies in the achievement of women's development. This also gives a framework for a second part of the research, which is specifically an assessment of JICA's WID policy.

The structure of this research project

There are six chapters to this research project. Chapters Two, Three and Four present theoretical discussion on policies and strategies for women's development. What is required for development assistance to be gender-aware becomes distinct through those three chapters. Chapter Two focuses on analysis of aid policies toward women in and on

ideologies on which the policies are formulated. In Chapter Three, I include a discussion of empowerment, as a strategy which may be complement to improve both women's living conditions and women's status. Chapter Four describe self-empowerment, that is first introduced in Chapter Three. Self-empowerment is an important process which helps women develop them so that they can claim and realise gender equality in a bottom-up manner. In Chapter Five JICA's WID policy and its executed projects are analysed from Gender and Development (GAD) perspective that recognises there is a fundamental problem in women's underdevelopment which lies in women's subordinate position relative to men. Chapter six, the conclusion discusses gender politics underlying in integration of gender-awareness into development efforts.

Although, development agencies became to give more attention to women's development, both the diffusion of gender awareness within the agencies and the effectiveness of their strategies to women's development are not satisfactory. In this research, I intend to explore the reasons of women's underdevelopment, the strategies to improve it and the problems in JICA's WID policy.