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Feminist research methodologies and development: overview and practical application

Gwendolyn Beetham and Justina Demetriades

This article provides a background on the feminist frameworks at the foundation of research conducted from a gender perspective, showing that development research that ignores the complex aspects of gender relations results in incomplete and/or biased research, which in turn leads to the formulation of incomplete development policies and programmes. The article goes on to explore the ways that feminist methodologies have been used in the development of gender sensitive indicators and measurements of change, examining the methods currently available for assessing progress on gender equality and how gender methodologies can be used to ensure that indicators better reflect gendered experience.

What difference does difference make? Conducting research from a gender perspective¹

What is a gender methodology?

A methodology is a theory and analysis of how research should be conducted (Harding 1987). Methodologies are often confused with *epistemologies*, theories of knowledge, and *research methods*, which are the actual tools used to carry out research. From a gender perspective, researchers have noted that 'traditional' methodologies, epistemologies, and methods are not scientifically 'objective' but the opposite: they generally ignore women's knowledge by showing bias towards the male perspective. In response to this, methodologies used for research on women in development were developed from critiques of particular sex, class, and race biases found in 'traditional' research methodologies as well as dominant perspectives of development.

In order to take into consideration gender and all of its complexities, a key aspect of methodologies that are sensitive to gender is their ability to adapt to different circumstances and situations. Important to the concept of research from a gender perspective is the recognition that there is not one specific method or combination of methods that necessarily makes research 'feminist,' but rather that the research comes from an approach that is considerate of the multifaceted nature of gender (see first

point below). In other words, it is the research approach, or framework, itself that is critical: 'the emphasis... is on using methods which can best answer particular research questions, but always using them in ways which are consistent with broad feminist goals and ideology' (Jayaratne and Stewart 1991, 91). Moreover, because 'power relations between men and women are complex, multi-dimensional and pervasive... a diversity of tools and angles are needed to disentangle and contest them' (Lewis 2004, 7). That said, there are several commonly agreed upon characteristics of research methodologies using a gender perspective (UN-INSTRAW 2006)²:

- Consideration of the hierarchical power relations between men and women that tend to disadvantage women throughout the research process – this involves recognising both gender inequality in the everyday lives of women and men, and also the gendered nature of the research process itself.
- Integration of diversity, including the differing ways that race, ethnicity, class, caste, sexuality, age, and (dis)ability, affect gender relations, with special attention to the voices of the marginalised, into all levels of the research process.
- Analysis of the relationships between and among all research parties (including the researcher/s).
- Common use of qualitative methods considered 'non-traditional' in the physical and social sciences and in research for development in particular.
- Adaptation of quantitative methods to take into consideration 'hard-to-measure' aspects such as women's empowerment, and sensitive items such as gender-based violence.

WID to GAD: research implications of shifts in development theory and practice

Conceptual frameworks for work on women and gender in development affect the entire research process, from the issues considered at the research formulation stage, to the questions asked when conducting research, to the elements considered important to project planning and implementation, and finally the ways in which indicators are developed to measure success in both the research and programme evaluation processes. Because of this, it is important to explore the connections between shifts in development theory and gender research, to fully understand the methodologies used for research on gender issues today. Moreover, '[t]heoretical frameworks which undergird... research projects greatly influence what questions are investigated, what data is collected from whom, and how that data is analyzed, interpreted, and reported' (Waller 2005).

There have been two dominant paradigms, or frameworks, that describe the main trends in the ways that women's relationship to development, in terms of both research and policy, has been considered over the past few decades. In both development literature and policy, these are referred to as Women in Development (WID), and Gender and Development (GAD)³.

In the early 1970s, women working in development began to critique the dominant development framework's 'modernisation theory'⁴ focus on men and its assumption that economic prosperity would 'trickle down' to women. Based on a 'liberal feminist' framework, primarily developed in north America, 'women in development' (WID) was heavily influenced by the work of women researching development, most notably Esther Boserup, who argued that women were almost entirely left out of the development process⁵. Aligned with the overall concepts of modernisation theory, WID assumed that women's subordination was directly linked to their exclusion from the formal marketplace, and therefore stressed the integration of women into the market economy through development programmes focused on women, in what came to be known as the 'efficiency approach'. Although the approach neglected to challenge the dominant development paradigm, it was successful in 'generat[ing] new research, including analytical evaluations of the impact on rural women of development projects' (Miller and Razavi 1995). The collection of sex-disaggregated data to demonstrate and document discrimination against women, including gender-based violence, and to recognise these issues as development concerns, became prominent. This process began what Jain (2005) refers to as 'questioning knowledge' – or a questioning of the traditional issues and strategies that made up the existing body of knowledge in the field of development, and expanding that base so that it recognised and advanced the rights of women⁶.

In the mid- to late 1970s and 1980s, women of the Global South began to critique the WID framework⁷. This critique was based on a post-colonial analysis that argued that WID and the Northern-defined and imposed theory of development with which it is associated are based on Western ideals that do not translate to the contexts in the Global South. Implicit in the critique of liberal-feminist-led 'top-down' WID programmes was the notion that women's grassroots networks and research institutes in the Global South should be more involved in producing research by and for women⁸. As Connelly *et al.* (2000) note, the 'critique of colonial–postcolonial representation has aroused considerable interest in the relationship between power, knowledge, and language and discourse. Feminist scholars in the South have become increasingly vocal about the need for studies to give voice to the complex, diverse, and multilayered realities of Third World women'.

The gender and development (GAD)⁹ framework which resulted from these critiques began the shift from women-only research and programmes to a broader consideration of 'gender relations',¹⁰ or the hierarchical power relations between men and women that tend to disadvantage women (AWID 2005). Looking beyond the market-based explanations of women's subordination, the GAD approach recognised that gendered subordination is constructed at many levels and through many institutions, including the household, the community, and the state. The approach also marked a shift from the efficiency approach's focus on 'practical gender needs', which do not challenge gender roles and norms and are centred around immediate

concerns (often inadequacies in living conditions), to encompass 'strategic gender interests'. These interests concern the power imbalances that lie at the root of gender subordination, such as gendered roles and divisions of labour (Molyneux 1985). This marked a shift in both research and policy, from seeing women as beneficiaries whose lives could be improved without altering traditional gender roles, to viewing women as agents who can be empowered to improve their position in society (Connelly *et al.* 2000).

In addition to recognising that institutions affect men and women differently, women from the Global South (as well as women of colour and minority women in the Global North) also cited identity and intersections of race, class, sex, religion, etc. They argued that these multiple identities play key roles in women's and men's relationships with institutions and each other, and thus impact on gender relations and both practical gender needs and strategic gender interests (Connelly *et al.* 2000). The framework's attention to identity, difference, and institutions in and beyond the market expanded the definition of what it means to focus on 'women' in development, and thus changed the way researchers conducted research. The recognition that the combination of interlocking forms of oppression affects not only how women live their lives but also how they are affected by any given development research project or policy, is therefore an essential part of conducting research from a GAD perspective.

GAD research perspectives: diverse strategies for diverse lives

Combining the need for 'alternative' development paradigms and a focus on the intersectional quality of discrimination against women, the GAD approach worked towards building methodologies that were more participatory and considerate of local knowledge – or knowledge that is traditionally held by local communities, commonly embedded in community practices and institutions (Gilmore 2003). As Jane Parpart argues: 'Emancipatory development will only occur when development theorists and practitioners adopt a more inclusive approach to knowledge/expertise, a readiness and ability to "hear" different voices/experiences, and the humility to recognize that established discourses and practices of development have often done more harm than good' (1995, 240). Research methodologies that take into consideration different knowledges and experiences, then, have the ability to work towards sustainable development that benefits both men and women.

In order to address the multiple dimensions of women's oppression in particular, and the traditional bias in development research in general, gender researchers both used existing methods and developed new approaches to research. Two specific foci have been the collection of sex-disaggregated data and the use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, or 'mixed methods' (Jayaratne and Stewart 1991). Beyond encouraging the collection of sex-disaggregated data, however, researchers attempting to capture the full complexity of gender relations also assert that '[r]esearch which only documents differences between the sexes offers no

understanding of why those differences exist or how such differences may be attenuated and therefore may reinforce (or create) the public's preconceived sexist attitudes' (Jayaratne and Stewart 1991, 88). That is to say, only when accompanied by an analysis of gender relations do sex-disaggregated data (either qualitative or quantitative) work towards producing change in the lives of women. Qualitative methods, such as the open-ended interview, which often involves the use of topic guidelines rather than questions that are strictly defined like those used in quantitative surveys have been used to address this concern. They are considered important to gender researchers for evaluating the nuances of many of the social phenomena important to an analysis of gender relations that cannot easily be quantified by numerical statistics or values.

Gender researchers have also addressed traditional bias by devising new methods to collect quantitative data that take into consideration the nuances of gender relations¹¹. Development expert and economist Devaki Jain recognises the historic role of researchers working from a gender perspective in the development field in addressing this problem, noting that the early research which uncovered the ways that women were differently affected by development policies and programmes 'led to an understanding that the way statisticians measured women's roles and contributions within economies was flawed' (2005, 106). Recently, the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD 2005, 11) underscored the continued importance of this tradition (using varied methods of data collection), describing the way in which traditional (quantitative) methods used to collect data often ignore gender differences, 'the implicit assumption being that [such methods] are essentially benign and gender neutral'.

From theory to practice: using GAD to develop indicators of change

The assumption that certain forms of data, or ways of measuring data, are 'gender neutral' is alive and well today. Indicators of change are being used more frequently to measure the progress of development policies and programmes. Despite the best efforts of gender and development experts (see, for example, the indicators developed to measure the progress of the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 3 – 'Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women'), these indicators are often developed without full consideration of gender. GAD remains the dominant framework for conducting research from a gender perspective today. It offers a useful structure for addressing this problem, building on the work already undertaken in the realm of 'gendering' quantitative methods, as well as developing qualitative methods that are more gender sensitive than their quantitative counterparts. There are several common methodological approaches to research and programme implementation under the GAD framework to choose from¹², each 'differ(ing) in terms of their conceptualization of gender, scope of institutional analysis, implications for development, and issues of social and organizational change' (Miller and Razavi 1998).

However, as discussed at the beginning of this section, all frameworks grounded in GAD theory use a gender perspective to examine gender and power relations in various spheres (the household, the state, etc.), emphasising participation, empowerment, and accountability during all stages of the research process, including the development of indicators. Further, many researchers and practitioners using gender methodologies see all stages of the research process as a form of political action that should consider women's empowerment, changing gendered institutions and power relations, with the achievement of gender equality as its goal. Therefore, as the next section will examine, the way in which change is indicated or measured is a critical part of the work of those who strive to make gender equity a reality.

Indications of empowerment: from setting the agenda to measuring change¹³

International development programmes, policies, and overall paradigm shifts have been influenced by the research produced under the GAD framework, as is shown not least by an increased incorporation of aims relating to gender equality and women's empowerment in development goals, policy, and programming. However, work in this area is not complete. Noleen Heyzer (2000), Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women stated that, '[w]e have agreed to a path, but have neglected to create all of the road signs that let us know how far we have come in our journey and how far we have to go'.

The need to measure change, and the need for better ways to do so, has also been recognised in recent reviews, which have emphasised the difficulties both of achieving and measuring change, and of accessing data to indicate progress. Reviews which highlight the growing awareness of a need for better gender-sensitive methods of measurement include: Beijing Platform for Action+10, Millennium Development Goals+5, and the current reviews of the Gender-Related Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with external gender specialists¹⁴.

It is not only international fora which recognise the need for better measurements of change. Gender-sensitive frameworks and measurements of change can support the efforts of women's organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), governments and development agencies to ensure there is progress on gender equality. Their uses lie for example in tracking the gaps between the widespread ratification of international commitments and their impact, and hence aiding accountability and improving planning for their implementation. They can also facilitate tracking activism, advocacy, programmes, and policies, including tracking the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming initiatives. Here, however, we will focus on indicators developed at the international and regional level, rather than at programme level.

Using indicators to measure change

Measuring change around gender equality requires knowing both the current situation, from the collection and analysis of 'baseline data', and developing indicators to establish the extent to which this *status quo* changes. Indicators are used to track progress towards a desired change or a desired state, an example of this being the link drawn between equal numbers of boys and girls accessing primary education and gender equality more broadly.

Indicators are used to measure research and programme success by donors, development organisations, and research institutes themselves. Indicators are used for explicitly political purposes and for reasons which appear immediately practical. Donors may want to know whether money being spent is working towards sustainable development objectives that include improving the lives of both women and men. To do this, they need to develop gender sensitive indicators against which to monitor¹⁵. For example, if poverty is the condition measured, gender-sensitive indicators can show differences in the severity and prevalence of poverty, and what this means for daily activities, by measuring gender roles and responsibilities, for women relative to men. They can also indicate reasons for the differences between men's and women's experience of poverty, such as unequal access to decision-making and assets.

Quantity versus quality

Indicators can measure quantity and/or quality; however the trend is to stick with the easily quantifiable. By way of example, when looking at the participation of women in decision-making at the parliamentary level, *quantitative* indicators would be used to record the *number* of women in parliament, while *qualitative* indicators would look at the *quality* of their participation and its impact. This could include looking at to what extent women in parliament contribute to policy discussions, whether their contributions are intended to further gender equality, and if their contributions impact on the outcomes of discussions.

There is a need to move beyond the easily quantifiable and easy to measure. Statistics appear more concrete and may be privileged by busy mainstream practitioners, without due recognition that statistical data, along with qualitative data, are often based on opinions¹⁶. We need both quantitative and qualitative indicators and methods of research (data collection) to measure gender inequality and build a more accurate picture. Furthermore, we should ensure that quantitative and qualitative data complement each other¹⁷. Following the principles of the GAD framework means fielding more diverse data that better represent the experience of gender in/equality. Moreover, where relevant, indicators used need to be developed from a gender perspective that is contextually appropriate, in order to take into consideration the complex and differing experiences that compose women's lives.

Data collection

Once indicators have been formulated, it is essential that sufficient reliable data are produced that can be measured against them. The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action states that national and international statistics organisations should collect sex-disaggregated data and develop qualitative and quantitative indicators to aid a gendered assessment of areas such as economic performance. However, to date, this proposal has been insufficiently executed.

In the absence of data, or of data collection resources, the quantitative indicators that can be formulated to measure gender equality and women's empowerment are limited. This is evidenced by the example of the World Economic Forum, which stated in 2005 that due to lack of available data they had been unable to systematically incorporate aspects of gender inequality, such as levels of violence against women, as an indicator in assessing women's empowerment, and instead incorporated other related dimensions of health and well-being. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA 2006, 92) states that in order to mainstream a gender perspective into national statistical systems, gender analysis must be implemented throughout the process of the production of statistics, from the development of concepts and methods for collecting data to the presentation of results. This endeavour requires political will at all levels and in all institutions that provide administrative data. One initiative to collect and make publicly available statistics to measure against gender sensitive indicators is the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee's (OECD/DAC) Gender, Institutions and Development Data Base, which has 60 gender-sensitive indicators. The use of indicators and the collection and provision of data against them aids transparency and accountability of donor governments by showing where aid from DAC members goes, what purposes it serves, and what policies it aims to implement (Moser, 2007)¹⁸.

What and how to measure

The 'mainstream' view is that measuring progress is a technical rather than a political process. However, the formulation of indicators and collection of data *are* political. By choosing what to measure, the policy-maker, advocate, researcher, or practitioner can choose the story he or she wants to tell (Moser 2007). For example, the calculations in the UNDP's GDI utilise Gross Domestic Product as a measure of the national level of economic development and adjusts this down (establishing the GDI) depending on the status of women in relation to this. This is therefore biased in favour of economic concepts and measures of development (UNRISD 2005, 57).

There are also a number of constraints to the effective use of gender-sensitive indicators to track change. Changes in the conditions surrounding and influencing gender relations imply a need for constantly evolving indicators. This is a challenge combined with the necessity to show change, or lack of change, over time. Formulating

gender-sensitive indicators and methods to measure change may be time and resource intensive, which can inhibit independent indicator formulation, staff training, and field surveys. Pressure from donors to supply rapid assessments and lack of capacity to analyse indicators may pose further challenges for organisations and institutions. In order to mitigate these types of constraints the Swayamsiddha project on women's health and empowerment used the capacity of community-based organisations to monitor against the indicators. This was a key factor in final selection of the indicators to monitor the progress of the multi-organisation project (BRIDGE, 2007).

Measuring many things at once

In line with the GAD framework, good indicators are formed in recognition of the interrelationship of multiple factors. The indicators that make up Giele's framework (in Moghadam and Senftova 2005) on gender equality, for example, include measurements for the concurrent analysis of areas such as: women's political participation, their work and mobility, family-formation, education, health, and sexual control. Questions accompanying the indicator on 'family' include: 'What is the age of marriage? Do women choose their own partners? Can they divorce them? What is the status of single women and widows? Do women have freedom of movement? Do family laws empower or disempower women?' A further challenge for gender researchers and mainstream practitioners alike is addressing the difficult to define (such as 'empowerment') and the difficult to measure (such as gender-based violence).

Example: measuring women's empowerment

Empowerment is multidimensional and must therefore be considered along multiple lines. Yet if perceptions and experiences of empowerment vary according to context and socio-economic background, is it possible to have global indicators on, and a global picture of, women's empowerment? There is no clear consensus on what represents evidence of women's empowerment or what it means. Kabeer (2005) argues that one way of thinking about 'power' is in terms of the ability of women to make choices about their lives – such as whether or not they attend school and what they do with their education. Empowerment is thus a process by which those who have been denied power gain power, in particular the capacity to make strategic life choices. Yet because of the importance of beliefs and values in legitimating gender inequality, a process of empowerment often begins from within, which makes it difficult to measure. Empowerment comprises not only forms of observable action, such as political decision-making, but also the meaning, motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their actions; their *sense* of agency or self-worth (Kabeer 2005).

A study reviewing international approaches to measuring women's empowerment suggests measuring along six dimensions: economic, socio-cultural, familial-

interpersonal, legal, political and psychological. Each of these in turn is measured at different social levels: the household, community, and 'broader arenas'. These are designed to accommodate contextual differences between countries. For example, in the economic dimension, indicators of empowerment include women's and men's control over household income, their access to employment, credit, and markets, and representation of women's and men's interests in macro-economic policies. In the psychological dimension, indicators include self-esteem and psychological well-being, collective awareness of injustice, and a systemic acceptance of women's entitlement and inclusion (Malhotra *et al.* 2003, in Moser 2007).

Example: measuring gender-based violence (GBV)

As a sensitive issue, formulating indicators around GBV and collecting data is difficult to undertake. Given this, GBV in particular can be marginalised as a development issue. It is essential therefore to document the prevalence and nature of GBV in order to lobby for its status as a priority development issue, both in its own right and to demonstrate its relationship to other development issues (such as poverty and HIV and AIDS). It has also been noted that the process of research on GBV, when well conducted, can serve as an intervention in itself. Methods of gathering information on GBV therefore need to be both effective and sensitive, and mitigate risk to informants. Useful considerations in the formulation of research on GBV often include: what purpose will the research serve and what benefits and risks are there to informants? What methods and indicators would best demonstrate causal factors and how does violence relate to other conditions, such as poverty?¹⁹

The *WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women* (2005) provides a cross-cultural examination of patterns of partner violence. The evidence demonstrated that levels of violence varied substantially between settings, among and within countries. This raised questions regarding the factors underlying these differences and also about the methods used to investigate violence in different contexts. For this reason the study took a conservative definition of violence which meant indicators and the questions that accompanied them were direct and simple for cross-comparison. In a different study, in Pakistan, participatory researchers used techniques such as getting mothers-in-law to leave the room during particular questions by politely asking for a glass of water (Andersson and Roche 2006, in Moser 2007).

International and regional indicators

Despite the challenges in defining ideas such as empowerment and gender equality, international indicators are essential for cross-country comparisons and advocacy purposes. The gender-focused indicators of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the UNDP GDI and GEM are of great value. However, they alone are

not sufficient to describe the breadth of individual and collective experiences of gender inequality. Reviews of existing indicators and their formulation provide complementary suggestions on how to supplement and adapt these approaches to different contexts, while linking to international frameworks on gender equality.

For instance, the indicators linked to MDG 3 have been scrutinised for not fully capturing gendered experience. One target for MDG 3 is to '[e]liminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education'. This is hugely important as one measure of gender equality; however, it does not go far enough. In 2003, the Task Force on Education and Gender Equality set up by the United Nations Millennium Project concluded that while education is an important part of the empowerment process, it does not capture all the major aspects of gender equality. Women need not only education, but also the opportunity to use their capabilities and make choices regarding, for example, employment or participation in political decision-making²⁰.

At the international level, indicators based on global standards may not translate usefully to the local or regional context (UNRISD 2005). The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC 2004) report on the Caribbean's progress towards the MDGs highlighted the limited utility of broad measurements and the assumptions embedded in the indicators used for monitoring progress towards the MDGs. If manifestations of gender inequality are context-specific, can global indicators sufficiently represent these specific contexts? The Economic Commission for Africa sought to address this issue in 2004 by developing the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI), which modifies the GDI and GEM frameworks to make them more applicable to the region. It puts emphasis on the major African charters which have a bearing on gender relations and women's empowerment, such as the Dakar Platform for Action²¹ and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa²². It is designed to provide African policy makers with an appropriate tool to measure gender equality and equity, and help monitor progress made in implementing the conventions which have been ratified by African countries. The AGDI is made up of two components: the Gender Status Index, which uses quantitative indicators, and the African Women's Progress Scoreboard, which uses qualitative indicators to measure government policy performance regarding women's advancement. The AGDI has been piloted in 12 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Egypt, Ghana, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda.

Promising developments in ways to measure change

There are several lessons that we can take from best practices developed through gender and development theory, research, and activism by exploring the following: what new qualitative and participatory tools could we draw on? What methods can be adopted to ensure methodologies are gender sensitive? Muraleedharan (2006) states

that 'participatory approaches, methods, tools, activities and related changes in attitudes can facilitate a more equitable and demand-driven participatory development process'. Moser (2007) argues that gender-sensitive participatory methods for measuring change can also be a catalyst for transformative development, with male and female participants gaining skills to play a greater role in their own development and empowerment. For example, in its strategic impact enquiry on women's empowerment, the NGO CARE believed that the research process should be recognised as a social process, which can itself be empowering or disempowering. The CARE initiative in Ecuador included women project participants in the research team; this 'challenged conventional distinctions between researchers and "subjects of research" and was intended to further promote empowerment' (Mosedale 2005, in Moser 2007). And at the international level, some steps have already been taken to better capture and measure gender relations. For example, Social Watch's Gender Equity Index (GEI) provides for a more multi-dimensional approach to assessing gender equality by diversifying the indicator of economic participation through measuring the income gap between women and men, as well as the proportion of women in the labour force (Social Watch 2005). UNDP has also undertaken a rigorous review of the GDI/GEM including external specialists as well as UN gender experts (Klasen 2006).

Conclusion

Gender research methodologies are essential for furthering the goal of equitable social and economic development. Measuring change on the basis of gender-sensitive frameworks is essential to monitoring the process of development for gender equality and gender equitable results – at all levels and in all contexts. Mainstream and gender-focused development researchers, policymakers, and practitioners alike are responsible for ensuring they use gender-sensitive methods and methodologies, to ensure reliable research results and subsequent positive action. Furthermore, without a combination of gendered frameworks, gender-sensitive agenda setting, programmes, policies, and monitoring, women will continue to be, as Boserup suggested in the 1970s, left out of the development process.

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Notes

- 1 Thanks to the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) for allowing the use of data gathered by Gwendolyn Beetham for a project on mapping gender research methodologies conducted at INSTRAW March–May 2006 for this portion of the article. For more information on INSTRAW's work on gender research and research methodologies, see www.un-instraw.org.
- 2 See also: Reinharz (1992); Waller (2005); Fonow and Cook (1991); Harding and Norberg (2005).
- 3 There has been much scholarship on these shifts, a full documentation of which is beyond the scope of this article. For overviews of the WID/GAD shift, see, for example: Jaquette and Summerfield (2006); Parpart *et al.* (2000); Jackson and Pearson (1998); Visvanathan *et al.* (1997); Marchand and Parpart (1995); Miller and Razavi (1995).
- 4 For definitions of the two dominant theories of development since World War II, 'modernisation' and 'dependency,' see Parpart *et al.* (2000).
- 5 *Women's Role in Economic Development*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1970.
- 6 See the Gender Roles/Harvard Analytical Framework developed by the Harvard Institute for International Development in collaboration with the Women in Development Office of USAID for a WID-inspired approach to research and programme development (Overholt, Cloud and Austin 1984; Miller and Razavi 1998).
- 7 See Marchand and Parpart (1995); Sen and Grown (1987); Mohanty *et al.* (1992); Gaidzwanwa (1992); Mama (1996); Lewis (2004). Connelly *et al.* (2000) provide the following overview: 'Institutions for research and activism blossomed in the South and played a key role in these debates. The Association of African Women for Research and Development . . . sponsored networking among African researchers and publication of articles on methodology and development for women in Africa. [. . .] The research carried out by the Institute of Social and Economic Research and by the Women and Development Unit of the University of the West Indies has provided both theoretical and methodological insights into Caribbean women's lives. [. . .] The Center for the Development of Brazilian Women. . .has provided an umbrella for Brazilian feminists largely concerned with the economic dimensions of women's subordination. [. . .] The Gender and Development Unit of the Asian and Pacific Development Center, the Pacific and Asian Women's Forum, and the Asian Women's Research and Action Network have stimulated important research on women in the region. [. . .] Indian feminism flowered in the 1980s, inspiring the creation of organizations such as the

Economists Interested in Women's Issues Group and the Centre for Women's Development Studies, in New Delhi. DAWN...grew from a small seed planted in Bangalore, India, into an international forum for women in the South concerned with development strategies, policies, theories, and research.'

- 8 See for example Wong (1981); Steady (1983) cited in Connelly *et al.* 2000.
- 9 GAD is still accepted as the dominant approach to considering gender issues in development today. However, critiques of the approach ask whether the way in which GAD tends to be implemented, with emphasis on 'gender mainstreaming', has meant a shift away from a focus on women, a depoliticisation of women's issues, and decreased attention and money to already under-funded programmes and organisations focusing on women's issues. The 'gender mainstreaming debate' focuses on the co-option of processes like gender analysis and gender mainstreaming (the integration of a gender perspective into all development programmes and policies) by mainstream development organisations. See Goetz 1997; Miller and Razavi 1995; Arnfred 2001; various authors, IDS 2004.
- 10 Although beyond the scope of this article, the shift from 'women' to 'gender' which took place as a result of the GAD framework's prominence has been debated. This has particularly been with regard to what some see as the replacement of 'women' with 'gender' and a continuation of the 'efficiency approach', meaning that the concept of gender relations has been misinterpreted and/or co-opted to mean only women and not the full examination of gender relations as intended. Still others argue that a shift to 'gender' has meant an unnecessary shift to a focus on men in some cases, ignoring the persistent unequal status of women. Difficulties around translating the term 'gender' have also been cited by many in the non-English speaking world.
- 11 For example, as a result of the work of gender researchers, practitioners, and activists over the past decade, measurement tools (or indicators) have been created within the United Nations system that attempt to quantitatively measure women's status. See, for example, the Gender-Related Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) used by UNDP for the *Human Development Reports*. Rather than using one measurement, such as maternal mortality, or the number of girls achieving primary education, these tools combine several factors in order to gain a more complete picture of women's status. For example, GEM combines 'three basic dimensions of empowerment – economic participation and decision-making, political participation and decision-making and power over economic resources'.
- 12 See UN-INSTRAW (2006). In addition, there are non-gender-specific approaches to methodologies that have been adapted for use by gender researchers. These methodologies include many of the same tenets as research conducted from a specific gender perspective, including greater attention to participation, accountability, and empowerment during all stages of the research process. It is important to note that certain aspects of each methodology, and also specific methods, both qualitative and quantitative, are often used interchangeably and applied according to the specific situation.
- 13 The second half of this article draws on the concept note by Justina Demetriades for the BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack on Gender and Measurements of Change (2007). Thanks to

- Hazel Reeves for substantive input. Some of the examples provided are drawn from the Overview Report by Annalise Moser – which is available at www.bridge.ids.ac.uk.
- 14 For a variety of papers on the GDI/GEM reviews please see Klasen (2006).
 - 15 This is evidenced by gender-focused organisations' work on new aid modalities, including for example the United Kingdom Gender and Development Network. See also Social Watch (2005).
 - 16 See Taher *et al.* (2006).
 - 17 The International Labour Organisation asked the founders of Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising (WIEGO) to quantify their concerns (Who are home-based workers? Where are they? How many are there?). Dr Martha Chen of Harvard University produced a document heavy with data on women in the informal economy. This provided the leverage to form WIEGO. Ela Bhatt noted, 'we were right in assuming that facts and figures would speak to governments far louder than the pleas of poor people' Bhatt 2006, also in Moser 2007).
 - 18 The database is a tool for researchers and policy makers to determine and analyse obstacles to women's economic development. It covers a total of 162 countries and comprises an array of 50 indicators on gender discrimination.
 - 19 The World Health Organisation (WHO 2005) has produced a guidebook for researchers and activists on researching gender based violence which provides key tenets for gender-sensitive research design and methodologies, through to indicators.
 - 20 For this reason, its report recommended that countries add two targets to meet goal three: eliminate gender inequality in access to economic assets and employment by the year 2015 and achieve a 30 per cent share of seats for women in national parliaments by 2015. UNIFEM and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) also proposed complementary, gender-sensitive MDG measurements.
 - 21 African Common Position for the Advancement of Women adopted at the Fifth African Regional Conference on Women, Dakar, Senegal, 16–23 November 1994 www.une-ca.org/fr/acgd/en/1024x768/en_gender/en_tool/en_9411_apa1.htm#declaration (last accessed 13 March 2007).
 - 22 This protocol came into force in November 2005. www.achpr.org/english/_info/women_en.html (last accessed 13 March 2007).

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