TOWARDS A GENDER ANALYSIS OF WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR IN A RURAL BLACK COMMUNITY IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the topic of the position of women in rural development. This topic has become the focus of extensive international debate at theoretical and policy levels, but for historical reasons remains relatively undeveloped in South Africa. After reviewing a number of contemporary approaches, the thesis argues in favour of the "Gender and Development" approach, and applies this to a case study of the gender division of labour in a rural black community in South Africa.

Chapter one reviews the variants of the "Women in Development" (WID) approaches, as well as the claims of "Global Feminism". It is argued that, although Global Feminism began as a critique of WID approaches, it is in fact similar in many respects to the contemporary "empowerment" focus within the WID tradition. Although useful, these approaches are not sufficiently explicit in their theorizing of gender relations in the context of development.

Chapter 2 sets out the key elements of the "Gender and Development" approach, which emphasises the complexity of the issue of women's interests, and warns against assuming a commonality of interests amongst all women. Instead, the GAD approach demands a detailed investigation of socially-constructed gender relations in specific communities, with a special focus on the gender division of labour. For GAD

theorists such analysis is a requirement of development planning which seeks to advance the position of women.

Chapter 3 spells out the methodological implications of the GAD approach, and develops a specific research design, influenced by GAD as well as feminist methodology, for the investigation of the gender-specific needs of women in Merino Walk, a rural black community. Chapter 4 presents a brief overview of the general context of rural women in Southern Africa, and a specific history of the Merino Walk community.

Chapter 5 presents the results of the research. In the context of this thesis, the results are presented essentially as an illustration of the application of the GAD principles to a specific South African example. The conclusion draws out some of the issues which emerge from the research.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with the broad topic of women's position in development. Despite the growing international debate and body of literature that focuses on the question of women and development, and despite the proliferation of a range of diverse policies, programmes and projects designed to assist low-income women in the Third World, particularly since the United Nations (UN) Decade for Women (1975 - 1985), South Africa's Apartheid policies and subsequent international isolation have meant that it has remained fairly removed from these initiatives and debates. As a result, very few South African development organisations have begun to address the specific issue of women and development.

In the present transitional period of negotiations and reconstruction the issue of rural development in general, and the development of rural women in particular, is just starting to be debated. Although these debates will have to take into account the unique nature of South Africa's Apartheid history, and policy recommendations will have to be grounded in the specific conditions and challenges of the South African context, there is nevertheless much for South African development workers to learn from the experiences and mistakes of their international counterparts.

This thesis examines some of the international debates and trends concerning the issue of women and development, and tries to assess the extent to which they could be usefully applied to the South African context. It is hoped that such an exercise will contribute to the development debate within South Africa and to the formulation of an appropriate development process that advances and improves the position of rural women in this country.

At the time of writing the thesis, the author was employed by the Grahamstown Rural Committee (GRC), a non-government service organisation that works with rural communities in the Border/Ciskei region around land and development issues. That experience highlighted the need for theories which not only advanced understanding in a general sense, but were also of immediate practical value in guiding and enriching actual research activities and development practice, specifically the formulation of an appropriate research design for investigating the gender-specific needs of women in rural communities at the local level. A central concern of the thesis is thus not only to analyse the extent to which the various theories and policy approaches advance our understanding of the issue of women and development, but also the extent to which each is able to guide and inform the work of development practitioners at the local level.

Chapter 1 of the thesis contains a review of the international body of literature on the issue of women and development in

the Third World. It examines the two major forces within the women's movement - on the one hand the Women in Development (WID) approach, and, on the other hand, Global Feminism - that have shaped and influenced the direction of thinking on the "women's question" within the international development arena. The discussion of the WID approach, which is perhaps the best known of the many policy approaches toward the issue of women and development, examines the various WID initiatives as categorised by Buvinic (1983) and Moser (1991). The different conceptual and theoretical assumptions underpinning the various WID approaches and initiatives are contrasted to those underlying the Global Feminism approach. The discussion of Global Feminism, which represents an attempt to define a feminist vision of women and development, highlights the fact that although Global Feminism initially defined itself as an alternative to WID, in recent years there has been a growing degree of consensus and agreement between these two approaches.

Chapter 2 of the thesis examines the Gender and Development (GAD) approach to the issue of women and development. It examines the way in which the focus of the GAD approach on the issue of gender relations and roles in a variety of settings, rather than on women <u>per se</u>, differentiates it from the previous two approaches. This chapter argues that the GAD approach's focus on gender contains a number of theoretical and conceptual advances over the other approaches that sharpen our analysis of the problematic issue of women and development. In addition

to this, its focus on gender relations and roles at the local level also facilitates the formulation of more appropriate and sustainable community development plans, which take the gender-specific needs, interests and priorities of different groups into account. The thesis thus argues that the application of the GAD approach to development work in South Africa, particularly to local-level community investigations, would greatly assist our ability to address the gender-specific development needs and interests of rural women.

Chapter 3 of the thesis addresses the issue of how to translate the GAD theoretical concepts into research questions and a research design, in the context of the identification and analysis of the gender-specific development needs of the women of Merino Walk, a small rural community in the north-eastern Cape Province. The chapter commences with an examination of the way in which conventional research methods have operated to marginalise and render women invisible in both the research and development planning stages. The aim of this discussion is to highlight the various gender biases that need to be avoided when conducting research and the need for an alternative, and gender-sensitive, research methodology. This chapter argues that the GAD approach, particularly the GAD research framework developed by the Canadian Council for International Co-operation and the Match International Centre (referred to as "The Collective") contains many of the methodological components necessary for this type of gender-sensitive research. This framework, which stresses the importance of

analysing the gender division of labour and the different types of work performed by men, women and children at the local level, was therefore employed in the Merino Walk community investigation.

Chapter 4 of the thesis outlines the social background to the general position of rural women in South Africa. It argues that although the position of South African rural women is in some ways similar to that of rural women in other developing countries, the history of Apartheid has, however, affected rural black women's position in a distinctive manner. It is therefore argued that development policies that seek to advance the position of rural women will only succeed if they are based on an understanding of how the specificity of their situation influences the nature of the gender relations in rural areas in South Africa in a unique and complicated way. This is followed by an historical account of the Merino Walk community, which traces their origins to Herschel and outlines the circumstances and conditions which gave rise to some of the Herschel people becoming refugees in Thornhill.

Chapter 5 of the thesis, which is presented in case study form, contains the findings of the research conducted in Merino Walk in February 1992. This chapter analyses the gender relations and gender division of labour that exists in Merino Walk, and focuses particularly on the roles, responsibilities and work performed by the women of the community. One of the central aims of this chapter is to examine the way in which the work

and responsibilities allocated to women within this gender division of labour are both affected by local conditions, and at the same time influence and shape the way in which they experience these conditions. Using the framework developed by the Canadian Council for International Co-operation and the Match International Centre, this chapter also examines the way in which women's responsibilities within the gender division of labour and the manner in which they experience these conditions gives rise to a set of gender-specific needs, interests and priorities that are distinct from the gender-specific needs and interests of men. The chapter also outlines the nature of the women's gender-specific needs and interests and the implications that these have for development planning. It must be stressed, however, that this chapter does not attempt to translate these gender-specific research findings into definite development plans. Instead it merely points to some of the gender issues that will have to be carefully considered when formulating plans for development projects.

CHAPTER 1. FEMINISM, WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

Two parallel trends have gained momentum during the past two decades. The first is the "women in development" (WID) debate that gained international prominence during and immediately after the United Nations (UN) Decade for Women (1975 - 1985). The second is the growth in women's movements around the world along with the development of a feminist discourse and attempts to define a Global Feminism. Until fairly recently, there has been very little dialogue between the two, and consequently, attempts to advance a feminist vision of women and development are relatively immature.

This gap between feminist discourse and the question of women and development is especially pronounced in the South African context. There are a number of reasons for this separation, one of the most important being the way in which South Africa's Apartheid history has shaped and influenced both the type of development work that has been possible, and the nature of the South African feminist movement.

Not only has the Apartheid system affected the type of development work that has been possible in the past, but it has also set the constraints and parameters within which any future rural development can occur. (By "rural" here I refer to those areas outside the towns and cities, including areas within South Africa as well as the Bantustans. Much of this land is

relatively heavily populated, and not necessarily characterised by agricultural production.) During the Apartheid era very little "development" took place and in the present phase of reconstruction and transformation, much of the development work facing South Africa will consist of trying to "undo" the inequalities and devastation created by the Apartheid system. Thus future development work will have to confront the legacy of, amongst others, a racially-based land allocation system that has resulted in the overpopulation and overstocking of certain areas, which in turn has undermined the productive capacities of these areas and generated large-scale landlessness and land hunger; the lack of adequate infrastructural development in rural areas; inadequate social services such as health and education in the rural areas; an entrenched migrant labour system; the virtual absence of rural extension services; and the collapse of the administrative/local government system in the rural areas.

To date the chief development agents working in the rural areas have been the state, non-government organisations (NGOs), private enterprise and the communities themselves. Friedman (1990: 15) argues that on the one hand, the state and quasi-state institutions have dabbled in various development initiatives in ways that have supported the status quo. A number of NGOs have sprung up in the past twenty years, primarily as welfare bodies or human rights organisations, in an attempt to alleviate some of the harshest conditions created by Apartheid. On the other hand, a great deal of energy has been

expended by rural communities and opposition organisations in negating and trying to break down the existing order. In refusing to work within illegitimate state-created and undemocratic structures, opposition organisations have tended to condemn the policy of separate development and have avoided doing any "development" work.

In the context of this history, South Africa has been isolated from international development agencies such as the World Bank and the United Nations. So, despite the UN International Decade for Women, the active policy of the UN of encouraging WID projects, and the fact that the majority of rural inhabitants in South Africa are women, any special focus placed on women or on gender relations has, in general, been perceived as inappropriate by most development practitioners. Few development organisations in South Africa have singled out women as a specific target group. The practical implications of this isolation on the one hand and the focus on resisting Apartheid structures on the other has meant that the South African development organisations have very little rural development project experience in general, and virtually no experience at all in designing gender-specific development projects (Friedman, 1991:15).

As South Africa moves beyond the Apartheid era into a period of reconstruction and rebuilding, the issue of "development" will become more central. Apart from the general lack of development experience in South Africa, the ability of the South

African feminist movement to influence the nature of this development is also of concern. Experience in other Third World countries has demonstrated the importance of feminists working within the development sphere, not only to ensure that women's interests and concerns are not overlooked, but also to influence the nature and content of the development process itself.

The South African feminist movement, like the development industry, is relatively immature, and it too has not been unaffected by the legacy of Apartheid. Although South African women have a long and proud history of involvement in the struggle against Apartheid, the term "non-sexist" has only recently been added to the list of aims of this struggle. This is because for many years the relevance of feminism to black women was highly contested. This can be traced to two major factors.

Firstly, the emerging feminist movement of the 1970s was a predominantly white, middle class, intellectual movement with strong ties to the English-speaking universities, often with little direct involvement in the broader anti-apartheid struggle. This served to heighten the distrust of feminism within the national liberation movement, along with the "fear that white feminists were attempting to foist on black women an alien theory that was somehow linked to maintaining white dominance" (Hassim and Walker, 1992:81).

The second factor contributing to the belief that feminism was irrelevant to the concerns of black women can be traced to the way in which the anti-apartheid struggle was defined. The struggle against Apartheid was seen as a national liberation struggle against racial oppression and class exploitation in which gender inequalities were viewed as secondary, and in which the raising of gender issues was often considered to be premature and divisive. There was therefore widespread hostility to feminism within the national liberation struggle where empowering women was interpreted mainly as empowering women to join the national struggle. Thus "feminism seemed to many activists to deflect energy away from challenging apartheid and to create disunity in the ranks of the national liberation movements" (Hassim and Walker, 1992:81).

It is only recently that there has been acceptance within the liberation movements that the "women's question" needs to be brought to centre stage and that feminism is not necessarily only of concern to white, middle class women. Although it seems that the legacy of distrust between the two parallel strands of the predominantly white intellectual feminist movement on the one hand, and the predominantly black activist and women's groupings on the other hand may be slowly receding, South Africa has yet to witness the emergence of a strong, non-racial feminist movement that attempts to build on the strengths and experiences of both traditions.

The net result of the problems and constraints that have beset both the development industry and the feminist movement in South Africa is that neither development nor feminist theory has as yet seriously confronted the issue of women and development. This chapter will examine some of the international debates and attempts to develop a feminist theory of women and development, particularly in the Third World. The feminist vision of development is, in the words of Sen and Grown, to achieve ...

> "A world where inequality based on class, gender and race, is absent from every country and from the relationships among countries. Where basic needs become basic rights and where poverty and all forms of violence are eliminated. Where women's reproductive role will be defined...and where the massive resources now used in the production of the means of destruction will be diverted to areas where they will help to relieve oppression, both inside and outside the home".
>
> (cited in Antrobus, 1991:315)

It is hoped that by examining these international debates and trends, some useful insights can be gained into the types of research and methodologies that will be required in order to develop a feminist theory of women and development appropriate to the South African context.

1. INTERNATIONAL TRENDS

Although the important role that women play in Third World economies and, consequently, in development processes is now widely recognised, it took several "development decades" for a coherent analysis of women's position in development, and of gender roles themselves, to emerge. Since the early 1970s, the international debate around the "women's question" has been shaped and redefined by two major forces in the women's movement, namely Women in Development (WID) and Global Feminism (GF). Sometimes these forces have interacted and often they have proceeded separately, but both have grown enormously since their beginnings. This chapter aims firstly to provide a historical overview of the different WID policy approaches and methods adopted to assist low-income women in the Third World during the various development decades, and secondly, to trace the emergence of Global Feminism. The various conceptual and theoretical assumptions underpinning each of these two approaches will also be examined, while the extent to which each of these theories enables us to address the gender-specific needs of rural women will be explored in Chapter 2.

1.1. Historical overview of the various WID policy approaches to women and development.

Throughout the Third World there has been a proliferation of diverse policies, programmes and projects designed to assist

low-income women. Until recently there has been little attempt to systematically classify or categorise these various initiatives and policy approaches towards women. One useful classification has, however, been provided by Buvinic (1983), who uses the following categories: the "welfare" approach which was dominant during the 1950s and 1960s; the "equity" approach which emerged during the 1970s, and the "anti-poverty" approach of the early 1980s. Moser (1991) adds two more recent categories to those of Buvinic, namely the "efficiency" and "empowerment" approaches that emerged in the mid-1980s.

Many of these programmes and policy approaches were initiated by First World development agencies and governments, the formulation of which, Moser (1991:161) argues, did not occur in isolation, but rather reflected changes in macro-level economic and social policy approaches to Third World development. Thus...

> "the shift in policy approaches towards women, from welfare, to equity, to anti-poverty, to efficiency and empowerment, has mirrored general shifts in Third World development policies, from modernisation policies of accelerated growth, through basic needs strategies associated with redistribution, to the more recent compensatory measures associated with structural adjustment policies" (Moser; 1991:161).

This section will make use of the different policy approaches towards women as categorised by Buvinic and Moser and will describe each chronologically. While this ordering is used to provide a sense of the historical context and the progression of thinking towards the issue of women and development that influenced each approach, it is recognised that the various approaches did not necessarily emerge in this linear fashion. Furthermore, development agencies often did not follow any ordered sequence when changing from one policy approach to another.

1.1.A. The Welfare Approach

The welfare approach towards women has its origins in the emergency relief programmes that were widely initiated in Europe after the end of World War II. These welfare relief programmes, which were accompanied by economic assistance measures aimed at facilitating the economic reconstruction of war-ravaged Europe, specifically targeted so-called "vulnerable groups". Women, particularly low-income women, were identified as key members of these "vulnerable groups" and so became the major focus and beneficiaries of these relief programmes. Relief aid was provided directly to low-income women, who, in their roles as wives and mothers, were seen as those primarily concerned with their family's welfare. This relief distribution was undertaken by international private relief agencies, and relied on the unpaid work of middle-class women for effective and cheap implementation (Buvinic, 1986:pp. 653-664).

These two parallel approaches to development assistance in post-bellum Europe - on the one hand financial aid for economic growth, on the other hand, relief aid for socially "vulnerable" groups - were then replicated in development policy for Third World countries as the two main thrusts of modernisation theory. The central aim of the modernisation approach to development is thus to provide financial aid to "under-developed" Third World nations in order to accelerate economic growth and to encourage the modernisation of their "traditional" economies and production processes. In terms of this theory then, development is defined in terms of economic growth, which has conventionally been measured in terms of the rates of increase in gross national product. Keeton (1989:140) argues that...

> "the adoption of economic growth as the principal measure of development represented an attempt to transfer directly the experiences of the developed world to the circumstances of the developing world, and was based on the assumption that growth either would "trickle down" to benefit all sections of the population, including its poorest members, or, if the benefits of growth proved to be unequally distributed, this could be overcome by corrective government action".

The modernisation approach to development focuses on women only in so far as they are viewed as key constituents of "vulnerable" groups and hence important recipients of relief aid

and welfare programmes. This approach does not attempt to promote the economic advancement of women because it is assumed that, in terms of the "trickle down" effect, they would benefit from the general economic advancement of men and the society as a whole.

The modernisation approach in general, and the welfare approach towards women in particular, tend to assume that women are passive recipients of development, rather than participants or, indeed, key actors, in the development process. They focus entirely on women in their reproductive role as wives and mothers and ignore the role that they play in production. These approaches thus create a separation between the economic sphere (production, agriculture and cultivation) in which projects and programmes are aimed at men, and the welfare sphere (health, nutrition, childcare and family planning) in which women are viewed as the main beneficiaries.

The effect of separating the economic from the welfare aspect of development is that these two approaches incorrectly assume that Third World women do not play a role in production or agricultural processes. Secondly, implicit in this separation is that only (men's) productive work is recognised as work. Women's reproductive tasks are thus seen as "natural" extensions of their social role and so are not valued. Numerous writers (eg. Cock,1984; Nelson,1979; Richardson,1988) argue that this has serious consequences for women because it means that most, if not all, of the work that they do is made invisible and

fails to be rewarded. In contrast, most of men's work is valued, either directly through paid remuneration, or indirectly through status and political power.

Although welfare programmes for women have broadened their scope considerably over the past decades, their central concern remains meeting women's needs in their reproductive role. Germaine (in Moser, 1991:162) argues that the welfare approach identifies women themselves, rather than the lack of resources as the problem, and places the solution to family welfare in women's hands, thereby perpetuating the dichotomy between women and welfare on the one hand, and men and production on the other.

The main method of implementation of so many welfare programmes tends to be through "top-down" handouts of free goods and services. When training is included it is for those skills deemed appropriate for non-productive housewives and mothers, such as home economics training, domestic skills, nutritional education and family planning motivation (Kabeer, 1991:8). Although the top-down nature of welfare programmes tends to create dependency rather than self-reliance, they remain very popular precisely because they are politically safe and do not question or challenge the traditionally accepted role of women.

By the 1970s dissatisfaction with the welfare approach was widespread, with criticism coming from groups representing

three very different positions (Moser,1991:162). First, development economists and planners were concerned with the failure of modernisation theory in the Third World. Second, a group of American, mainly female professionals and researchers were concerned with the increasing evidence that Third World development projects were negatively affecting women. Third, following the 1975 International Women's Year Conference, which formally "put women on the agenda", the United Nations designated a Women's Decade, starting in 1976, which provided legitimacy for the proliferation of a wide range of Third World women's organisations.

Criticisms from such groups during the 1970s resulted in the formulation of a number of alternative approaches to women, namely equity, anti-poverty, efficiency and empowerment.

1.1.B. The Equity Approach

By the 1970s many development economists and planners were disenchanted with the record of the modernisation approach to Third World development. They began to question the accuracy of measuring development in terms of economic growth because, they argued, practical experience has demonstrated that high rates of economic growth have been accompanied by widespread poverty in developing countries, and the absolute and relative economic positions of large sections of the population have frequently deteriorated. Thus economic growth has often been

accompanied by very little development, if any at all. Instead of the benefits of growth "trickling down" to the poorest sections of the population, they have typically "trickled up", with a resultant deterioration in income distribution (Keeton, 1989:140).

One outcome of these criticisms of the modernisation approach has been the redefinition of economic development to include the reduction or elimination of poverty within the context of a growing economy. A second outcome, which marks the emergence of the Basic Needs approach to development, is that development economists and agencies argue that economic development can only be said to occur if it reaches all sections of the population. This is perceived to be impossible unless at least those basic needs of the poor required for a productive existence, are satisfied (Keeton, 1989:143).

Two international development agencies, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Bank, were amongst the first to adopt the Basic Needs approach to development. They identified these basic needs as firstly, those minimum requirements of a family for private consumption including food, shelter, clothing and certain household equipment and furniture; and secondly, the provision of certain essential services for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, and health and educational facilities (Karl, 1991:63).

This shift away from the modernisation approach towards a focus on meeting the basic needs of the poorest sections of developing nations coincided with a re-evaluation of the welfare approach towards women. By the 1970s several studies showed that, contrary to the welfare approach's assumption that Third World women are not economically active, women are often the predominant contributors to the basic productivity of their communities, particularly in agriculture. Their economic contribution was, however, seldom reflected in national statistics or in development projects. Ester Boserup, in her pioneering work *Women's Role in Economic Development* (1970), argued that not only was women's economic contribution rendered invisible, but modernisation projects, with their new sophisticated agricultural methods and technologies, were negatively affecting women. She pointed out that the modernisation projects were targeted almost exclusively at men, thereby raising their productivity and perceived worth in society. By comparison, women's productivity and perceived worth decreased. Their workload also often increased because the men were now involved in cash crop cultivation and so were no longer available for their traditional chores. In addition, with the transition to cash crop cultivation, many women also lost informal rights to the land they had once farmed for subsistence. In short, argued Boserup, modernisation projects effectively displaced women from their traditional productive functions, thereby diminishing the income, status and power they had enjoyed in traditional relations (Boserup, 1990:23; Roodkowsky, 1991:13).

On the basis of evidence such as this, the Women in Development (WID) group in the United States challenged the prevailing assumption that modernisation was equated with increasing gender equality. They asserted that capitalist development models, imposed on much of the Third World through the modernisation approach, had resulted in the deterioration of the position of women and had exacerbated inequalities between men and women. They argued that it is a fallacy to assume that women will automatically benefit from development activities that are directed at the poor in general, or poor men in particular because, contrary to the "trickle-down" theory, the benefits enjoyed by men are frequently not passed on - neither to their wives and certainly not to the many female-headed households (HIVOS, 1988:2).

The equity thrust of the WID approach, which was strongly influenced by Boserup's writings, advocates that a central aim of development should be to reduce the economic inequalities between men and women in Third World societies. The approach argues that Third World women are active participants in the development process who perform both productive and reproductive roles in society, and the less monetized the economic system, the more important is their productive role. As such, women provide a critical, if often unacknowledged, contribution to economic growth. However, the magnitude of women's productive roles is regularly underestimated by conventional measures of economic activity, which fail to acknowledge the value of unpaid work and which undercount

women's paid work outside the modern sector. The effect of this systematic underestimation, together with the notion of motherhood as the natural function of women, has been to define a development policy for the Third World that erects barriers to paid work for women. As a consequence of this development policy, women are relegated to the economy's traditional sector, with the result that the income gap between the sexes is widened, often leading to the actual deterioration of women's social and economic position relative to that of men (Buvinic, 1983:15).

The WID equity approach thus argues that in comparison to men, Third World women enjoy less status, power and authority in both the public and private spheres of life. It identifies the origins of women's subordination not only in the context of the family, but also in the relationships between men and women in the market place, and hence it places considerable emphasis on economic independence as being virtually synonymous with equity. In order to achieve the goals of equity and greater economic independence for women they propose that women be "brought into" or "integrated into" the development process through access to employment and to the market place in the modern sector of the economy, and that greater educational opportunities be provided for women in order to facilitate such employment (Roodkowsky, 1991:13).

Because its main emphasis is on reducing economic inequality between men and women through "integrating" women into the

development process, equity programmes are identified as uniting notions of development and equality. The underlying logic is that women beneficiaries have lost ground to men in the development process. Therefore, in a process of redistribution, men have to share in a manner that entails women from all socio-economic classes gaining and men from all socio-economic classes losing, through positive discrimination policies if necessary.

Moser (1991:164) argues that equity programmes encountered problems from the outset. Methodologically, the lack of a single indicator of social status or progress of women and of baseline information about women's economic, social and political status meant that there were no standards against which "success" could be measured. Buvinic (1983:15) further argues that the lack of pre-intervention baseline data about women, coupled with the fact that only qualitative, rather than quantitative, evidence for the negative-impact argument has been obtained, meant that the development community was slow to accept the validity of such claims.

On the political level, the majority of development agencies were hostile to equity programmes precisely because of their intention to bring about a redistribution of power. From the perspective of the aid agency this was identified as unacceptable interference with the country's traditions.

Similar antipathy was felt by many Third World governments who believed that "Western-exported feminism" was irrelevant to Third World women. Many Third World women activists were also critical of this approach, and at the Mid-Decade Conference on Women it was argued that "to take feminism to a woman who has no water, no food and no home, is to talk nonsense" (cited in Karl, 1991:68). Other feminists critique the "integration" component of the equity approach, arguing that when this approach was being propagated, its proponents never questioned the nature of the development process itself. Instead they tended to be in basic agreement with mainstream development thought - their only quarrel with it was that women had been left out. They therefore never questioned the fact that the very development process into which women were to be integrated, was itself male-dominated and patriarchal in nature (Anand, 1991:6).

In a climate of widespread antagonism to many of its underlying principles from development agencies, Third World governments and women's movements alike, the equity approach has been effectively dropped by the majority of implementing agencies. However, the official endorsement of equity as one of the themes of the Women's Decade has ensured that it continues to provide an important framework for those working within governments to improve the status of women through top-down legislation (Moser, 1991:164).

1.1.C. The Anti-poverty Approach

The anti-poverty approach to women can be identified as the second WID approach, sharing a concern for equity as well as the criticism of trickle-down theories, but in which economic inequality between men and women is linked not to subordination, but to poverty. The emphasis thus shifts from reducing power imbalances between men and women, to reducing income inequality. Here women's issues are separated from equity issues and linked with the particular concern for the majority of Third World women as the "poorest of the poor". Buvinic (1983:26) has argued that this is a toned-down version of the equity approach, arising out of the reluctance of development agencies to interfere with the manner in which gender relations are constructed in a given society.

The anti-poverty approach attempts to link "women's issues" to poverty and tries to quantify the positive effects that may result from incorporating women's concerns into economic development programmes. Focusing on women as participants in, rather than beneficiaries of, development programmes and restricting those being studied to women in economic need, this approach is based on the following premises: (1) the ratio of women to men is greater in the poorest income groups than in the population as a whole; (2) the economic performance of households in the lowest income brackets is directly related to the economic activity of women in these households; (3) the importance of women's productive role increases with poverty

but the extent of their reproductive functions does not diminish; and thus (4) to promote balanced economic growth, a major goal of development policy should be to increase the productivity and income of women in the lowest income households (Buvinic, 1983:16).

The anti-poverty policy approach to women thus focuses mainly on their productive role on the basis that poverty alleviation and the promotion of balanced economic growth requires the increased productivity of women in low-income households. Underlying this approach is the assumption that the origins of women's poverty and inequality with men are attributable to their lack of access to private ownership of land and capital, and to sexual discrimination in the labour market. Consequently, it aims to increase the employment and income-generating opportunities of low-income women through better access to productive resources. There is also an increasing recognition that education and employment programmes could simultaneously increase women's economic contribution and reduce fertility (Moser 1991:165).

The anti-poverty approach, through establishing a conceptual link between women's issues and economic development theories, constituted a major step toward achieving acceptance within the development community of the idea that women's issues have development policy implications. Buvinic (1983:25-26) argues, however, that despite acceptance that an antipoverty strategy justifies assistance to poor women in terms of economic growth

rather than a welfare-orientated approach, many development agencies prefer a welfare strategy for a number of reasons. Firstly, productivity programmes (for men and women) are inherently more difficult to implement than welfare-orientated programmes because the very nature of such programmes are necessarily more expensive and staff intensive, are of longer duration, and have greater need for technical expertise. Secondly, programmes intended to improve the economic opportunities of women imply changes in the political and social relations between men and women beneficiaries. Productivity programmes for women usually require some restructuring of the cultural fabric of society and can have redistributionist implications. A welfare orientation, on the other hand, does not have redistributionist tendencies, and because many development agencies do not like interfering with the cultural practices of any society, welfare programmes are seen as politically safe.

The third, and perhaps the major, obstacle to the effective implementation of the anti-poverty approach concerns the difficulty of translating this approach into viable development plans. Attempts to improve the economic opportunities of women have resulted in development agencies turning to income-generating projects for women. Moser (1991:165) argues that while income-generating projects for low-income women have proliferated since the 1970s, they have tended to remain small in scale, to be developed by non-government organisations, and to rely on grants, rather than loans, from international and bilateral agencies. Most frequently they aim to increase

productivity in activities traditionally undertaken by women, rather than to introduce them to new areas of work.

Moser (1991: 165) further argues that when designing projects, fundamental considerations of the long-term viability of such projects are often ignored, including access to easily available raw materials, guaranteed markets and small-scale production capacity. She states that despite widespread recognition of the limitations of the informal sector's ability to generate employment and growth in an independent or evolutionary manner, income generating projects for women continue to be designed as though small-scale enterprises have the capacity for autonomous growth.

It would therefore seem that many anti-poverty income-generating projects for women have met with limited success. Apart from their inability to generate employment for large numbers of poor women, the predominant focus on women's productive role means that their reproductive role is often ignored. Income-generating projects which assume that women have free time often only succeed by extending their working day and increasing their burden. (Moser (1991:158), for instance, argues that development planning for low-income households often fails to recognise the "triple role" of women, namely that in addition to their productive and reproductive work, they also have specific community managing responsibilities). Unless income-generating projects also alleviate the burden of women's domestic labour and childcare,

through, for instance, the provision of adequate, socialised childcare, they may fail even to meet women's practical need to earn an income.

1.1.D. The Efficiency Approach

In justifying the categorisation of the efficiency approach as yet another WID approach, Moser (1991:166) argues that while the shift from equity to anti-poverty has been well documented, the integration of WID with efficiency approaches has passed almost unnoticed. Yet, she claims, the efficiency approach is now the pre-dominant approach for those working within a WID framework. What distinguishes the efficiency approach from the other WID approaches is that it shifts the emphasis away from women towards development, on the assumption that increased economic participation for Third World women is automatically linked with increased equity. This has allowed organisations such as USAID, the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to propose that an increase in women's economic participation in development links efficiency and equity together.

This shift towards efficiency coincided with a marked deterioration in the world economy which occurred from the mid-1970s onward. To alleviate the situation, particularly in Latin America and Africa where the problems of recession were compounded by falling export prices, protectionism and mounting

debt, economic stabilisation and adjustment policies designed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have been implemented by an increasing number of national governments. Elson (1991:141) argues that the stabilisation programmes of the IMF and the structural adjustment programmes of the World Bank differ slightly in that the IMF programmes focus primarily on cutting demand while those of the World Bank focus on boosting supply and increasing productivity. They both however, share a common emphasis on reducing the role of the state, and in increasing the role of the market in resource allocation.

Both the IMF and the World Bank believe that a major reason for the poor economic performance of many Third World countries is distortions in resource allocation. They argue that these distortions are caused by government policy, for example, by over-expansion of the public sector and by the use of direct controls and subsidies. A major element of both types of programmes is the removal of direct controls and subsidies and a reduction in the role of the public sector. Thus the IMF stabilisation programmes on the one hand, typically consist of deflation, devaluation and de-regulation. Public expenditure is cut, including expenditure on social services and food subsidies, while controls over imports and foreign exchange are loosened. The structural adjustment programmes of the World Bank, on the other hand, aim to improve the incentives for private sector producers (particularly of exports) through changes in prices, tariffs and other taxes, subsidies and interest rates; and by

reducing the resources allocated to the public sector in order to make more resources available for the private sector (Elson, 1991:41).

Thus it can be seen that despite the slight differences in emphases, both these policies - through both demand management and supply expansion - lead to the re-allocation of resources to enable the restoration of a balance-of-payments equilibrium, an increase in exports, and a restoration in growth rates (Moser, 1991:166).

Moser (1991: 167) argues that with increased efficiency and productivity as two of the main objectives of structural adjustment policies, it is no coincidence that efficiency is the policy approach towards women which is currently gaining popularity among international aid agencies and national governments alike. She argues that there is growing documentation, although still unsystematic, that suggests that these structural adjustment programmes are likely to have detrimental consequences for women because their success often relies on a shifting of costs from the paid to the unpaid economy, particularly through the use of women's unpaid time.

The efficiency approach has been criticised precisely because it relies heavily on the elasticity of women's labour in both their reproductive and community-managing roles. The consequences of this for Third World women are that their

particular needs and concerns are only likely to be met at the cost of longer working hours and increased unpaid work. The assumption that economic participation increases women's status and is associated with equity has also been widely criticised. While the so-called development industry has realised that women are essential to the success of the total development effort, it does not necessarily follow that development improves conditions for women.

1.1.E. The Empowerment Approach

The empowerment approach is the fifth and newest of the WID policy approaches to women although its origins are by no means recent. Moser (1991:167) argues that the empowerment approach differs from the equity approach not only in its origins, but also in the causes, dynamics and structures of women's oppression which it identifies, and in terms of the strategies it proposes to change the position of Third World women.

The origins of the empowerment approach, unlike the other WID approaches, are derived primarily from the emergent feminist writings and grassroots organisational experience of Third World women. At the start of the UN Decade for Women, many Third World women were highly suspicious of and resistant to the notion of feminism, particularly to the equity strand of feminism, which they viewed as inappropriate to the circumstances of Third World women. The empowerment approach represents an

attempt by Third World women to reclaim and redefine the notion of feminism in a way that is pertinent to their situation and experiences. It thus asserts that feminism is not simply a recent Western, urban, middle-class import that was imposed on women by the United Nations or Western feminists, but that Third World feminism has its own independent, albeit different, history. Since the late 19th century, Third World feminism has been an important force for change, but women participated more often in nationalist and patriotic struggles, working-class agitation and peasant rebellions than in autonomous women's organisations (Moser, 1991:168).

Although the empowerment approach agrees with the equity approach's argument that gross inequalities exist between men and women, and that the origins of women's subordination lie in the family, it also emphasises the fact that women experience oppression differently according to their race, class, colonial history and current position in the international economic order - a fact which the equity approach tends to overlook. It maintains that women's subordination cannot be explained in terms of single causal factors but rather as a complex network of interlocking oppressive structures and situations, all of which are experienced differently by different women, and which have to be challenged simultaneously, and at different levels, using a variety of strategies appropriate to the particular socio-political circumstances of any given society.

In defining an alternative vision of development appropriate for Third World women, the empowerment approach questions two underlying assumptions in the equity approach; first, that development necessarily helps all men, and second, that women want to be integrated into the mainstream of Western-designed development, in which they have no power to influence the kind of development that occurs. The empowerment approach goes on to question some of the fundamental assumptions concerning the inter-relationship between power and development that underlie previous WID approaches. While it acknowledges the importance for women of increasing their power, it seeks to identify power less in terms of domination over others (with its implicit assumption that a gain for women is a loss for men), and more in terms of the capacity of women to increase their own self-reliance and internal strength. This is identified as the right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change, through the ability to gain control over crucial material and non-material resources. It places far less emphasis than the equity approach on increasing women's status relative to men, but seeks to empower women through the redistribution of power within, as well as between, societies (Moser, 1991:168).

A powerful articulation of the empowerment approach has been made by the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) collective. The new era envisaged by this group includes both national liberation and the transformation of the structures that have been central to women's subordination.

DAWN posits that changes in law, civil codes, systems of property rights, control over women's bodies, labour codes and the social and legal institutions that underwrite male control and privilege, are essential if women are to attain justice in society (Bunch and Carrillo, 1990:74).

Many of the aims and principles espoused by DAWN and supported by the empowerment approach are similar to those identified by the equity approach. It is however, in the means of achieving such objectives that the empowerment approach differs most fundamentally from previous approaches. Recognition of the limitations of top-down government legislation to actually change women's lives in real terms has led adherents of the empowerment approach to acknowledge that their strategies will not be implemented without the sustained and systematic efforts of women themselves. They highlight the need for political mobilisation, consciousness-raising and popular education to bring about real change (Moser, 1991:169).

Antrobus (1991:312), in support of the empowerment approach, argues that while the focus of previous WID approaches on meeting women's immediate needs in the areas of employment, education, health and nutrition was important, they failed to recognise that even these immediate gains are easily reversed if women lack the power to protect them when resources are scarce. She argues that this is exactly what happened in the context of the structural adjustment policies pursued by many Third World governments in their efforts to deal with the

problems of debt, chronic balance of payment imbalance, and budget deficits. The empowerment approach thus states that while some of the most effective organisational gains have been those which started around the immediate concrete needs of women in relation to health, employment and basic service provision, the process of acquiring these immediate needs must be one that empowers women. It is only then that women can use the experience and confidence gained through this process to begin to address some of their longer-term needs associated with challenging the various structures of subordination within particular socio-political contexts.

Moser (1991:170) argues that the potentially challenging nature of the empowerment approach has meant that it remains largely unsupported either by national governments or bilateral aid agencies. Thus despite the widespread growth of Third World groups and organisations whose approach to women is essentially one of empowerment, they remain under-funded, reliant on the use of voluntary and unpaid women's time, and dependent on the resources of those few international NGOs and First World governments prepared to support this approach to women and development.

1.2. The emergence of global feminism

At the start of the U.N. Decade for Women in 1976 there was little interaction and dialogue between the two strands of the women's movement, namely the WID practitioners and those

feminists working within the development arena who saw their task as that of developing a feminist vision of women and development. These two trends have come together more in the mid-1980s, with much of the formative intersection between the ideas of feminism and WID taking place within the context of the U.N. Decade for Women 1975-85. One of the reasons for this greater interaction is the expansion of feminism that occurred in many Third World countries during the Decade, and the impact this has had on the women's movement globally. The WID empowerment approach, discussed above, bears witness to this greater degree of interaction and consensus.

The initial separation of these trends was symbolised in the slogan for the decade proposed at the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City in 1975: **Equality, Development, and Peace.** Charlotte Bunch and Roxanna Carrillo argue that ...

> "These terms reflected what was understood as central to the "women's question" in each of the three male-dominated power blocs within the United Nations. Thus Equality was seen primarily as a feminist issue coming from Western industrialised countries; Peace was included at the request of the Eastern Socialist bloc; and Development was perceived as key to the improvement of women's lives in the Third World countries of the South" (Bunch and Carrillo, 1990:70).

By the End of the Decade World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985, many women had, however, rejected the division of women's concerns into these three separate areas. The experiences gained during the decade had led to the realisation that not only do "women's issues" intersect with all issues affecting human life and that it is therefore impossible to separate "women's issues" from the political, social, cultural and economic aspects of any society, but also that conventional concepts and theories of development are severely limited in their ability to capture the global reality and needs of women. The emergence of global feminism thus arose out of the growing awareness of women from all regions of the need to link feminism with rethinking women and development.

Bunch and Carrillo (1990:72) argue that the impulse to redefine basic questions around women in development has come from many directions. Firstly, feminists who were working on other issues such as legal equality, violence against women, and reproductive rights, saw the necessity of addressing these in relation to economics and development. Secondly, some WID practitioners who felt the need for another framework for looking at development turned to feminism, particularly as it became more globally defined. Thirdly, the expansion of feminism in Third World countries, particularly in Asia and Africa where women began to address the specific regional concerns of women's lives, resulted in the expansion of the definition of feminism so that it is no longer so Western-centric, but rather increasingly global or international in orientation.

Interest in feminist perspectives on development has been a natural corollary of this emergence of global feminism. When the U.N. Decade began, feminism was seen primarily as Western but as the Decade progressed, the input from the women's movements in Africa, Asia, and the English-speaking Caribbean has not only led to increased dialogue between feminists from the North and South, but has also been central in the formulation of a global feminism and a feminist vision of development. Bunch and Carrillo (1990:73) argue that the convergence of thinking about feminism in relation to women in development has, however, taken a different path in Latin America. Perhaps partly due to its different linguistic and colonial experience, women in this region have seen gender issues less as a development concern and more as a question of women's political participation and empowerment. The primary aim of any special focus on women has thus been the mobilisation and politicisation of women for the struggle for democracy and freedom from military dictatorships. However, as the debt crisis crippled economies in the region during the 1980s, feminists have developed more interest in the analysis and experience of women and development that have come from other Third World countries.

> "Thus Latin American women enter the feminism and development discussion with a strong history of working on women's need for self-determination and political power as a crucial component of any development plans" (Bunch and Carrillo, 1990:74).

Various women's international conferences and meetings were used as opportunities to formulate the basic principles and objectives of both global feminism and feminist visions of development. One of the earliest international efforts produced a manifesto often called the Bangkok Paper in which it was argued that the oppression of women is rooted in both inequities and discrimination based on sex and in poverty and the injustices of political and economic systems based on race and class. It proposed one of the first global definitions of feminism as an ideology with two long-term goals: 1) the achievement of women's equality, dignity, and freedom of choice through women's power to control their own lives within and outside the home, and 2) the removal of all forms of inequity and oppression through the creation of a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally. This was seen as leading to the involvement of women in national liberation strategies, in plans for national development, and in local and global strategies for change (Bunch and Carrillo, 1990:77).

It was recognised that the achievement of these goals requires the empowerment of women. Power for women in this context is defined not as domination over others, but as a sense of internal strength, as the right to determine one's choices in life, and the right to influence the direction of social change. It can therefore be seen that the principles underlying the Bangkok Paper's vision of feminist development are very similar to those articulated by the WID empowerment approach. In both, the empowerment of women is considered to be one of the

major goals of development, and women are viewed as subjects or "agents of development" rather than as "development problems" to be targeted by planners and agencies.

Other international conferences which made public declarations about feminist visions of development from a global perspective included the 1980 Stony Point Workshop where development was defined as a political process that should empower its participants, and the 1982 Dakar Conference which stated that feminism not only provides women with a basis from which they can challenge all structures and ideologies that are oppressive to women, but also provides people in general with a programme for cultural resistance to all forms of domination. Thus the Dakar statement articulates the feminist vision that opposition to gender subordination is both linked to, and key to ending, other forms of domination (Bunch and Carrillo, 1990:78).

The most famous expression of a global feminist perspective on development was made by DAWN, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era. In outlining their vision of development, members of DAWN stressed their belief in feminist development as...

> "a movement for change that draws its ethical basis from women's daily lives, that rejects the effort to catch up with the competitive, aggressive spirit of the dominant system, and that seeks to convert men and the system to the sense of responsibility, nurturance, openness, and rejection of hierarchy

> essential to the feminist vision. Part of this vision is the acknowledgment of diversity and the differing but equally valid meanings of feminism in each region, society, and time" (Bunch and Carrillo, 1990:79-80).

DAWN, like the Bangkok Papers, views feminism as a political movement which, because of this and its international focus, needs to be diverse in its issues, immediate goals, and methods adopted. Feminism is therefore international in that its aim is the liberation of **all** women from all types of oppression. At the same time, however, it is also national because it recognises that in order to achieve liberation on a global level, the priorities and strategies adopted by women at the local level have to be appropriate to their particular cultural and socio-economic conditions.

The global feminist perspective thus works toward an integrated vision of development that does not separate issues of concern to women from broader socio-economic and political issues. Instead it seeks to find the inter-relationship between these issues while at the same time recognising that their manifestations are likely to take diverse forms. It defines development as a political process in which women should be empowered to take control of their own lives. It regards the aim of development as meeting people's human needs in all areas: material, cultural, emotional and political. Basic needs in this context then become basic rights, where poverty and all

forms of domination and violence would be eliminated. The perspective further contends that feminist development will only be realised through the sustained pressure of grassroots movements for social change. From this perspective then, autonomous women's groups, with support from other sectors, are necessary if the goal of feminist development, namely the empowerment of women, is to be realised (Bunch and Carrillo, 1990:pp. 80-82).

CHAPTER 2 TOWARDS A GENDER PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT

Despite the fact that the number of development projects aimed at improving the position of low-income women in the Third World had grown enormously, that several development and aid agencies had established WID departments, and despite the growing unity within the international feminist movement, a number of writers have argued that the majority of the world's women were actually worse off in 1985 than they were at the beginning of the United Nations' Decade for Women. Anand (1991:5-10) argues that the situation of women in the Third World had deteriorated even further by the end of the 1980s. She states that women have been negatively affected by the move from subsistence agriculture to cash-cropping and non-food crop cultivation as propagated by various international development agencies, not only because the disappearance of subsistence agriculture had a detrimental effect on the nutritional health and well-being of many rural communities, but also in that large numbers of women and children were displaced and are now dependent on government handouts and foreign aid for their survival. She further argues that the attempts to transfer women's work from subsistence agriculture to market-orientated, formal sector employment, merely resulted in large numbers of women finding employment within local and multinational industries such as textiles, electronics and

agribusiness. She thus concludes that the effect on women of the development policies pursued in the Third World was that they now found themselves working, often as migrant labourers, in jobs that offered little or no wage protection, poor benefits and minimal job security.

This deterioration in the position of women, it is argued, is a direct consequence of an inadequate analysis of the issue of women and development. Thus, for Antrobus (1991:312), the fact that an international programme on behalf of women, which had been in operation for more than a decade, had failed to improve the situation of women world-wide is an indictment of the policies and programmes used during the Decade. She argues that an alternative analysis is needed - one which attempts to relate experience at the micro-level of the sector, community, project, or household, to the macro-level, and one which incorporates an analysis of **gender** roles within different situations and contexts.

One such analysis is the Gender and Development (GAD) approach, currently being adopted and developed by a number of research and training institutions, including the Development Planning Unit at the University College of London, the Canadian Council for International Co-operation and the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex. GAD's major point of departure from the WID and Global Feminist approaches is that it focuses on gender relations in a variety of settings rather than on women <u>per se</u>. It argues that a focus on

"women" firstly operates from the false premise that women constitute a unitary social category. Secondly, even where this category is scaled down to, for instance "poor women", "Third World women" or "rural women", the erroneous assumption exists that each of these categories of women will have a common set of interests and needs. And thirdly, even those analyses, such as Global Feminism, which make provision for the fact that women from different racial, social, cultural, historical or ethnic backgrounds will have differing sets of interest, needs and priorities, often treat gender differences (i.e. differences between men and women) as relatively uniform in all contexts (Kabeer, 1991; Friedman, 1991; Chant, 1989).

The starting point of the GAD approach is the conceptual distinction between "biological" sex and "socially constructed" gender. Gender is seen as the process by which individuals, who are born into biological categories of male or female, become the social categories of men and women through the acquisition of locally-defined attributes of masculinity and femininity. Kabeer states that...

> "(W)hile the process of acquiring gender identities - becoming men and women - may appear far removed from the concerns of development policy-makers and practitioners, it is in fact a critical starting point because it challenges the notion that men and women are somehow naturally suited to certain tasks or roles and it starts to delineate

> those aspects of social reality which can be changed because they are not naturally defined" (Kabeer, 1991:12).

The GAD approach assumes that men and women are socially constructed gendered beings. The aim of a gender focus is therefore to distinguish between what is natural and biological and what is socially and culturally constructed and in the process, to renegotiate the boundaries between the natural - and hence relatively inflexible - and the social - and hence relatively transformable. A major implication of treating gender differences as socially constructed rather than biologically given is that it acknowledges that they will take different forms in different societies and that these too will change over time. It further acknowledges that gender differences within any given society are themselves shaped by ideological, historical, religious, ethnic, economic and cultural determinants. It is precisely because gender differences are both socially constructed and culturally specific that the GAD approach insists that only a focus on gender (rather than on women in general) is likely to produce development programmes attuned to the gender-specific needs of both men and women in any given community (Friedman, 1991:3).

Apart from examining the way in which gender identities are constructed and defined in any society and how these vary cross-culturally, a key focus of the GAD approach is to analyze the effect that these socially-defined gender identities and

attributes have on relationships between men and women in different contexts. A critical component of gender relations is the gender division of labour, which does not simply define who does what tasks, but also how tasks will be valued, how skills and aptitudes are assigned to and acquired by women and men, and how valued social resources which result from this division will be distributed. Kabeer (1991) states that one of objectives of the GAD focus on the gender division of labour is...

> "to make visible the inter-linkages and synergies between the tasks associated with production and reproduction and to point to the way in which different divisions of labour create different relations of inter-dependence and exchange between women and men" (Kabeer, 1991:13).

Detailed studies of the gender division of labour reveal that although the specific tasks and responsibilities allocated to men and women vary from society to society, in most low-income households, "women's work" includes not only reproductive tasks (i.e. both the biological processes of childbearing and rearing and the socially-organised chores associated with housework) that are necessary for the maintenance, reproduction and well-being of the community on a daily and generational basis, but also productive work - often undertaken to supplement the family's income. In addition, women are involved in community managing work at a local community level. Moser (1991:159) argues that because this triple role of women is not recognised, development planners often ignore the fact

that women, unlike men, are severely constrained by the burden of simultaneously balancing these roles of reproduction, production, and community work. Furthermore, only productive work is recognised as work. By contrast, reproductive and community managing work are both seen as the "natural" responsibilities of women and so are not valued. As a result, the labour, time and energy expended by women in carrying out their reproductive and community managing tasks is rendered invisible.

The implications of this gender division of labour in production and reproduction are that firstly, women's reproductive and community managing responsibilities are simply not planned for because it is assumed that work which is carried out by women as carers and mothers requires no recognition, no incentives and no resources. Secondly, development projects that only focus on one area of women's work often merely serve to increase women's burden because they now have less time in which to perform their other tasks. Thirdly, because men and women perform different tasks, they often have different needs and priorities. This is not to say that men and women do not confront similar issues such as poverty or resource shortages, but their different positioning within the gender division of labour results in each experiencing the consequences of these conditions differently (Moser, 1991:159).

The GAD approach therefore maintains that development planning should be based on a thorough understanding of how gender

relations are constructed at the micro-level of a particular community. They argue that it is only by examining the different roles, tasks and responsibilities assigned to men and women within the gender division of labour that the specific gender needs, interests and priorities of both men and women can be accurately identified. They further state that unless development planning proceeds from the basis of a gender analysis, projects that are intended to improve women's situation may only result in women's subordinate position being further entrenched (Friedman, 1991:6).

In planning for low-income women in the Third World, the GAD approach makes use of two conceptual models: firstly the distinction drawn by Kate Young (1988) between the day-to-day **condition** of women's lives and their **position** in society; and secondly, the model developed by Maxine Molyneux (1985:225-254) in which she replaces the global notion of "women's interests" with the more analytic concepts of **strategic gender interests** and **practical gender interests.**

Young (1988) argues that development projects from a GAD perspective generally aim to improve the condition of women's (and men's) lives. **Condition** in this context refers to women's material state - i.e. their immediate sphere of experience, whereas **position** refers to women's social standing relative to men. Position is measured, for example, by male/female disparities in wages and employment opportunities, participation

in legislative bodies, vulnerability to poverty and violence, and so on (cited in The Collective, 1991: 32).

Within a household or community, women, men and children may share the same general conditions of poverty and disadvantage and the same need for improvements such as a safe water supply, adequate food, and good health. However, women and men experience these conditions and the needs that arise from them differently. Furthermore, the fact that men and women perform different tasks and responsibilities may result in these differing experiences giving rise to differing sets of priorities. This again demonstrates the importance of a gender analysis in the formulation of development plans (The Collective, 1991:32).

The GAD approach argues that past development activities (including WID projects) have tended to focus on women's condition, aiming to improve their ability to carry out traditional roles and responsibilities. Many sought to enhance women's access to resources, especially income and education, without considering that the lack of control over inputs, outputs and relevant processes would leave women without the means to sustain new opportunities. Furthermore, not only have development projects often failed to improve women's condition in real terms, but they have also negatively affected women's position by eroding or eliminating existing areas of activity and control. It is therefore important that in the design of development projects and programmes, attention be paid to enhancing women's position relative to men by promoting their

ability to participate fully with men as agents of change (The Collective, 1991:33).

In the second model, Molyneux (1985:225-254) argues that we should replace the notion of "women's interests" with those of "strategic gender interests" and "practical gender interests". She argues that the concept of "women's" interests is highly contentious because it assumes that all women, by virtue of their biological make-up, have a common set of interests. The notion of "women's interests" therefore obscures the reality of the situation in which the interests that women might have in common may be determined as much by their class position or their ethnic identity as by their biological similarity as women. She thus advocates that a more accurate conceptualisation of the goal of development from a gender perspective is the identification of practical gender and strategic gender interests, which are in turn closely related to the concepts of condition and position discussed above (Friedman, 1991:4).

Molyneux (1985) argues that **practical gender interests** (or "needs" - the GAD approach uses the term needs rather than interests) ...

> "are given inductively and arise from the concrete conditions of women's positioning by virtue of their gender within the gender division of labour...practical gender interests are formulated by the women themselves who are within these positions rather than through external

> interventions. Practical gender interests are usually a response to an immediate perceived need and they do not generally entail a strategic goal such as women's emancipation or gender equality" (cited in Chant, 1989:238).

It can thus be seen that practical gender needs are linked to women's condition. They can be readily identified and usually relate to unsatisfactory living conditions and lack of resources. At the project level, initiatives concerned with practical gender interests would include attempts to meet women's material needs in the roles ascribed to them through the sexual division of labour, for example the needs that arise out of their roles as wives and mothers, as the carriers of water and fuel, and as the caretakers of the family's health and welfare. Development initiatives and projects that aim to meet women's practical needs and improve their living conditions are often of a short-term nature and generally preserve and reinforce traditional relations between men and women. In other words, practical interests do not challenge the prevailing forms of subordination, even though they arise directly out of them (Friedman, 1991:5; The Collective, 1991:33).

Strategic gender interests on the other hand, arise from women's subordinate and disadvantaged position in society. Strategic interests are long-term and related to improving

women's position. Molyneux (1986) argues that strategic gender interests...

> "are the ones most frequently considered by feminists as women's real interests. The demands that are formulated on this basis are usually termed feminist as is the level of consciousness required to struggle effectively for them...Projects addressed to strategic gender interests...are concerned with issues of status and challenging sexual inequality. Their underlying objective might be to abolish the sexual division of labour, to remove the legal barriers to political or economic equality, or to ensure that women are protected from male violence, and so on. Strategic gender interests are thus derived deductively, embodying both an analysis of gender inequality and a commitment to changing it" (cited in Chant, 1989:238).

For women at the local level, strategic interests are less obvious and less readily identified than practical needs. Like any powerless group, women may be well aware of their subordination, but may not understand its basis or the possibilities for change. Even where options for change are known, practical needs and family survival are usually seen by women as their first priorities. The GAD approach thus argues that any type of development initiative should begin by considering the objective conditions under which women at the

local level live because, without an understanding of the specific context and forms of subordination which give rise to women's practical needs, it will be impossible to meet these needs in a way which might enable them to address their specific strategic gender interests (Friedman, 1991:11; The Collective, 1991:34).

The GAD approach argues that the way in which women's practical gender needs are met is of crucial importance, because their satisfaction is a pre-requisite to the empowerment of women and the realisation of women's strategic gender interests. If the meeting of these practical needs is seen as an end in itself, then the potential to utilise the struggle around acquiring these needs as an empowering process and as a basis from which to address women's more strategic interests, is lost. A GAD approach thus identifies, negotiates and addresses practical needs of both women and men, in such a way that also addresses women's particular strategic interests (Friedman, 1991:12).

An underlying assumption of the GAD approach is that the development process should empower people in general, and women in particular, so that they may take control of their own lives and become agents of their own development. The Collective (1991:34) states that development processes that facilitate empowerment and self-determination are ones which address the strategic interests of people, for example: full consultation; their involvement as planners and managers;

education and training; long-term access to resources; and the promotion of democratic political processes. Women's subordinate position often means that they are excluded from these processes, with the result that the self-determination of "people" effectively becomes the self-determination of "men". It therefore becomes important that, while ensuring that the strategic interests of the community as a whole are addressed through people-centred development, the strategic interests of women in particular are also taken into account.

The GAD approach to development recognises that working on women's strategic interests to change women's position is a long-term, incremental process. While each development project may only make one small contribution towards this end, it is important that development initiatives - explicitly and strategically - try to contribute to the empowerment of women, as well as the community as a whole. Friedman (1991) argues that the GAD approach has ...

> "within it, the potential to redefine basic <u>needs</u> as basic <u>rights</u>. The process of struggling to win these rights would require political mobilisation; sustained and systematic efforts by women's organisations and a consciousness of social power relations. The aim of women's participation in development would be seen as having both a long and short term purpose. The process of meeting immediate practical needs in the short term while simultaneously struggling to meet strategic gender

> interests in the long term has to be a conscious one for long-term reconstruction to occur. For the specificity of gender interests to be taken seriously, they need to be articulated into a wider strategy of economic development rather than subordinated to it" (Friedman, 1991:12)

While both the WID and Global Feminist approaches are useful and important in their own right, the significance of the GAD approach for our purposes is that it raises in a very explicit and thematic way the need for detailed analyses of gender relations in specific communities. This is of special importance in a country where all categories of social relations have been shaped and distorted in a unique way by the legacy of Apartheid. The GAD approach encourages a focus on the local and the specific while remaining true to the feminist concern for the position of women. As such it provides the most useful framework for investigating the position of women in the context of rural development in South Africa.

In addition, GAD theorists have developed their principles into an explicit research methodology, which provides a detailed analytic framework for investigating gender relations in developing communities. In the next chapter this methodology is reviewed, along with the general principles of feminist methodology, in order to generate a research design for a case study of gender-specific needs in a rural black community.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The preceding chapters examined some of the various, and often quite diverse, policy approaches toward the issue of women's development in the Third World. It was seen that these approaches are essentially concerned with the same problematic - namely the formulation of a development policy and approach that improves, rather than worsens, the lives of women; that eliminates, rather than exacerbates, existing inequalities and power relations between men and women; and that values, rather than marginalises, women's contributions to society in general and the development process in particular. It was also seen that there is growing consensus within the international women's movement that women's full development cannot take place whilst those structures and ideologies which serve to maintain their subordinate position in society remain in place. Yet despite these common concerns and spheres of interest, and despite the growing consensus about the need to link women's development with women's liberation, the different approaches still vary in terms of how they conceptualise women's lack of development and the factors giving rise to this situation; how they define women's development and liberation; and consequently, also in terms of the strategies and methods they propose for reaching their strategic objective - namely the full development of women.

The implication for this chapter of these underlying, and sometimes fairly significant, theoretical and conceptual differences between the various approaches is that these differences give rise to differing research methodologies. Just as some theories are better able than others to explain and analyse the problematic status of women's development, so too are some research methodologies better able than others to overcome the research biases that work to keep women marginalised in the development process and to extract the type of information necessary for the formulation of realistic development plans.

Working from the premise that development initiatives and planning for specific communities should be informed by detailed research that investigates the objective conditions under which both men and women live, this chapter aims to explore the various research methodologies that will facilitate such an investigation. In particular, the chapter will examine, at an analytical level, the methodological components necessary for limiting gender biases in the research process, and for analysing **gender roles and gender relations** within rural communities. This will be followed by a discussion of the precise research methods that were employed in the field research in Merino Walk - a rural community in the Border region of South Africa. This section will show the operationalisation of the broad methodological principles into a specific research design.

3.1. GENDER-BIASED RESEARCH

In attempting to define the methodological components necessary for limiting gender biases in the research process, it is useful to examine the gender biases that do exist in many conventional research methods. Such an exercise serves, in a practical way, to point to "what not to do" when conducting gender research, as well as to identify the problematic areas which an alternative analysis and methodology needs to overcome.

Research conducted during the Decade for Women from a variety of perspectives has pointed to some of the biases that work to keep women invisible and marginal in the development process. These include gender biases in assumptions and procedures on the part of researchers and practitioners; the methodological limitations of some of the theoretical paradigms that remain focused on an economistic, materialistic, and positivist approach to the social sciences; and the inadequacies of conventional ways of conceptualising and measuring notions such as poverty, development, and women's contribution to economic and social processes.

While it will not be possible to discuss all these aspects in detail, this section will examine some of the main ways in which research has operated to render women invisible, which in turn has resulted in the formulation of development plans and programmes that are blind to women's specific practical gender

needs and that ignore the critical link between women's productive, reproductive and community managing roles.

As was mentioned in Chapter 2, researchers and practitioners working within a GAD framework argue that a fundamental flaw of many approaches focusing on the issue of women's development is that they treat "women" as a unitary, social category. They argue that the use of such a non-specific, generic, abstract category represents a "fallacy of aggregation" that applies not only to references to "women" but also to other categories such as "the poor", "the community", "the household", "the people", "the youth", and so on. The GAD approach argues that the use of such fallacies of aggregation maintains the illusion of harmonious and internally-undifferentiated categories of people, all of whom have the same needs and interests and will therefore be equally served by the same set of projects. Kabeer (1991) states that...

> "(T)hese aggregative concepts are, of course, frequently linguistic disguises for conceptual inadequacies. In reality, the poor, the community, the labour force, etc., are all internally differentiated groups even if the way they have been defined presents them as a unified category as against the 'not-poor' and the 'extra-community' and the 'economically-inactive'" (Kabeer, 1991:3).

The GAD approach argues that these aggregative concepts not only misrepresent existing reality and reflect conceptual

inadequacies within many current research methodologies, but they also serve to further marginalise and obscure women's specific conditions and needs. The following discussion will illustrate how these fallacies of aggregation help to render women invisible in the research process, thereby resulting in the formulation of inappropriate development plans.

The first variant of the fallacy of aggregation to be discussed is that of "the poor". It is often assumed that "the poor" consists of that undifferentiated mass of people who fall below the so-called "poverty line". Kabeer (1991:3) argues that conventional ways of conceptualising and measuring poverty have relied heavily on notions of household income and the poverty line. Not only are these indicators gender-blind, but they are also inappropriate for the partially monetised economies of the Third World. In particular, she argues, the poverty line approach is insensitive to the incidence and trends of inequalities below the poverty line, where, empirical evidence suggests, women and children are disproportionately represented. Furthermore, the notion of household income ignores the fact that this income is often unevenly distributed within individual households and between family members, with women and children often receiving fewer benefits. Thus the use of highly aggregated concepts of poverty overlook gender as a factor in explaining individual welfare differentials and may result in the design of inappropriate poverty-alleviation programmes.

The second variant of the fallacy of aggregation is that of "the household". Although the notion of a household as a homogenous and undifferentiated group of people has been much criticised, it still remains widely used as a unit of analysis. A common error is to assume that households in rural areas of the Third World correspond with nuclear family structures in which there is a (male) head of the household who is also the principal breadwinner. This fallacy firstly ignores evidence which suggests that the number of female-headed households, in the North as well as the South, is growing rapidly. Budlender (1991:4) states for instance that 1980 government statistics put the figure for female-headship in the "bantustan" rural areas at 59% - over half. Secondly, despite the increase in the number of female-headed households, researchers and practitioners frequently still only consult with the male members of the household on the assumption that only men head households and that their interests coincide with those of the other family members. Thirdly, this fallacy assumes that the benefits of development will eventually reach all members of the household. Kabeer (1991:4) argues that this variant of the "fallacy of aggregation" takes little notice of the well-authenticated research findings from the Third World that women and children, especially young girls, are likely to be discriminated against in the distribution of food and other life-preserving resources.

The third variant of the fallacy of aggregation is that of "women". As was discussed in Chapter 2, the GAD approach

argues that the assumption that programmes can be devised for a social category called "women" is absurd because it ignores the fact that there are class, religious, ethnic, age, and life cycle differences between women in any context that lead them to have quite different needs, interests and priorities. Yet, as Kabeer (1991) argues...

> "project after project has been devised for poor and assetless women in Asia and Africa which has sought to teach them skills - baking, sewing, knitting, home economics - which are totally inappropriate to their economic needs, but do conform to the particular planner's view about appropriate feminine occupations" (Kabeer, 1991:5).

In addition to these "fallacies of aggregation", another way in which development researchers render women invisible is by making use of secondary data, particularly national censuses, that undercount women's work. It is now commonly accepted that many areas of work in which rural people, particularly women, are involved - for example, housework, seasonal farm labour, subsistence cultivation, crop processing, most informal sector activities, paid domestic work, healthcare and childcare - are either omitted or undercounted in national census figures. Yet despite acknowledgement of the limitations of such empirical data, many researchers continue to use such information as the basis for development planning.

The inaccuracy of such information as the basis for development planning is often compounded by research and development projects that focus on single aspects of women's lives and ignore the vital inter-relationship between women's productive, reproductive and community managing roles. Kabeer (1991:7) refers to this tendency as sectoral research. She argues that the most common manifestation of this tendency is for researchers and planners to divide sectors into those with efficiency implications - agriculture, industry, finance, foreign trade and men - and those with welfare implications - health, rural development, women and children.

The implications of this sectoral split are that firstly, efficiency related projects are often given first priority, with the result that women's responsibilities for the health, welfare and care of their families are seen as being of secondary importance and consequently given little support. The second implication is that women's involvement in projects designed in one sector take little account of the fact that women might be involved in projects in the other sectors or that they still have to perform their other tasks and responsibilities. Kabeer (1991:9) argues that this lack of fit between the sectoral thinking of planners and the "inter-sectoral" spread of women's activities results in conflicting demands on women's time, intensified work burdens, longer working hours, and in the longer run, project failures.

The GAD approach argues that these methodological and conceptual flaws give rise to research findings that do not accurately reflect the reality of women's lives. These findings are in turn translated into development plans and projects for women that are inappropriate and unsustainable because they are not based on an understanding of the complex fabric of women's lives that simultaneously shapes their needs and determines the constraints to their full development. These methodological flaws, they argue, highlight the need for an alternative approach that both avoids the errors inherent in other approaches and that contains the elements of a more gender-aware approach to development and research.

Kabeer (1991:16) argues that the aim of such an alternative analysis and approach should be to provide a holistic understanding of development which is also based on an awareness of the human and gender implications of all forms of policy interventions. This requires a research process that is able to identify the multiple interlinkages between production and reproduction, that is able to analyse the structures and dynamics of gender relations within a particular community and that is able to identify the specific gender needs, interests and priorities of both men and women. It will be argued that the GAD approach contains many of these elements necessary for gender-sensitive research.

3.2. GAD ANALYTICAL TOOLS AND RESEARCH METHODS

The main theoretical and conceptual assumptions underlying the GAD approach were outlined in Chapter 2. It was argued in this chapter that, compared to many of the other approaches discussed, the GAD approach contains several conceptual and theoretical advances that better equip development practitioners and researchers to analyse and understand the issue of women's development in the Third World, and which in turn provides them with a more reliable platform from which to formulate appropriate and sustainable development programmes and projects. The Canadian Council for International Co-operation and the Match International Centre (henceforth referred to as "The Collective") have attempted to translate these analytical concepts into research areas and research questions which, they argue, assist in deepening micro-level gender analyses, overcoming the gender biases present in other approaches, and in guiding development work and planning. An outline of these GAD research areas and analytical tools, which were employed in the field research, will follow.

As has been previously mentioned, a central tenet of the GAD approach is its insistence on a gender focus - i.e an understanding of how gender identities and attributes are constructed in any given society/community; how these gender identities affect the relationships between men and women and how they in turn give rise to a gender division of labour; the different tasks performed by men and women and the values

attached to each; and how these differentially shape and influence the practical gender needs and strategic interests of both men and women. It is only on the basis of such an understanding, they argue, that development planning can proceed. The Collective (1991:24) therefore identifies the following research areas as crucial components of a gender focus in any community investigation:-

1. The sexual/gender division of labour
2. The types of labour:
    a) productive
    b) reproductive
    c) community labour
3. Differential access to and control of resources (political, economic, time) and benefits.
4. Condition and position
5. Practical needs and strategic interests

The community investigation in Merino Walk attempted to explore each of these five research areas identified by the Collective. A brief discussion of why a focus on these five areas is perceived to be important to a gender analysis, the types of information being sought from each area, and the broad research questions that were used in the first three categories will follow.

3.2.1. The sexual/gender division of labour

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the GAD approach argues that a central aspect of gender relations lies in the fact that men and women are allocated different roles, responsibilities and activities according to what is considered appropriate. This is usually called the Sexual Division of Labour, but is more accurately the Gender Division of Labour. Thus although both women and men work to maintain households and communities, their work tends to be different in nature and value. These differences between men's and women's work is a source of division and sometimes conflict among them, but they are also a source of connection, interdependence, exchange and co-operation in their combined efforts to meet household survival needs. A GAD approach strives for a holistic understanding of gender relations that recognises the relational aspects of the division of labour (The Collective, 1991:25).

Although women are essential contributors to the social and economic well-being of their families, their work is generally less valued than men's. Women's work thus earns less prestige and remuneration and is often excluded from national economic indicators. The Collective (1991:25) argue that the nature and extent of women's work can remain invisible if there is no awareness that a gender division of labour exists in the community; and inappropriate assumptions may follow about how work is organised, who does what, and how men and women will be affected by any development intervention.

They therefore propose that gender-sensitive research investigate how work is organised in any community in which development work is anticipated. This would include examining what work men, women, girls and boys do, and which of these tasks are paid and which are unpaid. This information would enable development practitioners to analyse the implications of this division of labour for achieving project/programme goals; to anticipate the differential impact of a project on both men and women; and to analyse whether a proposed project will tend to reinforce or challenge the existing division of labour.

3.2.2. Types of labour/work

In examining the gender division of labour, the GAD approach argues that it is important to look at the different types of work performed by men and women within a particular community. They maintain that one of the main errors of past development initiatives and research was the failure to examine the interplay between the different types of work undertaken, particularly by women. Moser (1991:158) identifies three main categories of work in rural communities:

a) PRODUCTIVE WORK, which involves the production of goods and services for consumption and trade (farming, fishing, employment and self-employment). The Collective (1991:26) argues that when people are asked what they do, the response is most often related to productive

work, especially work which is paid or generates income. Both women and men can be involved in productive activities, but for the most part, their functions and responsibilities will differ according to the gender division of labour. Many development researchers and practitioners still assume that productive work is largely the preserve of men. Women's productive work is thus often less visible and frequently less valued than men's.

b) REPRODUCTIVE WORK, which involves the care and maintenance of the household and its members including bearing and caring for children, food preparation, water and fuel collection, shopping, housekeeping and family health care. Reproductive work is crucial to human survival, yet is seldom considered "real work". In poor communities, reproductive work is, for the most part manual, labour-intensive, and time-consuming. It is almost always the responsibility of women and girls.

c) COMMUNITY WORK, which involves the collective organisation of social events and services: ceremonies and celebrations, community improvement activities, participation in groups and organisations, local political activities, and so on. This type of work is seldom considered in economic analyses of communities. However, it involves considerable volunteer time and is important for the spiritual and cultural development of communities and is a vehicle for community organisation and self-

> determination. Both women and men engage in community activities, although a gender division of labour also prevails here (The Collective, 1991:26).

Women, men, boys and girls are likely to be involved in all three areas of work. In many societies however, women do almost all of the reproductive and much of the productive work. Thus any intervention in one area will affect the other areas. Women's workload can prevent them from participating in development projects, and when they do participate, extra time spent farming, producing, training or meeting, means less time for other tasks, such as the child care or food production.

The GAD approach therefore proposes that an analysis of the types of work done by women and men - i.e. of the gender division of labour - is necessary in order to acknowledge all the work done in the community and its true value, to plan for the impact of projects on the complex balance of community social and economic functions, to reduce women's workload, and to ensure women's participation in projects.

It also argues that an analysis of work might usefully identify the amount of time spent doing different types of work (particularly by women), and their regularity, seasonality and location. Such an analysis of community work will also identify women's groups, affiliations and representatives - valuable information for determining how to consult with and support women's collective activity (The Collective, 1991:pp26-27).

3.2.3. Access to and control over resources and benefits

The GAD approach argues that productive, reproductive and community work all require the use of resources. It is therefore important that a gender focus investigate the extent to which women have access to the resources needed for their work, their degree of control over those resources, the extent of their access to the benefits derived from family and personal work, and the amount of control they have over the benefits.

The Collective (1991:27) states that **resources** can include: a) economic or productive resources such as land, equipment, tools, labour, cash/credit, employment/income-earning skills, employment/income-earning opportunities; b) political resources such as representative organisations, leadership, education and information, public-sphere experience, self-confidence and credibility; and c) time which is a particularly critical and scarce resource for women. **Benefits** on the other hand, can include: provision of basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter; cash and income; asset ownership; education and training; political power, prestige, status, and opportunities to pursue new interests.

Women's subordinated position can limit their access to and control over resources and benefits. In some cases women may have **access** (the opportunity to make use of something) to resources, but no **control** (the ability to define its use and

impose that definition on others) over how they are used. Furthermore, women often have less access than men to the benefits of economic or political activity, or little control over them. Women may, for example, have access to land, but no control over its long-term use or ownership; they may have access to food, but on control over its allocation within the household; they may have access to income through their food or craft production, but no control over how it can be spent; and they may have access to local political processes, but little influence and control over the nature of issues to be addressed and final decisions (The Collective, 1991:28).

Restricted access and control, lack of time, can limit women's ability to participate in and benefit from development activity, particularly at a decision-making level. The GAD approach argues that a lack of information on access to and control over resources and benefits has led to many incorrect assumptions about what women will be able to achieve and how they will benefit from both women-specific and "gender-integrated" projects. This is therefore another category of information, along with the gender division of labour and types of work, that is required to develop projects that will achieve their objectives. A gender-based analysis of resources and benefits can help planners compensate for and/or correct women's lack of access and control, at least within the project process (The Collective, 1991:28). This would obviously have to be done in a manner that does not generate conflict and result in men's resistance to women's involvement in development.

The GAD approach argues that a gender-focus requires that information be gathered in the above three research areas in order to analyse the other two gender-focus areas, namely women's condition and position, and women's practical gender needs and strategic gender interests. (For a discussion of the analytical concepts of women's condition and position, and women's practical gender needs and strategic gender interests, refer to Chapter 2).

Although field interviews are usually able to extract information from women themselves about their condition and practical gender needs, women often find it more difficult to analyse their own position and strategic gender interests. Their ability to arrive at such a self-analysis therefore requires an educative, and consciousness-raising process that aims to empower women, improve their position and realise their strategic gender interests. The GAD approach maintains that the method of service or project delivery aimed at improving women's (and the community's) immediate material needs - i.e their condition - should be one that facilitates this empowerment process and enables women (and the community) to become agents of their own development. When planning and designing a specific project, it is therefore important that the delivery of a service is not merely seen as an end in itself but as a means toward the full development of both men and women (The Collective, 1991:pp32-34).

3.3. FIELD RESEARCH DESIGN: APPLYING A GAD FRAMEWORK

The field research attempted to use the GAD framework and research methods discussed above in a rural community in South Africa's Border region. While some brief demographic details are given below, a full overview and historical background to the occupation of Merino Walk by the Thornhill people will be provided in Chapter 4. A discussion of the research findings (in case study form) will be presented in Chapter 5. The remainder of the current chapter will discuss the way in which the GAD framework was translated into a research design for the community investigation that also attempted to overcome some of the gender biases discussed in section 3.1.

Merino Walk, a new settlement with only one "village", has an estimated population of 2000 people, consisting of about 180 households. Most of these households are of an extended-family type, with approximately 7-10 people per household. These figures include migrant workers who are away from the community for most of the year. Most of the migrants in the Merino Walk community (at least 80%) are male. Because of this, and because a large number of female-headed households were allocated land in the process of occupying Merino Walk, about one-third of the households are in fact headed by women.

The Merino Walk community investigation took place in February 1992. Initial consultation meetings were conducted with the Residents Association (i.e all the residents of Merino Walk) and approval for the research process was obtained. The in-depth interviews took place over a period of a week, with the "research team" being hosted and accommodated by the community. This provided us with the opportunity to conduct in-depth interviews with a range of people as well as to gain first-hand experience of some of the problems and difficulties, mentioned in the interviews, with which residents have to cope on a daily basis. Although it was possible to interview some of the weekly commuters - i.e. those who work in nearby towns during the week and return to their homes over the weekends, the timing of the interviews excluded the possibility of interviewing migrant workers - i.e. those who only return home once or twice a year, usually during the Easter and Christmas periods. Most of the people interviewed were therefore either those who spend a large part of their time in the community (women, the young and the aged) or those who were unemployed at the time, but who saw themselves spending less time in the community once they found jobs (male youth and men of employable age).

After the interviews, several reportback meetings and workshops were held within the community in order to discuss the research findings, clarify certain areas, and to discuss some of the implications of these findings. Subsequent to the

interviews a development process has been defined within the community and regular meetings are held to monitor progress.

It was decided that in-depth interviews were more likely to produce gender-sensitive information than survey research. It was also felt that the aim of the community investigation should be to extract qualitative rather than quantitative information. In retrospect, the quality of the data from these interviews, which enabled the interviewer to gain a deeper understanding of the complex substance of people's lives, more than vindicated this decision. At the same time however, it has become apparent that in addition to gender-sensitive data, reliable development planning and funding proposals for specific projects also require statistical and census-type information. Ideally then, statistical data gathered from, amongst others, survey research is necessary to **complement** gender-sensitive, qualitative data.

After the first interview which used a questionnaire format, the GAD research areas (mentioned above) were translated into checklist areas, rather than into a rigid questionnaire. It was discovered that rather than following a set format, the best way to stimulate discussion was to ask interviewees general questions about their lives; how they spend their time; how they feel about their day-to-day lives and workloads; what tasks are performed by men and women respectively; what tasks they enjoy and which they dislike; the problems and difficulties they experienced; and what they think might make their lives

easier. This interviewing technique seemed to produce more detailed and qualitative responses than the questionnaire format - the interviewer's role thus became one of listening rather than one of "interrogating". It also provided the interviewer with the space to pursue certain responses in more detail and to return to those areas that had not been covered in the answers.

In an attempt to avoid some of the common gender biases (eg. fallacies of aggregation that assume common interests and needs), it was decided to interview a range of people, and in different combinations, across gender, age, and socio-economic lines. A mixed sampling procedure was employed. In the first step, using purposeful sampling, relevant groups within the community were identified. Twelve groups were interviewed. These were as follows:

* 3 "youth" groups, which comprised girls and boys of school-going age;
* 2 groups of women of varied ages;
* 1 group of old women pensioners;
* 3 "mixed" groups made up of men and women, girls and boys;
* 1 men's group of various ages;
* 1 group of old men (who were also livestock owners);
* 1 group of leadership people drawn from the different political and civic structures in the community and which consisted of men and women, boys and a few girls.

A total of 250 people took part in a series of group interviews. A random sampling method was used in which one person from every second household was selected, depending on which groups were being interviewed at that time (for example, youth were selected from the household if a youth group was to be interviewed; GRC fieldworkers, well-known to the community, assisted in gathering people for these interviews). In the case of livestock owners, the Dipping Book Register was used, from which a random group was selected. Each group consisted of 20-30 people which, in some cases, was not ideal because participants did not always have the opportunity to express their view on every issue. The main problem was that although these groups started out with 10-15 members, others would join the group during the course of the interview, making it very difficult to ask them to leave without disrupting the proceedings. Despite these problems, most people participated fully in the discussions and were sensitive to the need to allow everyone the chance to speak on each issue. The one oversight however, was that there was not a separate group of young(er) girls because it was discovered that they were reticent in all forums, including the women's-only and youth groups. The anticipation had been that the women in general would contribute less to the discussions of the mixed groups than the men or the male youth. With the exception of the young girls (ranging from 16-20 years) who hardly participated at all, this proved not to be the case.

The main purpose behind the selection of these groups was to gain an understanding of how men, women, and youth each viewed their own lives, workloads, needs and problems so as to be able to analyse the gender-specific needs of each group and the extent to which these gender-specific needs vary according to age or life cycle. In addition to talking about their own lives, each group was also asked to discuss how they saw the lives, workloads, needs and problems of the other groups - for example, women were asked to talk about their perceptions of men's work and needs and whether they thought men's requirements would differ from their own. The aim here was to determine how men, women and youth perceive each other's lives and needs, whether there are any major gender differences between these perceptions, and the extent to which these differing perceptions are based on gender assumptions and attitudes about the appropriate behaviour of men, women and children respectively.

The interviews, which were conducted with the assistance of a translator, were recorded on tape and then later transcribed in full. The consent to use the tape-recorder was gained from each group prior to the interview. The use of the recorders ensured that the analysis of the data could be based on a full and (hopefully) accurate record of the interviews rather than on rough notes or memory. Obviously, the reliance on a translator was not ideal. Some of the problems experienced in this regard were that the translator did not always provide a full and literal translation, particularly of the longer

contributions. Because the translators tended to be young, they were not always able to accurately translate all the nuances and idioms of the Xhosa language used by rural people, especially the old men (so-called "Kraal talk"). In addition, the translators sometimes experienced difficulties in translating abstract English concepts into Xhosa - for example, the concept of a female-headed household seemed to be a particularly problematic one. Some of these problems were overcome by briefing the translators prior to each session and discussing some of the concepts that would be used in the interviews. Where problems were still encountered, the question would be repeated or rephrased.

Despite the problems of translation and the size of the interview groups, the research design appears to have produced qualitative information which is not only a detailed account of the lives, experiences, needs, problems and desires of the Merino Walk residents but which is also sensitive to the gender-specific needs and priorities of men, women and children. The fact that these interviews were conducted as part of the GRC community investigations probably meant that more trust was established between the community and the interviewer than would otherwise have been the case. A gender analysis of these research findings will be presented in chapter five.

CHAPTER 4 SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1. RURAL WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

As is the case elsewhere in the world, women in South Africa are among the most vulnerable members of society (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989), and the position of rural African women is especially critical. Here the legacy of Apartheid, especially of influx control and the Bantustan system, come together with oppressive traditional practices and general poverty to create a formidably difficult and harsh set of circumstances. The future position of African rural women will be an important test of progress and development in South Africa.

Although the position of rural women in South Africa has similarities with that of rural women in other developing countries, it is also distinctive. The imposition of Apartheid by the Nationalist Government after 1948 consolidated and advanced economic and social patterns which had already been established by South Africa's colonial history, and added to the burden of the patriarchal tradition in African society. According to Grand Apartheid's policy of separate development, black South Africans were held to be citizens of their tribal homelands. These "homelands", or Bantustans, were defined by the white

authorities in such a way as to exclude access to most of South Africa's mineral and agricultural wealth. African South Africans would eventually, according to Apartheid, all be citizens of homelands, having only visitor status in South Africa proper as migrant workers. To this end thousands of people were forcibly removed from white South Africa into the Bantustans, and whole communities incorporated by the redrawing of boundaries. Migration back to South African cities, other than by those with jobs, was forcibly prevented, in a policy known as influx control, which was finally abolished during the reforms of the 1980's.

The effect of this system on rural women was compounded by their already vulnerable position in the traditional social structure. Customary practice was rigidly patriarchal: women were and still are regarded as permanent minors, initially under the authority of their fathers, and then of their husbands, and the male members of the husband's family should the husband be absent or dead. When the migrant labour system removed the men from the communities, the women were expected to carry the full burden of work hitherto shared between men and women, but without any of the concomitant authority and decision-making powers.

Currently, approximately half the population of South Africa are women, but the proportion of women varies in different regions. In particular, women constantly predominate in the economically disadvantaged regions. For example, Development Bank analysis

of the 1990 census shows that the proportion of women in the rural African population in the relatively poor region D (East Cape, Border, Ciskei and Transkei) is 57%, while in the relatively wealthy region H (Witwatersrand) the proportion of women in the rural African population is only 51%, and in the urban Witwatersrand it falls to 40% (Development Bank of South Africa; cited in African National Congress Women's League, 1993: 2-3). The disproportionate presence of women in these regions can be traced to the legacy of migrant labour and influx control. These practices, originating in the economic imperatives of colonisation and formalised under Apartheid, made it extremely difficult for women without jobs to gain access to the industrial cities in South Africa. Especially important in the context of this thesis is that although African women are in a small minority in urban settlements in South Africa, they form a clear majority in the relatively poorer rural areas, and especially in rural areas in the "independent" homelands - the so-called TBVC (Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda, Ciskei) countries. For example, women form some 56% of total population in the TVBC countries, and the percentage is of course greater in the specifically rural areas of those regions (Budlender, 1991: 4).

The major factor contributing to this skewness is undoubtedly the migrant labour system, coupled with influx control which for decades prevented women from joining their husbands who had jobs on the mines or elsewhere in the cities. The effect of this was to confine large numbers of women to areas which had

the least to offer in terms of job opportunity. A related fact is that the relative position of women is worst in areas with the lowest overall employment rates. For example, the 1980 South African census found that while 84% of African men and 52% of African women within the "common area" (i.e. South Africa less the Bantustans) were economically active, the comparable figures for the TVBC countries were 52% for men and 20% for women (Budlender, 1991: 6). Although these figures are debatable, the relations between them are probably accurate, and they show that, as far as economic opportunity goes, rural African women were not only far worse off in absolute terms in the Bantustans, but they were also worse off relative to men.

Although women in rural areas have little scope for formal employment, their labour is employed in a variety of ways. The extent of this is often underestimated. Even in the formal areas, the figures are probably undercounted, especially as regards the two major areas of formal employment, farm and domestic labour, where for various reasons a percentage of women employed goes unreported. In addition, women's labour in relation to subsistence agriculture, as well as general domestic and child-rearing labour, is not regarded as productive labour in official surveys (Budlender, 1991: 10).

Of course many women in these areas receive a remittance from their husbands on the mines, or at work elsewhere in South Africa. However in this case as well they are worse off than their urban counterparts. Many men will take girlfriends and

eventually second wives in the urban areas, and so return less and less of their income to their rural family. Even where men remain relatively faithful, all migrants in order to survive the years of exile must make some sort of life for themselves in the urban areas, with friends and activities which cost money, so invariably the amount of money returned decreases over time. According to Wilson and Ramphele (1989:63), the major source of income in most rural areas is migrant remittances, while pensions constitute the second most important source. (However, in the community of Merino Walk, field research indicated that pensions appear to be the primary source of income in many households).

The effect of the migrant labour system on women's life in the Bantustans has been immense, and the social patterns which it has given rise to, at both domestic and communal levels, will remain in place for many years. Certainly the end of influx control will not produce an immediate reversion to earlier practices. The degree of poverty experienced by women, the nature of their daily existence, their social and domestic roles, all have a distinctive nature within the South African context. It is a crucial claim of this thesis that development policies which seek to advance the position of women will only succeed if based on detailed analyses of the specific contexts of rural women, and the specific nature of gender relations in rural communities. These are both complicated and unique.

One important legacy of Apartheid, through migrant labour and influx control, is the high proportion of female-headed households. Although this is not an uncommon phenomenon in other areas, it is very prevalent and has a distinctive nature in the context of the Bantustans. According to the 1980 census, about 59% of households in the rural areas of the TVBC countries were female-headed (Budlender, 1991: 4). This has important consequences for the economic and social status of women, and for development policies directed at rural women.

Wilson and Ramphele (1989: 177) pick out the following as those South African women whose situations are most vulnerable, even within a category where vulnerability is already high: widows, divorcees, wives of migrants, and women who head their own households. Of these categories, all except divorcees are especially prevalent in rural areas. The issues of wives of migrants and of women who head households have been outlined above. The high proportion of widows (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989: 178) is a remarkable feature of rural existence, and appears to be related to factors such as the deaths of men from diseases acquired on the mines, as well as widows returning from towns to their rural homes. In any case, it is clear that rural women are especially likely to find themselves in such positions of special vulnerability which are further exacerbated by a context of general poverty. Although the position of women would be important even if they constituted a minority of the population, it is clear that the position of women is a

major factor determining the success of any rural development policy or project.

2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE THORNHILL / MERINO WALK COMMUNITY [1]

To understand the Thornhill people one needs to know their history. In some ways it is a history typical of the dispossession which so many experienced as a result of the implementation of the Bantustan system, but it is also unique.

The people now living at Thornhill were originally from the Herschel district, in the north-eastern Cape Province near the borders of Lesotho and the Orange Free State. It has been administered for most of its history as part of the Ciskeian reserves of the Cape Province. While it is the recent history of the Herschel people which is most relevant to this thesis, it is worth going back a little further into the fascinating past of that region.

Since the mid 19th century the Herschel district has accommodated a mixed population of Xhosa- and Sotho-speakers who together totalled some 77,000 by 1970. It was a region of some prosperity in the late 19th century, as social, political and economic factors gave rise to a class of successful African farmers. During this time Herschel was described as the

"granary" of the Northern Cape and Free State. A key factor in this prosperity seems to have been the absence of a strong system of traditional rule by chiefs. According to Colin Bundy, "the absence of opposition by chiefs to agricultural and other innovations", together with the related fact that the reserve was "largely free of the traditional sanctions against the accumulation of wealth by individuals", (Bundy: 211; cited in Walker) were among the crucial ingredients leading to the emergence of successful small farmers in this area. The resistance to rule by chiefs remains part of the tradition of the Thornhill people, and played a crucial rule in the tragic chain of events leading to their current predicament. Similarly, the acquisition of farming land remains among their primary desires.

The twentieth century has seen a rapid decline in this prosperity, as the Land Acts and other political and economic restructuring produced a typical scenario of inadequate production and dependence on remittances from migrant labour. Bundy notes that as early as 1923 the district was described as "congested, eroded, overstocked, suffering from 'thoroughly unsound economic conditions' and 'general depression', while the population was 'seething with discontent', 'poor in production and very low in consumption'" (Bundy: 222; cited in Walker). This process of deterioration continued through the 20th century,.

The recent history of the Thornhill community begins with the decision, made public in 1975, to incorporate the Herschel

district (and neighbouring Glen Grey) into the Transkei, as part of the package put together by the SA government for the formal independence of the Transkei. Before this decision it had seemed that the Herschel district was to remain Ciskeian, as indicated, for example, in consolidation plans for Ciskei released in 1972. In 1975 the Herschel district was administered as part of the Ciskei, falling under the control of the Ciskei Legislative Assembly, under Chief Minister Lennox Sebe. The CLA, of course, remained accountable to the South Africa Government through the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development. Unlike Transkei, Ciskei at that time had not publicly opted for independence.

Local government in the Herschel area by this time had been restructured in accordance with the Bantustan system, and consisted of six Tribal Authorities, each headed by a chief. Their antagonistic relationship to the chiefs, and refusal to become part of the official local government structures under a chief, was to be a major feature in the subsequent problems of the Thornhill people.

Despite clear indications of the opposition of the people of the Herschel district (and Glen Grey) to Transkei incorporation (including a referendum held in 1971 in Glen Grey), the decision was railroaded through the Ciskei Legislative Assembly by Lennox Sebe, and subsequently, through the South African Parliament. Whatever Sebe's reasons for supporting the incorporation into Transkei - presumably it was part of a

package deal with the SA government in which Sebe would be well rewarded for acquiescence - he supported the move with vigour, and the CLA voted in favour by 33 votes to 13. Of the six chiefs from the Herschel district in the CLA, 3 voted in favour and 3 against.

It was clear, even within the generally passive ranks of the CLA, that there was a great deal of resistance amongst the people of the Herschel district to Transkei incorporation. To avoid accusations of coercion and possible political turmoil, Sebe decreed that those inhabitants of Herschel who did not want Trankeian citizenship could relocate into the Ciskei, and that those who chose this option would not "suffer any threats and inconvenience, physically, morally and financially".

The question of whether to stay or to relocate was a difficult one for the Herschel residents. Those who chose to move were influenced by a number of factors, chief among them the promises made by the South African Government in the form of a Mr Uys, an official of the Department of Bantu Administration and Development, who visited the district in April of 1975. The Group Four people at Thornhill have a copy of the minutes of his meeting with the chiefs, and the promises which are listed there influenced the decision to move. Their non-fulfilment has been the source of the subsequent years of isolation, misery, and fruitless struggle. Briefly, some of the main promises were:

* "Land would be made available in compensation of the extent of land excised," and this would be done in full consultation with landowners. It was assumed that this included the provision of farming as well as residential land;
* There would be full compensation for personal property (e.g windows, doors) left behind; or they will be transported free of charge;
* Livestock would be transported free of charge;
* Tribal Authorities could decide on whether to move independently, and chiefs would retain full status in the new area;
* Furthermore, individuals could choose to move or to stay regardless of the decision of their chief;
* No-one would be inconvenienced by the move, as adequate preparations would be made.

The above points are clearly stated in the minutes as recorded. In addition, people also believed that Uys had promised that those who moved without chiefs would not be forced to accept the jurisdiction of chiefs in the new area, and that people who changed their minds and wanted to return to Herschel would not receive special assistance to do so. These points are not clear from the document, but they were firmly believed and as beliefs they strongly influenced the subsequent decisions of the Thornhill people.

In addition to the above, the people of Herschel were taken on a bus tour which passed through empty farm land in the Whittlesea area, land which they believed would be allocated to them. There were also numerous fears as to the nature and consequences of Transkei rule. These factors led to a mass

voluntary exodus of people from the Herschel district in 1976.

In a parallel process to the one discussed here, Sotho speakers in the Herschel district were wooed by the Qwaqwa authorities and moved to Botshabelo in Qwaqwa. However the Xhosa speakers who decided to leave Herschel arrived in mid-1976 at what was believed to be merely an initial receiving camp for those relocating in Ciskei - Thornhill, some 40 kilometres from Queenstown, in the Hewu district of Ciskei. They were moved in trucks supplied by the Ciskeian authorities, and were thus clearly taking up the official invitation offered by Sebe and Uys. When they arrived at Thornhill they discovered the first of many broken promises: despite having had a year in which to prepare the reception camp, preparations had not extended beyond about 2 000 tents, pitched on open veldt. This was totally inadequate for the steady stream of people who arrived over the next six months.

By January 1977 it was estimated that the Thornhill camp held about 40 000 people. The conditions, austere and inadequate from the start, rapidly degenerated into an appalling human tragedy as the Ciskeian authorities (who blamed Pretoria) failed to provide any basic necessities: there were no toilets, no water supply, inadequate shelter and no clinic. Newspaper reports in January 1977 spoke of babies dying at the rate of 5 a day. Some cash compensation was paid out to the initial arrivals, but most felt that the amount was woefully inadequate.

As the situation in Thornhill stabilized, crucial differences in status emerged. Three of the Herschel chiefs, supporters of Sebe's Ciskei National Independence Party, had moved to Thornhill, and they and their followers received preferential treatment, firstly in the allocation of what meagre resources were available in the camp (such as tents), and secondly as arable land was made available. Those who moved to Thornhill without their chiefs fell through the cracks of the Ciskei state, despite promises to the contrary, and their subsequent history has been one of extraordinary dispossession and disenfranchisement. They called themselves the Group Four people, in order to distinguish themselves from the three groups linked to the chiefs. Group Four, whose leaders claimed that they consisted of about 20 000 people in 1976/77, are today the largest grouping of people still left in Thornhill. After nearly 20 years of struggle, they have yet to see any of that which they believe to be rightfully theirs.

The followers of the three chiefs have all left Thornhill, and have moved to land made available to them elsewhere in the Hewu district. About 12 500 people remain at Thornhill, mostly members of Group Four. Conditions in Thornhill are bleak. Housing is mostly self-built wattle-and-daub, and often in bad repair. There are a handful of water-points, and a small clinic. Some stock remains, but numbers have dwindled, grazing is poor and there are numerous problems with the inadequately-fenced camps. Although there is an official plan for the upgrading of Thornhill, nothing has been done, and the

Thornhill people receive little if any state assistance. This is compounded by the refusal of the Group Four people to recognize the Amavundla Tribal Authority, under whom they would fall in terms of Ciskei regulations. This refusal derives from their belief that they had been promised that they would not be forced to accept the jurisdiction of chiefs if they elected to move from Herschel. It is one of the promises which they wish to see upheld.

The Group Four leadership have fought a long and bitter campaign for the recognition of their rights. They wrote letters, sometimes through lawyers, to South African and Ciskeian authorities, but nothing was achieved. Their situation worsened when Ciskei took independence in 1981. South Africa could wash its hands of the problem, and Ciskei demonstrated an increasingly hostile attitude. Despite the increased hazards (increasing detentions and alleged torture on the part of the notorious Ciskei security police), the Group Four leaders have continued their struggle, linking up at times with the Black Sash, various lawyers, and the Grahamstown Rural Committee. In 1986 two representatives travelled to Pretoria to see Foreign Affairs Minister Pik Botha, but again to no avail.

They believe their claims are just and straightforward. They want land, self-government (that is, freedom from tribal authorities), and South African citizenship. They believe that these were promised them by South Africa in 1976, and that it

is the responsibility of the South African government to make good these promises.

After years of inaction, the 1990's brought a flurry of activity to Thornhill. First there were indications of a new attitude on the part of Pretoria, which began to indicate a readiness to negotiate with the Group 4 people. Unfortunately the results of this process was a government proposal of an urban settlement for a small number of people at Waverly, which explicitly excluded the possibility of land for farming. This scheme was in fact part of a standard Government plan for township redevelopment. Group 4 took this as a sign of insincerity on the part of the Government.

The Ciskei coup which unseated Sebe and brought Brigadier Gqozo to power also raised a flicker of hope, which was quickly dashed. After this second disappointment, in July 1990, the community decided to occupy vacant land near Thornhill - Merino Walk farm, belonging to the South African Development Trust. After being evicted at gunpoint by Ciskeian soldiers, the community returned a second time, and in much greater numbers, to Merino Walk, in January of 1991. It is estimated that about 180 households made this move. Negotiations with the South African Department of Development Aid then began, which included a visit by deputy minister of Development Aid, Piet Marais, who gave approval for the Merino Walk community to remain there pending the finalisation of negotiation around their land claims. However, matters rapidly deteriorated after this

promising beginning, with the community believing that DDA was dragging its heels and reneging on earlier promises. The process ended in deadlock. The emotions which arose from this resulted in the occupation of another two neighbouring farms, Arendskranz and Tigerklip.

The people at Merino Walk in any case began to think in terms of some sort of permanent occupation of the land. An application to the newly formed Advisory Commission on Land Affairs (ACLA), with the aid of lawyers from the Legal Resources Centre in Grahamstown, for land in the vicinity of Merino Walk raised hopes of official restitution. However there were two other applicants for the same land, and the Commission awarded the land to the Hewu applicants. This decision was announced in February of 1993, and has had a powerful and depressing effect on the Merino Walk people.

The ACLA decision only appeared after the empirical research for this thesis was completed, and so has no effect on the data or the interpretation of that data. It is included for the sake of historical accuracy.

There is very little evidence in the historical record of the participation of women or women's organisations in the struggles of the Thornhill people. Although there is currently a branch of the ANC Women's League in Merino Walk, this did not exist prior to 1991, nor is there any recorded evidence of an equivalent structure in Thornhill. However, the interviews

revealed a complex interaction between the role and attitudes of the women of Merino Walk today, and the history of struggle in Thornhill. Women bore the brunt of much of the harassment experienced by Group 4 members in Thornhill, and they were frequently among those most affected by the harsh living conditions and the arbitrary rule of the chiefs and headmen. Their experience of adversity in Thornhill strongly affected their desire for land which they could call their own, and on which they could build homes for themselves and their families. As a result of this desire for security and some rudimentary comforts, women were prominent members of the group which initiated the occupation of Merino Walk, and have remained key actors in the struggle of the Merino Walk people to acquire legal status and other development resources and infrastructure. Thus it becomes evident that women did play a role in the struggle for land in Thornhill and Merino Walk, and that that struggle had an important effect on the position of women in Merino Walk today. The following chapter will examine in more detail the role and position of the Merino Walk women.

Notes

1. Unless otherwise indicated, the information in this section is taken from:

   Walker, Cherryl. "Bantustan Betrayal: The Herschel Refugees of Thornhill and Botshabelo." Unpublished manuscript: Grahamstown Rural Committee, Grahamstown.

   This constitutes a draft work which is still being updated by the GRC. As such there exists no definitive copy, and so I have not given page numbers. Instead I have sometimes given page numbers of the author's original sources.

CHAPTER 5. CASE STUDY: GENDER RELATIONS IN MERINO WALK.

In September 1990 a small grouping of Thornhill residents occupied Merino Walk, a tract of land that was once a white-owned farm but that was subsequently bought by the South African government and administered by the South African Development Trust. The present settlement in Merino Walk reflects the community's state of uncertainty about their future on this land. Upon their arrival at Merino Walk the residents erected temporary shacks as they did not want to invest resources in building permanent dwellings that they might be forced to vacate. Two years later most people are still living in these "temporary" shacks. At the same time, there are apparently many more families back in Thornhill who would like to move to Merino Walk but who are unwilling to take the risk until they can do so with some degree of certainty.

The present settlement in Merino Walk thus resembles a squatter camp. The majority of shacks are extremely rudimentary, in close proximity to one another, and often house more than one family. Basic infrastructure and services - such as toilets, water, health facilities, education and transport - are either nonexistent or completely inadequate. The urgent requirements of the community therefore centre around land and the

provision and improvement of basic services and infrastructure. However, plans aimed at acquiring these services have been affected by the recent ACLA decision that Merino Walk should be handed over to the Hewu people and the present uncertainty as to whether they will be offered alternative land that meets with their approval.

At the time of conducting the interviews the community was concerned with lobbying the South African government to recognise their right to remain on the land they had occupied, to grant them sufficient additional land to cater for the residential, agricultural and grazing needs of both the Merino Walk occupants and those Thornhill people who still wanted to move to Merino Walk, and to provide and improve basic services and infrastructure. The decision as to whether or not to proceed with plans to develop Merino Walk (informed by the findings of the community investigation) now depends on whether ACLA offers alternative land to the Thornhill/Merino Walk people which they find acceptable and to which they agree to move. The following analysis of gender relations, the gender division of labour and the gender-specific needs of the Merino Walk residents is based on the conditions and intentions of the community that prevailed up until the ACLA judgement of February 1993.

This gender analysis of the research data gathered during the community investigation in February 1992 will make use of the

GAD framework recommended by The Collective (1991), which was outlined in the previous chapter. The first aspect of gender relations to be discussed is that of the gender division of labour - i.e. the manner in which work is organised in Merino Walk and the different nature and value of the work performed by women, men and children respectively.

1. THE GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR

The following were identified as the traditional roles of women, men and children respectively:

1.1 Women's work

Cooking
Digging soil for plastering and bricks
Plastering
Chopping and collecting wood
Collecting water
Looking after children
Nursing and caring for babies
Discipline children
Ensuring that children attend school
Gardening
Hoeing
Cleaning the yards
Stamping mielies
Grinding mielies
Looking after the pigs
Looking after poultry
Making beds
Cleaning the house
Washing dishes
Washing clothes
Ironing
Sweeping
Sewing

Handicrafts
Seeking ways in which to feed the family

In addition to these roles and responsibilities, women may also be expected to perform those tasks traditionally defined as "men's work". This occurs when the men are away, or in the case of female-headed households. Typical examples here would include looking after the livestock, milking the cows and building houses.

1.2 Mens's work

Looking after the livestock
Dipping livestock
Shearing
Building houses
Bricklaying
Roofing of houses
Assisting women with gardening and planting
Ploughing (if land was available)
Fencing
Planting trees
Repairing working instruments (eg wheelbarrows and carts)
Heavy or manual work (eg digging pit latrines; clearing thorntrees)
Roads (building and repair)
Migrant labour (providing for the family)
Chopping big pieces of wood
Repairing cars
Digging graves

1.3 Boy's and girl's work

Making tea/coffee in the morning
Cooking
Looking after the goats
Looking after the dogs
Attending school
Cleaning windows
Milking the cows (sunrise and sunset) [boys]
Assisting the men [boys]
Assisting the women [girls].

As can be seen from the above, there is a very definite gender division of labour, whereby men, women and children are allocated, and are expected to perform, different tasks and functions within the community. This gender division of labour

within Merino Walk shares many similarities with the gender division of labour that may be found in other rural black communities in South Africa (and indeed, in other parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America). Peoples' ability to perform their respective tasks are, however, influenced, shaped and affected by local conditions. The following discussion, which examines the different types of work that exist within this gender division of labour, will pay special attention to how the roles, responsibilities and tasks performed by women are affected by the specific conditions that prevail in Merino Walk.

2. THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORK PERFORMED BY WOMEN

The GAD approach identifies three main categories of work that exist in rural communities: reproductive, productive, and community work. Although women, men, boys and girls are likely to be involved in all three areas of work, in most societies women are responsible for almost all of the reproductive work and much of the productive work, especially in female-headed households or those in which the male member is absent for a large part of the year. As already mentioned, the GAD approach argues that many development projects have failed precisely because they failed to recognise that women, unlike men, are severely constrained by the burden of simultaneously balancing these three roles (Moser, 1991:159). A

discussion of the roles and tasks performed by the Merino Walk women in each of these three areas will follow.

2.1. Reproductive work

Reproductive work involves the care and maintenance of the household and its members. The women of Merino Walk, like many women the world over, are allocated the direct responsibility for sustaining the household. In order to meet these household responsibilities, the women are obliged to perform a range of different activities on a routine daily basis. Murphy (1991:6) states that the multiple activities performed by the women in sustaining the household may be classified into four categories, namely: survival tasks, household tasks, income-generating tasks and, in many instances, men's tasks. Survival tasks serve to sustain daily life within the household (finding ways of securing food for the family, supplying the household's water and fuel, and health care - child care and care for the sick and aged). Household work is aimed at maintaining the orderly functioning of the home (cleaning, washing, ironing, food preparation and cooking). Income-generating tasks, which will be discussed under the heading of productive work, contribute directly to the family budget (the production and sale of handicrafts, the sale of chickens and eggs, and wage employment). Finally, many women - widows, single women, and the wives of absent migrants - are also obliged to take over those tasks that are traditionally defined as men's work,

(looking after livestock, herding cattle and sheep, building houses).

Not only do women perform a variety of tasks in order to fulfil their daily household responsibilities, but their already tedious chores are made more difficult by the absence of basic social and economic infrastructure and services in Merino Walk, by a lack of finances, and by the fact that they receive little or no assistance from men, even with those household tasks that are physically or emotionally demanding. Furthermore, because many of the tasks involved in sustaining the household take place within the "private" sphere of the home and often do not contribute directly to the household budget, the women also receive little or no acknowledgement for their efforts in meeting the material needs of their households. Thus despite the fact that women's reproductive work is crucial to human survival, it is seldom considered "real work". In addition, because their reproductive work is for the most part manual - labour-intensive and time consuming, the women often have less time and energy to invest in other "more productive" activities. As mentioned previously, this has development implications, particularly where development planners overlook this crucial area of women's work.

2.1.1. Survival tasks

a) Women Feeding the Family

The women of Merino Walk, like women throughout Africa, are directly responsible for feeding the household. In the case of Merino Walk, this task is especially difficult as most families do not appear to have a regular or adequate source of cash income with which to buy food. The interviews revealed that the current economic recession has resulted in a number of rural migrant men losing their jobs, particularly on the mines and consequently, many families no longer have access to cash wages. The majority of families seem to be totally reliant on the pensions received by the senior members of the family, which often constitute the only regular supply of cash entering the family coffers. In interviews with two of the women's groups, 25 of the 40 women indicated that their households were dependant on pensions rather that migrant remittances for survival, while a further 5 women revealed that although they received remittances, these were too little or too irregular to support the household entirely.

While poverty and the lack of reliable/regular sources of money tend to be fairly common features of many South African rural communities, the women of Merino Walk - unlike some of their counterparts - do not have subsistence agriculture to fall back on. Because of their recent occupation of Merino Walk and the fact that most families have not yet begun to cultivate gardens,

the women of Merino Walk have no choice but to buy food in order to feed their families.

In the absence of subsistence cultivation, the task of providing food for their families becomes a constant source of anxiety for the women, who are forced to further stretch already over-extended budgets. Furthermore, the lack of transport facilities, and the fact that Ciskeian pensions and migrant remittances (for those who do have access to them) are both usually only received every two months, mean that the women rely on a few local stores selling basic consumer goods at inflated prices. As a result, most women do not purchase large quantities of foodstuffs at one time.

Most of the women interviewed expressed their desire to cultivate small gardens or fields in which they could grow vegetables such as potatoes, beans, cabbages and pumpkins. While the cultivation of food crops, particularly vegetables, will assist the women in their task of providing food for their families and in easing the demands on family budgets, it is not without its contradictions. Firstly, food cultivation for subsistence purposes is largely (if not entirely) the responsibility of women. Thus the cultivation of gardens and fields will have the effect of increasing the already heavy workload of women. Secondly, food cultivation is physically exacting and time consuming work that could potentially further limit women's mobility and time and energy for involvement in other types of activities. Thirdly, the absence of adequate

water supplies, farming equipment and financial and other resources can result in food cultivation becoming an additional burden rather than an asset to the women concerned.

It is also interesting to note that almost all categories of women in Merino Walk - married, widowed, single, old and young - expressed their preference for gardens rather than large fields. This preference, which was not shared by the men, reflects an implicit understanding that smaller gardens are easier to plant, tend, manure, fertilise and water than large fields. Furthermore, garden cultivation does not necessarily depend on extensive or expensive agricultural equipment (for example, ploughs or tractors), and they generally require less effort and management than large arable fields. While not ruling out the possibility of arable fields, the scarcity of both land and water in Merino Walk, and the limited agricultural potential of the region, suggest that smaller, more easily manageable garden plots that can be intensively cultivated might be more suitable for the community's (and women's) purposes.

Most women in Merino Walk will probably be willing to take on the additional workload associated with food cultivation as they believe this will assist them in the long-run in easing their task of providing food for their families. It is important however, that the planning around future food cultivation not only takes women's views into account, but that it also tries to ensure that this cultivation process genuinely benefits the women and the

community as a whole rather than locking them into an endless cycle of "unprofitable" hard labour.

It is also important that discussions around food production possibilities not be limited solely to vegetable and maize cultivation, but also look to poultry, livestock (including pigs), fruit and nut production. The latter, which will be discussed later, are important aspects of an integrated food production plan.

b) Women as Water Managers

Apart from ensuring that the family is supplied with food on a daily basis, the females of the household are responsible for providing water. This is essential for a variety of purposes including drinking, personal hygiene, cooking and watering livestock. The present water systems in Merino Walk date back to the days when it was a white-owned farm. These systems were therefore designed to cater for the water needs of a single household (rather than an entire community), and a relatively small number of livestock (compared to the size of the herds currently being carried by the land). Furthermore, because the farm was unoccupied for several years, many of the components of the water system have fallen into disrepair. The community also generally lacks the necessary skills and expertise to fix and maintain these water systems.

These problems, together with the general scarcity of water in the area and the severe drought that is ravaging the country, make the women's task of providing water exceptionally difficult. At present the only available water outlets at Merino Walk are a tap near the old farmhouse and a water reservoir some distance from the main settlement. The lack of water outlets not only mean that women have to walk a fair distance every day in order to fetch water, but that they also have to queue in long lines at these heavily utilised outlets. In addition, the water to these outlets is windmill driven with the result that on windless days the water does not reach the taps, often leaving the community short of water.

In this context, the women's responsibility for providing water consumes a vast amount of their time and energy. In addition to spending several hours a day walking to and queuing at the water points in order to collect the slowly trickling water, the women then have to carry the water home. Many women mentioned that they collect water in 25 litre drums (a mass of 25kgs) which they then carry home on their heads, often with a child on their back. This mass exceeds the ILO recommended limit of 20kgs (cited in Murphy, 1991:8). The women also mentioned that they frequently have to rise very early, usually before the rest of the household is awake, in order to fetch water and to heat it so that warm water is available for the family's early morning washing.

Given the inadequate supply of water in Merino Walk, it is not surprising that water was identified as one of the most urgent and pressing needs of the community. When considering the limits and possibilities of a future water system, it is important to bear in mind that although women are the providers and carriers of water, they are not the only water users. Apart from water for household/domestic usage, it was also stated that water is needed for livestock and cultivation purposes. A consulting water engineer has advised the community that although it would be physically and financially feasible to bring clean water closer to the main settlement and that there are adequate ground water supplies to provide water for the community's domestic purposes at a rate of 25 litres per person per day, there is however, insufficient water to cater for the additional needs of watering livestock and irrigating fields. The interviews revealed that the women feel that water outlets for domestic purposes, close to the main settlement, should be given priority. The men on the other hand felt that an easily accessible water supply could result in increased domestic water consumption, thereby reducing the amount of water available for livestock. In this context, the men felt that although water for domestic purposes should be given priority, water for livestock was more important than a closer and more convenient water supply, particularly if this resulted in increased domestic water consumption.

The planning of a future water project will therefore require careful consultation with the various interests groups, not least

with the women in their capacity as providers and carriers of water. Experiences from other countries highlight the disastrous consequences for the long-term success of water projects that neglect to consult women in the planning and decision-making phases (The Collective, 1991:44). It would also be important to ensure that women are among those selected to receive training in the use, maintenance and control of any water system. The interview also revealed the need for the establishment of a process whereby a compromise between the different and sometimes competing priorities of the various water users can be reached.

c) Providing Wood

The provision of the family's energy demands is the responsibility of the women of the household. Although there are electricity cables that could potentially supply electricity to the community, the current was disconnected upon the departure of the white farmer. In the absence of electricity, natural wood supplies become an important source of fuel. The women's task of providing wood for household use is exhausting and time-consuming work as they often have to travel considerable distances in order to collect bundles of wood. The interviews revealed that a firewood collecting expedition can take an entire day if one includes the return trip. Furthermore, the women have to walk long distances balancing heavy loads on their heads - a single "headload" of wood can

weigh as much 35 or 40 kgs - which is again in excess of the ILO's recommended limit.

Since moving to Merino Walk the community has tried to impose strict controls over the collection of firewood. Their experiences in Thornhill, where trees were systematically destroyed in order to acquire firewood and the consequent destruction of the surrounding vegetation, has made them aware of the need to preserve the natural vegetation. The Merino Walk community has therefore decided to impose regulations whereby only dry wood can be collected and they have made it illegal to fell and cut branches off green trees. This is obviously an admirable policy that should be encouraged, but it cannot be denied that it is the women who are most directly affected by this policy decision. It raises the question of convenience versus conservation - the women bear the blunt edge of conservation as they now have to travel greater distances in order to collect firewood. Furthermore, it also has to be acknowledged that the community have not always been successful in enforcing the community rules and regulations, and that it is the women, as the wood collectors, who are the ones most likely to disregard this particular rule.

Apart from the collection of firewood being exhausting and time consuming work, it can also be dangerous. Other studies conducted in rural Natal and Kwazulu show that women collecting wood beyond the boundaries of their settlement are increasingly prone to physical attacks (Wilson & Ramphele,

1989:44). Although the women of Merino Walk have not yet encountered any such dangers, the women of Mgwali, a rural settlement near Stutterheim in which a similar community investigation was conducted, reported that the incidence of physical attacks and the theft of their firewood bundles are increasing steadily. It would seem that as the supply of wood in the vicinity of any settlement dwindles and women are forced to search for wood further afield, they become increasingly vulnerable to physical attacks. This is something that will have to be considered when addressing the issue of future fuel supplies.

Any development plan for Merino Walk will be obliged to look to the long-term aspects of the community's energy needs. Even where there are rules and regulations governing the collection of firewood (as is the case in Merino Walk), the relentless search for supplies of wood is bound to have serious long-term ecological consequences. One study demonstrated that in those communities where wood is used as the chief source of energy, each household is likely to use between 3 and 4 tons of wood a year - a per capita consumption of between 500 and 800 kgs annually (cited in Wilson & Ramphele, 1989:45). It is obvious that unless some provision is made for replenishing and replanting trees, this source of fuel will not only become ever scarcer, but the destruction to the environment and natural vegetation will be catastrophic. Any future development plan will also have to consider ways in which a constant supply of wood can be secured and that minimises rather than increases

the amount of time and energy women spend gathering firewood.

There are however, serious questions as to whether wood can and should continue to remain the main source of fuel for South Africa's rural poor. Apart from the questions of the long-term ecological effects of this massive demand for wood as a source of fuel, wood alone does not meet all the energy demands of a rural household. In addition to wood fires that are used for cooking, most households in Merino Walk also use candles and/or paraffin to provide lighting and warmth. This combination of wood, candles and paraffin is expensive and uneconomical. One study, for example, found that fuel for cooking, heating and lighting often costs more per unit of energy for the poor than it does for those who are better off. In other words, poorer households that have to use paraffin and candles incurred running costs nearly three times as high as those who can afford electricity (cited in Wilson & Ramphele, 1989:47). Furthermore, the combination of these three sources of energy are not only potentially dangerous as they can easily be knocked over, but they can also pose health hazards, particularly for the young, if these fumes are inhaled regularly.

In this context, the real question about fuel is not about whether the poor can afford electricity in South Africa but about whether the country as a whole can afford not to ensure that everybody has access to electricity. It would seem then

that the long-term solution to Merino Walk's energy and fuel problem lies in the provision of electricity. This would help to alleviate the ecological consequences of the relentless search for wood by the people without electricity, reduce the time and energy women spend gathering firewood, and would provide a more economical and safer form of fuel.

There are however, drawbacks to electricity that would need to be discussed within the community. Firstly, many people in Merino Walk perceive electricity to be an expensive form of energy that they cannot afford. This perception is based on the fact that at present wood is a natural resource for which they do not have to pay. In the minds of many of the older men this "free" source of fuel offsets the inconvenience of having to spend large amounts of time and energy gathering firewood (this is particularly so because they are not the ones who have to collect the wood). Furthermore, their perception of electricity as an expensive form of fuel does not take into account the money they currently spend on paraffin and candles.

A second drawback to the provision of electricity is that many people in Merino Walk, particularly the older generation - and more especially the older men - are very resistant to the installation of electricity. This grouping of people tend to associate electricity with the urban areas: "We do not want all those glittering lights. We want a rural farm village". There are therefore some people who regard electricity as an

unnecessary evil and actively oppose its possible installation. Another grouping, largely made up of the youth, actively support the need for electricity as part of their vision for a "modernised rural settlement". A third position to emerge consists of those who argue that those families who want, and can afford, electricity should have this choice. It can thus be seen that attitudes towards electricity as a source of fuel differ, but as yet none of these attitudes are based on an understanding that in the long-term electricity might be a cheaper, more economical and convenient source of energy.

A third, and probably more important, aspect to the electricity equation is that even if electricity was made available, it is unlikely that it would instantly replace all the other sources of fuel. In fact it is quite probable that a family would use electricity for lighting and to run a television set, but would continue to use a paraffin heater and wood fires for cooking. Thus, even if electricity was installed, it would not immediately do away with the demand for wood or the outlay on paraffin. This is because many poor rural families would not be able to afford to buy an electric stove and other appliances such as heaters, irons or fridges. In addition, heating appliances such as heaters and stoves draw a lot more electricity than do television sets or electric bulbs. Seen from this perspective, electricity would not immediately answer all the community's energy and fuel problems.

A possible solution to the fuel situation is to develop a duel approach that seeks both to campaign for electrification and to initiate an agro-forestry programme. This suggestion is based on the argument that it would be a serious mistake to assume that electrification would eliminate the demand for wood and the consequent damage to the environment. The initial aim of the campaign around electrification could be to provide electricity to the community's public resources such as the school, clinic, creche and community centre. More extensive electrification could occur at a later stage once a thorough cost/benefit analysis had been undertaken.

Agro-forestry programmes, sometimes also referred to as social forestry, usually have a broader focus than just the planting of woodlots aimed at reforestation or replenishing woodfuel supplies. Their focus would also include the planting of trees in order to provide shade; wind-breaks, particularly around delicate crops; ground cover aimed at reducing soil erosion; fruit and nut trees for human consumption; protection of ground water sources, particularly natural springs, and trees that can be used as fodder for livestock. An integrated agro-forestry programme therefore has many advantages beyond just the provision of wood for fuel and energy that would be of benefit to the Merino Walk community.

d) Caretakers

Women are responsible for maintaining the health of the household. This includes both child care and care for the sick and aged. The interviews revealed that the women assume almost sole responsibility for caring for and raising the children, with little or no assistance from their husbands. This responsibility encompasses a broad range of tasks including suckling and nappy changing of infants, socialising and disciplining the children as they grow up, and ensuring that they are fed, clothed and educated. The father's active involvement with his children (apart from the general responsibility of providing financial support for the family) usually only arises later as they are about to enter adulthood. It is the father who deals with arrangements concerning the circumcision of their sons and lobola for their daughters about to enter into marriage. The fact that the woman assumes almost sole responsibility for child care means that the woman is unable to leave a small child with her husband while she is busy with her other tasks. She therefore either has to carry the child on her back or has to leave him/her with another female community member. This makes leaving the community for any length of time especially difficult.

The women's role as caretakers is made more difficult by the lack of facilities that could assist them in fulfilling these tasks. Firstly, health care facilities are completely inadequate. At present there is a mobile clinic that only visits the community

once a month. The women mentioned that if a person falls ill in between the clinic visits, it becomes very costly for the family concerned as they not only have to hire a taxi to take the person to Queenstown (there is no ambulance available for this purpose), but they also have to consult a private doctor, which is very expensive. Secondly, the women identified the lack of creche facilities, social workers and financial and medical assistance for handicapped children as major problems they experience in their attempts to take care of their families.

2.1.2. Household tasks

The women perceive their lives to be extremely hard and they feel that they work harder than the menfolk (some of the men agreed with them). They believe that it is their household or domestic responsibilities that make their lives so difficult, because in addition to their other work, they also have to look after and maintain their individual households. This not only takes up large amounts of their time but it also means that, unlike the men, they never have time to rest. The women believe that their lives are also made difficult by the fact that the men do not help them with the housework because this is not the Xhosa tradition. They feel however, that their sons are less traditional because many of them will wash and iron their own clothes, and sometimes even cook. They put this down to the fact that the younger generation are better educated. One group stated that this is why they as women place such

importance on education because they see education as a way in which women can be liberated in the future because it exposes the youth to new ideas.

Many of the women seemed to be ambivalent about their household responsibilities. On the one hand they stated quite clearly that they think it is unfair that they have to assume sole responsibility for household chores such as cooking, cleaning and laundry, and that they see no reason why the men cannot assist them with some of these tasks, especially if the woman is feeling tired or unwell. Some went so far as to argue that housework, and men's abdication of all responsibility in this area, is a major source of oppression for women. On the other hand, however, some of the women - particularly the older women - stated that they did not believe anything could be done to alter this gender division of labour. Some even stated that although this division of labour is unfair to women, they do not want to change it as it is part of Xhosa tradition and their marriage responsibilities.

Some women in Merino Walk therefore identify the gender division of labour, and in particular their household responsibilities, as a source of oppression. Their desire to challenge and re-organise the way in which work, especially housework, is organised and unequally divided between women and men is a strategic gender interest that they themselves identified. Yet despite their identification of this strategic

gender interest, most of the women did not see any possibility or way in which they could realise this objective interest.

2.1.3. Assuming responsibility for men's tasks

Women also describe how they have to assume responsibility for work that is traditionally defined as men's, either because they are single, widowed, or because the men are away. They are therefore forced to take over men's work such as looking after livestock, building houses and planting. They also state that even when the men are present they are sometimes expected or forced to help the men with their tasks despite the fact that they have their own chores to perform. One example of this is that the men force them to go and collect the livestock from the camps.

It was mentioned that if a man is absent from the community, other males (either family members or community members) are theoretically meant to take over some of the responsibilities of the absent male head of the household. It was admitted however, that this tradition has broken down and that the women/wife has generally taken over these responsibilities. One group stated that the absence of men has become a tradition and men now no longer do their traditional tasks which becomes a source of oppression for women.

2.2 Productive work

The second category of work identified by the GAD approach is productive work which involves the production of goods and services for consumption and trade. The interviews revealed that apart from their reproductive and household tasks, women, through necessity are also forced to contribute to the family budget. The women mentioned that men are seen to be the traditional bread-winners - it is their role to provide for the family - but that the women are playing an increasingly important role in this regard. In the case of married women, the husband's income is usually insufficient or irregular, and so they are forced to find ways of supplementing this income. The interviews also revealed that the current economic recession, coupled with the drought, has resulted in the retrenchment of a large number of rural migrant men. Many rural families have therefore lost access to wage incomes and so there is additional pressure on the women to find ways of generating an income. There are also many female-headed households in which the responsibility of providing for and supporting the family rests solely with the woman head of the household.

Most of the women we spoke to stated that, if given the choice, they would prefer to earn an income by entering wage employment in the formal sector of the economy, preferably in the vicinity of Merino Walk. Most of the women are not, however, given this choice as there are generally very few

economic opportunities in the Queenstown area. Furthermore, Budlender (1991:7) suggests that women tend to have less chance than men of finding formal sector employment, and that the lack of opportunities for women relative to men are greatest in those areas in which women predominate - i.e. in the rural areas and bantustans.

The consequences of the general lack of employment opportunities, particularly for women, are that if women do find wage employment, it often tends to be low-paying and low-status work, generally characterised by the lack of job security and protection under the Labour Relations Act. The most common type of work for women in this category is domestic work, either on the neighbouring white farms or in Queenstown. Women are also employed as seasonal farm labourers where they generally work for three months at a time, returning home for another three months before leaving again for a further three month period. Both the Merino Walk and Mgwali women reported that a grouping of Western Cape farmers visit the region annually to recruit women for this work, for which they receive extremely low wages, supposedly supplemented by payment in kind. It would be necessary to investigate this further, but the information suggests that these Western Cape farmers literally treat the Border/Ciskei region as a reservoir of cheap, exploitable labour that can be extracted during peak periods, only to be returned to the "pool" during the off-seasons. This system means that the farmers do not have to bear the ongoing

maintenance and reproduction costs of their seasonal labour force.

Some women, particularly the younger women, also seek unskilled factory employment in the East London area, but given the present high unemployment rate in the Border region, these openings are becoming scarcer. It was also reported that Queenstown employers have on occasion visited the Merino Walk/Thornhill community on the pretext of recruiting temporary female labour. It was later discovered that these women had been unwittingly hired as scab labourers to replace the striking workforce. The general picture to emerge is that very few women successfully find wage employment in the formal sector of the economy, and that their desperation to find employment makes them vulnerable targets of exploitative and unscrupulous employers.

Given the scarcity of employment opportunities in general, and for women in particular, many women are forced to turn to informal sector activities in order to generate incomes. These activities are often extensions of the daily work women perform in order to sustain the household. Although the women only spoke of their legal informal sector activities during the interviews, there is possibility that some women may resort to illegal activities to supplement household incomes. Examples of such illegal activities could thus include the brewing and sale of alcohol (outside of ceremonial functions) and prostitution.

During the interviews however, the women frequently spoke about the money they earned as a result of their sewing and craftwork, such as blankets, clothes, brooms, mats, "bantu" beer and school bags. These items, which are usually sold to people within the community, not only generate meagre incomes but they also do not result in additional sources of money entering the community. Although the proceeds of their handiwork are not highly lucrative, the women are proud of their attempts to earn money and feel that these activities would generate more money if they could acquire resources such as sewing machines and other materials. The men on the other hand, are slightly scornful of these attempts by the women to earn money, arguing that this money is less than that normally earned by the men. It can thus be seen that in comparison to men's productive work, women's productive labour often generates less income and is perceived by the men as having less social value and status.

Many rural women earn additional cash by selling their surplus agricultural produce. Since the Merino Walk community has not started planting gardens or fields, this avenue is not yet open to them. Poultry is however, an agricultural pursuit that they have in common with other rural women, and which enables them to generate some extra cash. The possibility of developing poultry farming into a more profitable, income-generating and employment-creating activity for the women is something that warrants further investigation. The advantages of poultry over many other forms of agricultural activities are that it does not

require much land, time or capital and it can guarantee a relatively quick cash turnover. Furthermore, poultry is considered to be "women's livestock" and responsibility, and so the possibility of transforming this sphere of "women's work" into a more profitable pursuit should be explored.

Some members of the community manage to generate an income through the farming of "large livestock" - i.e. cattle, sheep and goats. There are a number of different aspects to livestock income. Firstly, there is the sale of livestock itself, although most livestock owners stated that they are generally not in the business of buying and selling livestock, and will only sell part of their herds in cases of financial emergencies. Secondly, there is the sale of cow's milk, and thirdly and the most lucrative as far as the community is concerned, there is the sale of sheep's wool. The interviews revealed that some families earn a fairly large sum of money through the sale of wool. Most people expressed the desire to own more livestock, particularly sheep and goats as they perceive livestock to be an important potential source of income. It is important to note however, that rough estimates are that only about half of the community own any livestock at all, and most of those who do possess livestock own very small herds. Furthermore, very few women own "large livestock" - which in Xhosa culture are considered to be men's animals - and even fewer women are able to earn an income from the herds that they do own.

Although there are no formal restrictions on women owning large livestock, very few women seem to manage to invest in livestock during their normal life cycle. Most of the women who do possess livestock tend to be widows - in other words, those who have inherited livestock from their deceased husbands. It would seem that even though these women own this inherited stock, they do not have formal control over the animals, particularly where other male members of the husband's family are present. A widow therefore cannot sell or slaughter any of the inherited stock without the consent of the male members of the (husband's) family. She would also encounter cultural barriers around certain activities associated with the maintenance and care of the animals, such as not being able to enter the kraal to milk the cows or to slaughter a beast, or not being able to take sole responsibility for shearing the sheep. A widow owning livestock is therefore reliant on male intercession in one way or another. She either has to defer decisions concerning the sale and dispossession of the herd to men, or she has to rely on men to assist her and/or to perform certain tasks on her behalf.

In the context of women having ownership rights rather than formal control over "large" livestock and the cultural constraints they face in certain areas of livestock husbandry, it is perhaps understandable that despite the perceived income-generating potential of livestock, more women do not own and invest in livestock. The interviews also revealed that women generally have different financial priorities to men. Whereas

men are more likely to invest in livestock, even if cash is scarce because owning large livestock herds is regarded as a status symbol, women are more likely to spend "spare" cash on clothing for their children, food for their families or furniture for their homes. It would therefore seem that there are a whole set of cultural and social constraints to women viewing large livestock as a viable source of income.

2.3. Community work

The third category of work identified by the GAD approach is community work which involves the collective organisation of social events and services, including ceremonies and celebrations, community improvement activities, participation in groups, organisations and local political activities. Both men and women are involved in community activities, although a gender division of labour is also evident in this sphere of work. For example, during ceremonies such as weddings or celebrations, the women do the cooking, baking and brewing of beer, while the men slaughter the beasts, clean the yards, welcome and entertain the guests, and carry heavy items (eg furniture) in preparation for the festivities. It is interesting to note that during ceremonies to appease the ancestors, traditional roles are reversed because only the male members of the family can take part in these appeasement activities. So for example, during such events the men do all the cooking, fetching of wood and water, tasks that are traditionally defined

as women's work - although unlike the women who carry these items on their heads, the men usually carry them in a cart or wheelbarrow.

The other types of work that are undertaken by women within this category of community work include cleaning the public toilets and school buildings; ensuring that the community's guests are fed and provided with accommodation, water and blankets if they spend the night; making traditional clothes for celebrations; organising food for long community meetings or workshops; and clearing the animal droppings from the footpaths and roads of the main settlement.

The women of Merino Walk are also active participants in the political organisations, community groups and local affairs of the community. It was found that although they are not always as vocal as the men, their level of participation in these public and political activities was higher than their counterparts in other rural communities in the area. This can perhaps be attributed to the fact that the residents of Merino Walk have been, and still are, engaged in a struggle to win recognition for their right to land and to defend themselves against harassment, intimidation and a second removal from their homes. This struggle has created a high level of unity among all the residents of Merino Walk and an acceptance that women are an important part of and force behind this struggle. It is therefore important to ensure that whatever gains women have

made in this area are not reversed when the situation returns to "normal".

As The Collective (1991:26) notes, community work is seldom considered in economic analyses of communities despite the fact that it involves considerable volunteer time and is important for the cultural and spiritual development and cohesion of the community. Furthermore, the interviews revealed that the women of Merino Walk are centrally involved in community work, a fact that needs to be consciously acknowledged and accommodated when planning for development.

3. WOMEN'S CONDITION AND PRACTICAL GENDER NEEDS

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, women's practical needs are linked to their condition, both of which relate to the way in which women experience their immediate material state and living conditions. The Collective (1991:32) states that women, men and children often share the same general conditions and need for improvements. However, given the different nature of their work and responsibilities within the gender division of labour, men, women and children often experience these conditions and the needs and priorities that arise from them differently. The following discussion will examine the general needs as well as the gender-specific needs and priorities, centred around material improvements, that were

identified by the different interest groups within the community.

The following is a list of the needs identified by the community in descending order (i.e. those appearing first are the ones that were identified most frequently).

1. Water; Clinic; Transport; Toilets.
2. Settlement.
3. Public telephone; School building/education; More land; Grants for additional teachers; Permanent structures.
4. Post Office; Improved bridge; South African pensions; Boundaries.
5. Assistance to build houses; Factories/employment;
6. Education bursaries.
7. Electricity; Literacy/night school for adults; Improved roads; Ambulance.
8. Creche; Development; Assistance with disabled children; Administration offices; South African ID documents; College; Water engine.
9. Public library; Police force; Sports field; Shops; Dairy; Social Workers; Tractors.

When examining this list of stated needs identified by the different interview groups, the importance of a gender analysis - particularly of the way in which men, women and children's different roles and responsibilities within the gender division of labour differentially affect and shape the manner in which they experience these needs - becomes strikingly apparent. Although this list accurately reflects the responses to a Needs Assessment which consulted men, women and children, when taken on its own, this list does not reflect the gender-specific needs and priorities of the different groups. Thus development plans that are based solely on the results of a needs assessment, no matter how democratic and participatory the

process, are unlikely to result in gender-sensitive projects attuned to the specific gender needs and priorities of the different groups within the community.

A gender analysis of the gender-specific needs and priorities of the different groups in Merino Walk reveals that although everyone agreed on the importance and urgency of the above stated needs, it was possible to detect different priority ratings. For example, the youth emphasised the need for sports facilities, and education and its associated needs as the most urgent. This is not to say that other groupings within the community do not identify the importance of these issues, but the youth tend to put more stress on them because they are affected by them very directly. Similarly, the men saw the need for more land, employment and livestock-related issues as the most important.

Women on the other hand, placed emphasis on a closer domestic water supply, as well as the need for resources to assist them with their reproductive work, including a permanent clinic, assistance with disabled children, creche facilities, improved shops and assistance from social workers. Furthermore, because the majority of pensioners are women, the women tended to put more emphasis than the other groups on the need to transfer pensions from the Ciskei to South Africa. A gender analysis also identified that men and the youth are more likely to organise around what they identify as their most important needs. For example, the men have arranged for their livestock

to be dipped and inoculated. The youth, together with other community members, have formed an Education Crisis Committee to deal with the issue of education. The women however, tend to rely on others, particularly the Residents Association, to address their needs. The women have thus done very little as a group to organise around their immediate needs, for example pensions. This tendency of the women to be dependent and reliant on others to act on their behalf, and to lack the confidence and ability to organise around their own interests, both arises out of and reinforces their subordinate position. This tendency, which is not unique to the women of Merino Walk but which is a feature of many powerless groups, and which is especially the case with poor women, will be explored in more detail in the next section.

Thus it can be seen that although women share with the rest of the community the same general conditions of poverty and the absence of basic services and infrastructure, the way in which they experience these conditions gives rise to gender-specific needs and priorities. This again points to the importance of a gender analysis which not only enables development practitioners to identify the gender-specific needs and priorities of women and hence to incorporate them into development plans, but also to formulate plans that take women's time constraints, their triple burden, and the multiplicity of their tasks and roles into consideration. Furthermore, the way in which development plans and projects are implemented should not only aim to satisfy and change

women's immediate condition and short-term needs, but should also look to providing women with a basis from which to begin changing their subordinate position and addressing the longer-term strategic interests.

4. WOMEN'S POSITION AND STRATEGIC GENDER INTERESTS

The Collective (1991:34) argues that women's strategic interests arise from their subordinate position in society and their lower social and economic standing relative to men. Strategic interests are thus related to the long-term improvement of women's position. In analyzing the position of Merino Walk women, it will be argued that, on the one hand, they share the same general oppression, subordination and disadvantage and the same general lack of power, status, social standing and authority relative to men that are experienced by other black, rural and marginalised women in South Africa. On the other hand however, it will be argued that the Merino Walk women, unlike many other rural women, have the unique opportunity to begin challenging and eroding those structures, attitudes and practices that give rise to and reinforce their subordinate position.

The interviews revealed that although many women are able to identify some of the factors that give rise to their subordinate position, they are at the same time generally unable to identify

the possibilities for change. Thus, for instance, the women identified the following areas as some which they find oppressive: their unequal responsibility for housework and the fact that many men refuse to assist with them with household chores; that women do not have an equal say in decision-making within the home because Xhosa men regard themselves as the heads of the household and "often act like dictators"; that women have less status than men both in the home and in the community, which stems from the fact that women,in the Xhosa tradition, are meant to obey the men; and that the men have more authority than women because a women is not meant to question or criticise a man's decision. These interpersonal dynamics, they argue, together with women's heavy workloads, harsh living conditions and extreme poverty are all oppressive to women. Yet despite their ability to identify these areas that result in their subordination, most of the women do not believe that they can change this situation. Many, particularly the older and more traditional women, cite cultural norms, Xhosa traditions and practices, and their commitment to their marriage contracts as reasons for this state of affairs and why they cannot be changed. As one old women commented, "This situation of the women is part of the Xhosa tradition. It was like this in the time of our forefathers. It is so now. Even the Bible says that a wife must obey her husband. How can we change what is written?"

The interviews also revealed that apart from feeling powerless to change those aspects of their lives which they find

oppressive, the women also experience their geographical isolation and illiteracy (the vast majority of the older population were found to be functionally illiterate) in different ways to men which serve to increase their feelings of hopelessness. Due to men's higher mobility and greater exposure to city life, workplace environments and trade union organisations, they become more "worldly" and learn ways of overcoming their sense of insulation. This is not the case with most women who tend to spend the majority of their lives in the rural areas. Thus even the seemingly simple task of applying for a pension or disability grant can become a traumatic ordeal for many women.

A gender analysis of the position of the Merino Walk women - their general state of powerlessness and disadvantage, their harsh existence, grinding poverty and heavy workloads - highlights the importance of empowering women to take control over their own lives and to become agents of their own development. Such an empowerment process would involve assisting women to analyse for themselves both their strategic interests and the strategies necessary for realising these objectives - in other words, identifying those aspects of their lives that they find oppressive and building within them the confidence to recognise the possibilities for change.

This is obviously a slow and incremental process. Despite the oppressive nature of the women's lives and position, it will be argued that the Merino Walk women have some advantages over

other rural women that provide them with the opportunity to begin challenging their disadvantaged position. Firstly, unlike many other rural women where community decision-making is still the exclusive preserve of men, the Merino Walk women are represented on and involved in political and civic structures at all levels of community life and decision-making. Furthermore, women's representation and involvement in these structures are viewed by the rest of the community as a central aspect of community democracy. As already mentioned, one of the reasons for women's involvement is that they are viewed as an important part of the community's struggle for land and as such have a right to be party to decisions that affect the community as a whole.

The interviews also revealed that the other, more historical, factors that gave rise to women's initial inclusion in community decision-making processes were that the women used to complain that their exclusion from decision-making meant that the men could not expect them to always know what decisions had been reached or to abide by them. So, if for instance, the men decided that money should be collected from each household for a particular event or purpose, the households that had not been represented at the meetings (mainly female-headed households or those in which the men were away) would refuse to contribute to the fund. This eventually gave rise to a situation where women were allowed to represent those households in which there were no men present. These meetings were gradually expanded beyond a household representative to all

residents, including other household members, women and youth. It is therefore argued that although the Merino Walk women still lack the confidence and collective internal strength to make full use of this representation, they nevertheless have more potential than many other rural women to capitalise on this space.

A second opportunity open to the Merino Walk women is that through the process of seizing and occupying the land known as Merino Walk, many of the traditional criteria usually employed for allocating land in the rural communities have been waived. Thus many women have been allocated residential sites in their own right rather than via their relationship to a man. It would therefore be important to ensure that this practise is not abandoned once a settlement has been established and land again becomes a scarce resource.

The GAD approach argues that meeting women's strategic gender interests is a much more difficult and long-term process than is meeting their practical needs. Thus even where women have some space, as is possibly the case with the women in Merino Walk, the process of struggling to change their position and achieve their strategic interests would require political mobilisation and sustained, conscious and systematic efforts by the women and their organisations. This would need to include efforts to: build up the confidence and internal strength of the women; increase the organisational strength and capacity of women's structures and women representatives; work with and

educate men in order to change their attitudes and resistance to change; and encourage men to help alleviate women's workload. As Friedman (1991:12) states, the process of meeting immediate practical needs in the short term while simultaneously struggling to meet strategic gender interests in the long term has to be a conscious one for long-term reconstruction to occur.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

The issue of the position of women in developing countries is complex and difficult. Where development projects fail, women are often the most affected, and where they succeed, the position of women often remains unchanged. Despite the proliferation of programmes and projects aimed at Third World women, the financial and technical resources that have been injected into such work, and the growing international body of literature and debates that aim to inform development policies and approaches toward women, many authors have claimed that these efforts have largely failed (Elson, 1991; Moser, 1991; Anand, 1991).

The obvious lesson to those concerned about women's development in South Africa is that significant improvements in the quality of women's lives will not be easy to achieve. The situation is especially difficult in the area of rural development, where the prospects for successful development of any kind are particularly bleak. Yet it is precisely these women who, because they are the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, can least afford development failures. For various reasons, not least those of justice, it is important that South African development agencies confront and address the issue of the development of this marginalised and vulnerable sector of women who often live under the harshest conditions characterised by a lack of basic material resources and extreme poverty.

There are some advantages to South Africa's late entry onto the international development scene. Although the South African development path will doubtless be a distinctive one requiring strategies and programmes designed to meet the specific challenges and conditions that prevail in this country, there is nevertheless no excuse for repeating errors to which others have alerted us, or for wasted time spent re-inventing the wheel. Although there is nothing so simple as a successful model which merely needs to be implemented, there is a rich body of experience and analysis in the international literature from which we can learn and benefit. As South Africa moves beyond the Apartheid era into a period of reconstruction and transformation, the issue of "development" will become more central and urgent. South African development organisations have the unique opportunity to learn from the development experiences of other developing nations and to ensure that the issue of women's development is addressed from the outset. The concerted and sustained efforts of feminists (including feminist academics) and "enlightened" development practitioners will, however, be necessary if a feminist development approach is to emerge and be adopted that addresses the specific needs, interests and concerns of South African women, particularly rural women.

Some of the major themes in the international literature dealing with the "women's question" in Third World contexts have been reviewed in chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis. While they all enhance, to varying extents, our understanding of the nature

of women's position in development, it has been argued that the Gender and Development approach is especially useful in the South African context. Although the various approaches toward women's development in the Third World have demonstrated increasing convergence over the years, particularly in their concerns with the need to empower women to take control over their own lives and development, and in their agreement about the need to link women's development with women's liberation, it has been argued that the GAD approach offers a more explicit and thematic method of investigating those structures and conditions that are oppressive to women, both at a general societal level and at the micro level of a particular community. The GAD approach thus provides the basis from which strategies appropriate to the immediate and specific development concerns of women at the community level can be linked to those necessary for the realisation of their longer-term strategic interests.

It is argued therefore, that while a successful approach to the issue of women and development will require co-ordinated national policies and a clear and relatively unified vision, these policies (and indeed the vision) must take into account the specific nature of women's situation in the wide range of South African contexts. The GAD approach provides a practical guide to research design which facilitates the detailed investigation of gender relations, especially the gender division of labour, in local communities. It is the claim of this thesis that such information provides the soundest starting point for the

development of projects and policies which are likely to make a difference to the lives of women, both in the short and in the long term.

Chapter 5 of this thesis reflects the attempt to implement the framework developed by practitioners within the GAD approach to Merino Walk, a rural community within the Border region of South Africa. The aim of this investigation was to obtain a deeper understanding of gender relations and the gender division of labour within this community and the implications of these for the development process.

The case study showed very clearly that the respective roles and responsibilities assigned to men and women within the gender division of labour differentially influence the way in which they each experience their day-to-day lives. The effect of these gendered experiences are that men and women have different needs and development priorities. Furthermore, the different responsibilities and workloads of women and men also affect the extent to which each has the time, energy and space to become involved in development planning, training and implementation. Thus it can be seen that the present workload of the women of Merino Walk leaves them less time for involvement in additional activities with the result that they might regard the development process as yet another demand on their already limited time.

In addition, just as the gender division of labour affects people's capacity to become involved in the development process, so the development process is likely to impact on the existing gender division of labour. While this is probably unavoidable, it is necessary to avoid the situation where the development process either exacerbates women's workload or rigidly entrenches the existing gender division of labour, such that women are permanently locked into lower status, menial, time-consuming and "unproductive" work within the private sphere of the home.

One of the strongest points of the GAD approach is that it embraces complexity and eschews simplification. One of its major points of difference with alternative approaches is that it problematises the issue of women's needs and interests. It is too easy to assume that these are obvious, and fairly uniform within the context of sexist societies worldwide. But the case study presented here, along with other research in the GAD tradition, shows clearly that the position of women in a specific context is the complex product of a network of gender relations. The especially complex nature of the gender division of labour has also been emphasised. This is important not only because it is crucial to a general understanding of women's situation, but because the success or failure of development projects (from a feminist point of view) is often determined by its impact on women's work.

Having argued however, that the GAD approach facilitated the investigation of gender relations and the gender division of labour within the Merino Walk community, which in turn helped to highlight and point to those areas in which people's gendered experience lead men and women to articulate different needs and development priorities, the challenge now is how to translate this gender analysis into realistic development actions and strategies. These strategies are needed to empower and enable women and men to collectively determine their own development; involve both women and men as development decision-makers; increase the access of women and men to resources, opportunities and power; and to ensure that development activity impacts and benefits women and men equally.

GAD practitioners such as Moser (1991) and Levy (1991) have argued that encouraging development practitioners to adopt a gender analysis rather than focusing on women per se is only half the battle. They argue that the almost world-wide lack of gender-sensitive development plans results from the lack of adequate development planning skills amongst most development agencies. Thus Levy states that...

> The challenge for the 1990s is to break out of the women's sector approach through the creation not only of gender specialists, but also and more importantly, the creation of gender competence among planning professionals.
> (Levy, 1991:11).

Levy (1991:12) further argues that the translation of gender concerns into "good" planning practice hinges on combining analysis and action in four spheres of activity: the technical, political, organisational and research spheres. These different spheres often represent different, though overlapping groups of people, politicians, planners, development experts and community members, all working at different levels and with different foci. Successful gender planning practice requires a definition by planners of their role with respect to these different spheres, and in so doing, a clear understanding of the gender implications of the activities in each sphere. Only in this way can an orchestrated effort on the part of all groups involved be induced which will contribute to an improvement in the performance of planning practice through making it more gender aware.

The challenge now, however, which is beyond the scope of this thesis, is to work together with other development actors to translate these research findings into development plans and strategies that are gender-sensitive. The author therefore hopes that the research findings contained in this thesis go beyond being merely an academic exercise but rather contribute to the formulation of appropriate and gender-sensitive development plans that will make a meaningful differences to the lives of the Merino Walk men and women.

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