



TOWARD EQUITY SERIES

IF WE ORGANIZE IT WE CAN DO IT

Project Planning From
a Gender Perspective

CECILIA ALFARO QUESADA
in collaboration with
BLANCA MENDOZA DE SÁNCHEZ
and REDNA GUATEMALA

WORLD CONSERVATION UNION
Mesoamerican Office - Social Policy Program
ARIAS FOUNDATION FOR PEACE AND HUMAN PROGRESS



TOWARD EQUITY SERIES

IF WE ORGANIZE IT WE CAN DO IT

Project Planning From
a Gender Perspective

CECILIA ALFARO QUESADA
in collaboration with
BLANCA MENDOZA DE SÁNCHEZ
and REDNA GUATEMALA

WORLD CONSERVATION UNION
ARIAS FOUNDATION FOR PEACE AND HUMAN PROGRESS



INTRODUCTION

The Social Program of the World Conservation Union Regional Office for Mesoamerica (IUCN-ORMA) and the Arias Foundation's Center for Human Progress began this project in March 1997, thanks to the special interest and financial support of The Netherlands Government Cooperation. Our objective is to unify gender and environmental efforts by providing technical assistance for regional organizations and rural development projects interested in incorporating a gender equity perspective into their programs.

The challenge was to offer more than just conceptual support regarding the definitions and implications of gender. We sought to provide tools and instruments for integrating a gender equity perspective at every level of the work cycle. Our ultimate goal was to ensure that projects achieved greater equity in regard to participation by women and men in the decision-making process as well as in accessing services, goods and resources.

Our satisfaction in presenting this series is twofold. First, over the years we have concluded that even though many initiatives in the field have a positive attitude towards incorporating a gender equity perspective, they have not been able to find practical methodologies for doing so. In this series, called "**Toward Equity**," we have made an effort to offer concrete suggestions and recommendations for incorporating a gender equity perspective into every stage of the project cycle.

Second, the modules have been prepared and validated by countless numbers of project technicians in the field. These publications have been enriched by their invaluable contributions, and we send them our most profound thanks.

In some cases our recommendations were originally designed by a person or group of people in each country and then widely disseminated, discussed and validated in different parts of Central America (Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.) This is the case of the modules on Proposal Design, Participatory Appraisals, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Participation and Empowerment and Systematization.

The recommendations contained in the other components of this series were based on participatory research. This is also true with regard to the modules on indicators and on equitable project administration and management.

- MODULE 1** A GOOD START MAKES A BETTER ENDING
Writing Proposals with a Gender Perspective
- MODULE 2** SEEK AND YE SHALL FIND
Creating Participatory Appraisals with a Gender Perspective
- MODULE 3** IF WE ORGANIZE IT WE CAN DO IT
Project Planning with a Gender Perspective
- MODULE 4** TAKING THE PULSE OF GENDER
Gender-Sensitive Systems for Monitoring and Evaluation
- MODULE 5** IN UNITY THERE IS POWER
Processes of Participation and Empowerment
- MODULE 6** EYES THAT SEE...HEARTS THAT FEEL
Equity Indicators
- MODULE 7** PRACTICING WHAT WE PREACH
Toward Administration and Management with Equity
- MODULE 8** SHARING SECRETS
Systematization from a Gender Perspective
- MODULE 9** UNVEILING GENDER
Basic Conceptual Elements for Understanding Equity

The ideal moment to use these modules is at the beginning of a work initiative or process. But they can also be applied whenever existing projects decide to introduce changes in processes that have already begun.

We hope that this series will be of value to all of those who are working in rural development projects and, like us, would like to make equity a lifelong commitment for the construction of a new society.

M.Sc. Lorena Aguilar
Bch. Guiselle Rodríguez
World Conservation Union

Lic. Ana Elena Badilla
M.Sc. Lara Blanco
Arias Foundation

PURPOSE OF THE MODULE

**I
TALKING IS NOT
ENOUGH...
WE MUST MAKE ROOM
FOR THE FACTS**

Discussion of the most important topics prior to the initiation of any project's new stage. This includes the conditions related to gender-focused participatory planning.

**II
DON'T WAST TIME...
GET THE BALL ROLLING**

Includes exercises at both individual as well as group levels, aimed at acquiring a deeper insight about the personal construction process and the sense and direction of the actions taken.

**III
INVOLVEMENT OF
PROJECT PARTICIPANTS
IN THE FEEDBACK
PROCESS**

Emphasis is placed on the significance of involving all project participants in the feedback process.

FOREWORD

Participatory planning is a dynamic process demanding patience, skills, understanding and commitment by all individuals involved in development processes. Participatory planning is a slow process, entailing successive approximations to the goals we expect to achieve.

This is a changing process; it accepts improvements and adjustments throughout all of the implementation stages, arising from a full knowledge about the local resources and possibilities to solve men's and women's problems and needs. There are marked differences between men and women within their own communities. These differences, which derive not only from social standing, race, religion, or culture, but also from gender, have created inequalities between men and women regarding their access to development opportunities and benefits; women experience the most disadvantageous position.

One of the priorities of human development is to decrease said situation of discrimination and inequality, and create access to opportunities and benefits. To this effect men and women alike must participate in the local processes undertaken to define the future of their communities, by means of their active participation in decisions and commitments towards a more equitable society. Gender-focused participatory planning is an extremely useful tool to promote the incorporation of both genders' concerns into their own development processes.

Gender-focused participatory planning stems from the knowledge of the local reality, acquired through different participatory techniques and tools, which make it possible to identify problems, needs and expectations. The above identification is followed by discussions and prioritization of the actions to be undertaken at both community and group levels, to achieve a sustainable human development.

Experience shows how futile it is to attempt to prepare a manual containing rules and procedures about how we should be and how we should behave. Nevertheless, ideas and experiences can be offered to undertake participatory planning activities.

This is the module's underlying objective; it was prepared to be used as a working tool for the incorporation of the gender perspective during the community planning stage¹, and it is addressed to women and men involved in rural development projects.

This guide is not intended to be followed to the letter. As a matter of fact, it stems from insights provided by people who, like you or me, have had good and bad experiences regarding their efforts towards the implementation of a gender perspective. As will be noted, it is hard to change what we do every day, particularly when lacking a guide about how to do it. We, therefore, believe that it is important to recuperate these ideas so that they can support our daily activities.

The module was divided into two segments:

During the first segment, called **"Talking is not enough... we must make room for the facts"**, discussions will be focused on the most important topics to undertake a new stage within any project cycle. This includes the conditions related to gender-focused participatory planning.

The second segment, **"Don't waste time... get the ball rolling"**, includes exercises at both individual and group levels, aimed at acquiring a deeper insight about the personal construction process and the sense and direction of the actions taken.

Participatory planning is achieved through the following seven steps based on various techniques. These steps also include comments and observations to facilitate their development/implementation.

- Step 1.** What shall we do now?
- Step 2.** Sharing similar expectations
- Step 3.** Which factors help us and which hinder the achievement of our expectations?
- Step 4.** Where it hurts most
- Step 5.** He who grasps all loses all
- Step 6.** Which is the best solution?
- Step 7.** How shall we proceed?

¹ This module attempts to provide hints about undertaking a community planning process. It stems from the assumption that the planning process will include the participation of representatives from the various groups that conform the social conglomerate of a community or region. Nevertheless, it must be clearly understood that a close link must exist between community planning and institutional planning. Module 7 of the **Toward Equity Series** "Practicing what we preach" provides a deeper insight regarding institutional planning with a gender perspective.

I TALKING IS NOT ENOUGH... WE MUST MAKE ROOM FOR THE FACTS

*Module 2
"Seek and ye
shall find" of
the Toward
Equity Series,
discusses the
steps to
undertake a
gender-focused
participatory
appraisal*

Upon completing the participatory appraisal from a gender equity perspective, the path is ready to move forward with the task of building the right conditions for a better and more equitable life for the communities within the rural development projects. Prior to the incorporation of the gender perspective, a series of questions must be considered regarding the data gathered by the appraisal.

- How is "development" built? How do community members and project specialists participate?
- How can meeting their basic needs contribute to improve the living conditions of individuals and group members of a community?
- How can family, conjugal, economic, working, public or private-related relationships, among others, develop into relationships based on mutual respect, thus enabling individual as well as group potential?

Within participatory planning, gender perspective represents the core element to determine a set of actions to be undertaken together with the community's male and female members, aimed at moving from speaking about sustainable human development to the practice, experience and enjoyment of such a development based on equal conditions for both women and men.

"Participatory planning from a gender perspective is a means for men and women to give thought to and make a joint analysis about their current situation, and determine strategies for change" (Balarezo, s.f.).

1. Basic considerations

Participatory planning with a gender perspective has one precise objective: to recognize the inequalities caused by the dynamics of the relationship between genders and how these inequalities influence the individuals' actions, to enable them to take corrective actions.

Compliance with the following conditions is essential to ensure the incorporation of a gender approach within the planning process:

- **Specific acknowledgment regarding inequality or discrimination.**

The institution's willingness and political decision to acknowledge the existence of gender-related disadvantages and inequalities, and that project actions should help to eliminate them, constitutes the driving force behind an effective participatory planning with a gender perspective.

Political willpower is required from all project participants: directors, coordinators, consultants, technicians; thus, the clear need to undertake a gender awareness stage prior to initiating the planning process.

- **Technical abilities required to incorporate a gender approach into the human resources involved in the planning process.**

In the case where a gender unit exists within a project or organization, full participation by this unit would help to ensure that all procedures involved in the process meet the gender requirements. It is, therefore, important to make sure the unit is actively incorporated into the process from the very beginning, and support its participation regarding personnel training as well as throughout all of the planning stages.

Should the planning process require hiring new staff, regardless of the position to be filled, priority should be given to individuals possessing experience in this field, or at the very least, individuals who are willing to work with a gender perspective throughout every stage of the project.

- **Understanding about the pedagogical process guiding participatory planning with a gender perspective.**

The various stages of a project constitute an educational process to the gender approach. During the appraisal stage it is possible to identify the major problems and constraints confronted by both women and men².

2 — It is important to acknowledge the discriminations stemming from other social systems operating parallel to the gender system, such as economic status and ethnic group. Women as well as men may experience exclusion from development opportunities on account of several reasons such as the organization of the economic, cultural or political system, which conditions are even more acute for women.

Planning is an educational process as well. At the beginning of this stage, the work team will find themselves at the threshold of new knowledge; nevertheless, from the onstart, the team should have a clear understanding about certain aspects.

The actions undertaken as well as the decisions made, should be directed at encouraging self-management processes and capacity building, which processes are not possible if women are not empowered.

Development projects may strengthen the gender awareness process among participants. The actions planned and implemented may constitute a determinant factor to either reinforce inequalities or transform relationships that have been traditionally inequitable.

Planning is a means for both women and men to undertake an in-depth analysis of their true reality under a gender perspective, in order to develop awareness about the origin of the actions undertaken by them, and thus, be able to undertake a process of change based on discussions and the negotiation of priorities which were previously invisible.

Being a woman does not automatically imply possessing a sense of equity. As it revolves around questioning the education and convictions that guide our existence, the process to reconsider the roles of gender is not simple for either women or men. Particularly, due to the fundamental changes required. It must be clearly understood that although women and men participate in projects, this, in itself, does not guarantee equity; thus, this is why we talk about an educational process: it is a matter of reeducation, reform, tearing down and building new approaches.

Transformation is aimed at facilitating gender-focused educational processes, to enable women and men to make positive changes regarding their wellbeing and living conditions.

OTHER MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To create the necessary conditions to identify the fears imbued within each gender to move beyond what is socially forbidden (roles, stereotypes).

To understand and support the resulting changes for each gender.

To create the necessary conditions to facilitate women's access to women's decision-making processes, to promote legal equality, equal opportunities and equal participation.

To recognize through appraisal studies that women deal with conditions of inequality, and that any actions undertaken must be directed towards the community members confronting the most disadvantageous position.

To propose different strategies to support the groups that, according to the appraisal study, are least likely to achieve an integral development.

To establish gender policies or special programs dealing with female empowerment³, and set upon improving their personal development, wellbeing and living conditions.

To develop overall actions based on a multisectoral approach. From each project's particular scope of action, it is possible to articulate a wide range of actions together with other groups and organizations: cultural, health, educational, economic, environmental, aimed at globally responding to the needs of community members.

Short-term actions based on a long-term perspective. This entails undertaking specific actions to follow up on the findings of the appraisal, through definite steps to transform the prevailing conditions of inequality.

3 — Empowerment refers to the individuals' need to exercise power and control over their own existence, the decisions affecting their life and the life of the members of their household. To have an opinion and be able to express it, to make it stand, without setting upon attacking other community members.

2. Conditions needed to guide the participatory planning process towards equity

Processes should guide actions; that is, thought needs to be given to whatever needs to be done not only today, but in the long term, visualizing how the actions undertaken today, bring us a step closer to our objective, which—in this particular case—is equity. The following seven elements⁴ should be combined in order to ensure that a process guides the planned activities.

- **Placing women and men as players in the process.**

Obviously, the individuals (players) constitute the primary element. The people are the starting point for the process. People have their own background, carry out their own activities, have a specific gender education and experience, and possess the will to participate in the process.

- **Responding to a need considered as a problem.**

Any process stems from a need or problem that needs to be resolved. Ideally, a process should enable participants to make use of their feelings and their daily experiences to identify their needs for change.

To this effect, it is essential for the appraisal and planning processes to be of a participatory nature, thus, establishing distinct differences between the particular interests of men and women, as this is a sine qua non condition to respond to the individuals' specific situations that make sense to them. This perception and awareness about the need or problem represents the spark that ignites the process.

- **Accurate determination of the geographic area.**

This means one or two geographical sites where the project is being implemented. These sites have certain environmental economic and political features, which contribute specific characteristics to this process, and have an impact on women and men.

4 — Based on "Todos son procesos" . Module II. Pedagogy related to human rights' education. Prado, C. and Gutiérrez, F. San José, Costa Rica. ILPEC, 1997.

- **Determining the timeframe.**

The duration of the process sets the pace and determines the order of the activities to be undertaken, as well as the actual possibilities regarding their implementation. Project participants have different time availability, depending on the activities they are carrying out at the moment the project is implemented.

- **Identification of the relationships between women and men that the project intends to change.**

It refers to the relationships between participating women and men, and the relationships between them and the other elements or people within the project area (for example, technicians and support technicians, the surrounding environment, other organizations and projects).

- **Securing sufficient resources.**

The resources needed to adequately execute the project. Resources are of either an internal or external origin. In this particular case, internal resources refer to the abilities each individual and the group as a whole are able to contribute to the project: their ability to envision, to create, their particular awareness and solidarity, but most of all, the ability of both women and men to direct their sensitivity, imagination, will power, and intellectual talent to the achievement of the objectives and the solution of the problems initially posed. All projects should have male and female staff, preferably local staff adequately trained on gender-related matters.

External resources are related to the economic and material resources needed. However, it should be borne in mind that there are other resources which give meaning to the project, and which participants can enhance. Resource allocation among activities and participating individuals, should clearly reflect the equity objectives. The expenses entailed by a participatory process should also be determined.

- **Clear determination about the expected results or products.**

All processes involve results within the short- medium- and long-term, as well as at the end of the process. Compliance with these deadlines gives credibility and consistency to the project. It is very important that these be tangible results, connected to each other. They should be of a continuous nature,

To measure the progress achieved by these processes, Module 6 of this series "Eyes that see... hearts that feel" proposes the utilization of gender equity indicators

achieved throughout the life of the project, within close timeframes between each other.

Products should be the end result of group interaction. A sense of responsibility should prevail among participants with respect to the achievement of equity, where each person's contribution may be appreciated.

Although the achievement of results and products for the sake of more equitable relationships seems somewhat intangible, it is very important to find specific results that would help us to verify our progress. This would enable, for instance, converting the solution of practical needs into a higher appreciation of the women's work, by earning community recognition and encouraging men to assume their reproductive responsibilities.

Another important factor is to take advantage of these continuous practices to implement new practices that will contribute to eliminate the stereotypes existing around gender behavior.

Verification to the effect that all of these elements are present in the planning results, will ensure—to a large extent—the existence of adequate conditions to carry out a good job and, thus, attain the expected results.

3. Challenges posed by a gender-focused participatory planning

A participatory planning process requires willingness, disposition and patience. Even when the communities' gender-related needs and interests are first explored, it is possible for the individual in charge of process facilitation to face the need to take an in-depth look at his/her own life, and reconsider relationship forms or practices deeply rooted into their everyday life.

The person facilitating the process should perform several roles:

- Ensure a balanced participation of men and women.
- Possess good sense to determine when men and women should work jointly or separately.
- To recognize over the course of the planning process power relationships arising between men and women.

- To promote diverse relationship spaces, so that in the case of tense or strenuous situations, these could be discussed and solved spontaneously, without resorting to external intervention.

It is important to remember that in the case of a mixed group, planning should be facilitated at all times by a mixed group, in order to maintain the participants' trust.

In spite of the efforts made to ensure compliance with the above requirements, situations of frustration are likely to occur, such as women not attending the meetings; difficulties encountered by the field team to overcome the participants' traditional or technical visions, without due consideration to the social aspects; or the occurrence of situations of a personal nature between male and female participants, which jeopardize the approach implemented for the planning process. The following should be taken into consideration when analyzing this type of situation:

- These situations are not uncommon, even when a gender approach is not applied. The challenge for the implementing team is to develop skills to deal with the problem. This is also a learning process for the individual facilitating the planning process. **Whether we like it or not, every intervention affects all relationships, including relationships of power exercised by women and men, as well as their own development opportunities.** Each of the actions carried out has an impact of some kind on the life of the other person: reinforces an inequality or creates an opportunity towards change.
- As mere facilitators, **we contribute the elements for participants to question their practices, the directions governing their lives.** Each person does this at their own pace, in accordance with their particular situation and background. People who have enjoyed greater freedom and access to opportunities, will—most likely—initiate the process of change more easily than the others.
- The **facilitation process requires that we conduct this process following participatory methodologies and approaches.** That is, encouraging meditation without becoming actors, without providing the answers, without monopolizing discussions, without submitting our ideas as the one and only truth.

- Each person (including technicians) **handles a certain amount of data, information and experience, and possesses a set of abilities, but does not know it all.** Therefore, it is a good idea to count on several points of view, to be able to make decisions that truly promote individual as well as group development.
- **To facilitate discussion and negotiation among groups with diverse interests.** Throughout the process, there are groups or sectors with different interests and conceptions, for which reason learning to negotiate is a must. Helping the groups in the identification of their needs and the search for ways to solve them, without having to resort to mutual aggression is a permanent task. Although these diverse interests may originate from economic, political or cultural groups that, as a general rule, are used to enjoy some recognition, they may also stem from women and men negotiating for the allocation of resources.

Discussion and negotiation should be undertaken at various levels: among women; among women and men; among women and men and other economic, political groups, and among projects, programs and agencies.

We must provide support to women, by helping them to present their approach in clear terms and negotiate their terms and conditions; and to men, by helping them to appreciate the approaches made by women, in the understanding that both groups' approaches are valid with respect to overall community development. This process fosters mutual recognition based on respectful relationships, which is the basis for democratic processes involving representative decision making.

A process cannot be considered as democratic, when women have no recognition, or when they are not present and do not fully participate at all levels of the process, or when their rights are not respected in terms of development issues, access to resources, or their integrity and dignity as persons.

II DON'T WASTE TIME... GET THE BALL ROLLING

Steps for project identification and formulation

Prior to the implementation of the plan, the community group must have already processed the appraisal data, which is like a photograph of the community's present situation. This photograph should provide a clear idea about the following aspects:

- **Needs identified** for women as well as men.
- **Inequalities and shortages.** Due consideration should be given to the fact that poverty, violence, access to resources, daily chores, and the opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes, are distinctly different for women and men.
- The **resources** available for development improvement, the condition and quality of these resources, their ownership and control, who decides about their use; who has access to them and; the productive and marketing systems.
- The **benefits** generated by the development activities and their distribution among the community's women and men.
- Whether the information provided by the appraisal study is sufficient or whether supplementary data is required.
- Whether the inventory of needs and information gathering are adequately representative of the situation prevailing for most women and men, and whether there exists a certain situation regarding minority ethnic groups that should be further explored.
- Whether there is concrete and differentiated data upon which to base an equitable prioritization of existing problems and a selection of sound solutions, considering the existing inequalities between women and men.

*It is also
important to
verify:*

Following the analysis of the appraisal, the steps and their order may vary. Nevertheless, we propose the following seven steps to effectively work on issues regarding a practical and technical gender-focused participatory planning. All steps aim at supporting participation, identification strengthening and project appropriation by the community.

- Step 1** **What shall we do now?**
How do we understand planning? Introduction to the concept and planning steps. Connection with the appraisal. Essential elements.
- Step 2** **Sharing similar expectations.**
Definition of the primary purpose. Connection with development. Our community objective, shared by women and men.
- Step 3** **Which factors help us and which hinder the achievement of our expectations?**
Identification of our own strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOTS), as a community group, in order to determine the actual constraints and possibilities to change our present situation.
- Step 4** **Where it hurts most.**
Identification of priority problem(s). Problem prioritization. What is most urgent? Who does it affect the most? How does it affect us?
- Step 5** **He who grasps all loses all.**
What do we expect to accomplish? How far are we willing to go to solve the problem? Formulation of objectives
- Step 6** **Which is the best solution?**
How can the possible solutions be identified?: by considering the options we have to solve our primary problem and achieve our objective.
- Step 7** **How shall we proceed?**
We prepare a tentative plan and determine the people who will be responsible, the deadlines and costs. Which activities should be undertaken to achieve our objective and solve our problem? Which actions should be carried out? Who? When? With what?

For a better understanding of each step, please refer to the following outline:

- *Description of the step*
- *Objective, what does the exercise attempt*
- *Estimated timeframe*
- *Materials required for its development*
- *Methodology*
- *Supporting concepts to complement discussions*
- *Recommendations*

The above steps are to be worked on at the community level: the selection of the people who will participate in the planning process is basically based on the results of the appraisal. Through this appraisal a social map becomes available to identify key agents for an equitable community development.

People summoned to the planning meetings should be clearly informed from the onstart about the objectives and procedures to be followed, so that they fully understand the process, and are able to set aside time to participate in the activities. A successful gender-focused participatory planning depends—to a large extent—on appreciating people's time.

Step 1

What shall we do now?



How do we understand planning? Introduction to the concept and planning steps. Connection with the appraisal. Essential elements.

Objective:

Introduction to participatory planning, allowing participants to understand the process.

Duration:

2 hours.

Materials:

Flipchart paper, markers, tape.

Methodology:

1. Request the plenary to remember their experience regarding the appraisal. Which were the actions taken? Which were the results? If not yet done, participants who took place in the appraisal analysis should be informed about its outcome. People who put time and knowledge into the process, are entitled to this information.
2. Ask the plenary to answer this question: "Now, what do we do with this information?" Ask several people to participate, and write down the answers on flipchart paper.
3. Based on the answers, consider again the planning process elements attached to the supporting concepts at the end of this step.
4. Write down in cards the next steps for project planning. They can be compared to steps followed prior to sowing the soil, or in

preparation to some activity carried out by the community members (fishing, hunting, vegetable gardens, agriculture, craftsmanship). Make sure the example is about an activity known to women and men, so that both are able to express their opinions.

5. Facilitate a general discussion about the planned project, and explain the process being proposed (all the steps and the length of time this will take). This will provide the group with a general idea about the actions to be undertaken as well as the time required to prepare the plan for the project. This will take up at least five-half morning sessions, during which period of time regular activities will be interrupted. Discussions should also be held about any other proposals that might arise regarding the planning process. Try to reach an agreement about the steps to be followed and the corresponding dates. Ensure that both men and women will be able to attend on the date and time of day selected.

6. The participation of women and men should be well stressed, as the project is intended to benefit all members. In the case either women or men object their participation in joint meetings, consideration should be given to holding separate meetings to hear about each group's opinions. Efforts should be made to determine the actions that can be taken to comply with the steps, and what will be done to guarantee equal conditions for women and men during that period of time. Actions should also be taken about providing adequate care for the children, so that everyone is able to participate. Needs regarding transportation or other services should also be identified.

The above-mentioned points can be resolved in a meeting. As the project deals with issues to promote the development of all community members, adequate conditions should be created from the very beginning.

Support concepts:

We all have had planning experience. In fact, we make plans every day about what we have to do, we define **objectives** (what we want to accomplish); we define the **activities** required to reach the objectives; determination is made about the approximate **length of time** required, and know the **place** where the activities will take place; we also give consideration to the **resources** available to accomplish our objectives, and—of course—determine who will carry out which activity. In other words, we make decisions about what we do on a daily basis to change something for the future. It is very important for people to consider planning as part of their everyday experiences, and that the project will allow them to bring order to some of the things they already do.

Recommendations: One way to develop awareness about visualizing women's contributions to gender relationships, is by asking men to imagine whether they could execute the project without the women, and indicate which activities they would carry out without them. Particularly, the activities they would have to carry out to replace the woman's reproductive role at the household or community level.

By making evident the reproductive activities in which women participate, the men would have to make plans for the necessary support to ensure their participation in the project. Emphasis should be made on the importance of the tasks carried out by men and women, as well as on how important the opinions and experiences of both genders are to community development.

Step 2

Sharing similar expectations



Definition of the primary purpose, connection with development. Our community objective, shared by women and men.

Objective:

To define the community's expectations regarding progress and development, through a participatory process to be used as reference with respect to community development.

Duration:

3 hours.

Materials:

Flipchart sheets about the community appraisal (chart about the community's present situation). Information will be required about the community's present and past situation: resources, benefits, schedule of activities, identified needs, etc.

Flipchart paper, markers, tape, cards.

Methodology:

1. The group briefly reviews the appraisal data about the community's past and present situation.
2. The group is divided into two smaller groups, women in one group and men in another group, for the purpose of verifying whether the groups have different interests. The groups get together later to share the results of their work.

3. On separate flipchart paper each group should draw a picture about how the group wishes the community to look like five years from now. Each group is asked to include the following aspects:

- **People's condition:**
Physical: nutrition, health, reproduction.
Wellbeing: harmonic and egalitarian relationships within the household and the community.
Opportunities regarding autonomous development: education, training, fields for sports, expression- and recreation-related activities.
Political participation and community organization.
- **Environmental status:**
Water, land, forests, animals.
- **Property, production and marketing:**
Resources, income, productive activities, resources' ownership.
- **Infrastructure and services:**
Housing, electricity, drinking water, telephones, community centers, market.

Stress the importance about how they see themselves, their children, grandchildren, five years from now, and whether this differs from how they want to be? What they want to do? Where they want to be? What they want to have?

4. Men can then be handed the women's drawing, and vice versa, for subsequent plenary interpretation. Both men and women will be able to clarify or finish the interpretation given to their drawing.

5. On a separate sheet of flipchart paper, ask them to draw the elements men and women wish to have in common. The differences will be analyzed during the plenary session, trying to group them into one group, equitably shared.

6. Based on the image drawn by women and men, participants should then be requested to put in writing the objective they wish to achieve as a community. Remind them about the distinct expectations expressed by women and men.

Support concepts:

- It is important to remember that equity is not the same as equality. When dealing with conditions of inequity, we cannot act towards women in the same manner as towards men, as such inequity would then worsen because both groups do not have the same starting point. The actions to be undertaken should depend on each particular inequity situation in order to contribute to the achievement of equal opportunities needed for our development.

- This technique will help us to establish in our community a strategy for human development towards equity, to which effect we should make emphasis on the situation, living conditions, compliance with and respect towards the rights of women and men. The appraisal analysis makes evident the obstacles faced by all community members with respect to their own development; thus, this is a good moment to validate it and encourage participants to appropriate their future expectations.

- It is now time to create the conditions to attack the underlying causes of inequality and, thus, achieve equity. During this process it is necessary to give new meaning to the exercise of power, provided this is not based on authoritarianism and oppression. Consequently, a change towards sustainable human development implies that men should learn other ways to exercise power, on a fully democratic basis, in consultation and co-responsibility with women.

- It also implies the empowerment of women as a gender, not only working around their self-esteem and the appreciation for the activities they undertake, but also encouraging their access to new opportunities. This is, precisely, the reason why we express our expectations, because we are allowed to express our wishes about a different life, where we are able to undertake other activities and experience different attitudes.

Step 3

Which factors help us and which hinder the achievement of our expectations?



To identify the actual constraints and possibilities to change the present situation, through the analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOTS) we face as a community group, in order to determine the context within which the community project will be executed.

Objective:

To conduct an analysis about the population's awareness concerning their own potential and constraints, to be used to visualize the community's situation.

Duration:

4 hours.

Materials:

Cards, flipchart paper, markers, tape.

Methodology:

Efforts should be made towards having a representative group conformed by equal numbers of women and men. Men and women will work separately; during the plenary session their visions will be shared and a summary will be prepared.

1. Two sets of flipchart paper with the following table should be prepared in advance:

TODAY Conditions we can control	
Strengths:	Weaknesses:
Opportunities:	Threats:
TOMORROW Conditions we will not control	

- 2. Ask the groups of women and men to separate. Explain that men and women have been socialized in a different manner; socialization determines different responsibilities for women and men; which fact leads, thus, to the conclusion that gender determines the manner by which an individual assumes its own life.
- 3. Ask participants to define strength, weakness, threat, and opportunity, and to place within sight the definitions agreed upon. Each subgroup will have 30 minutes to complete this task.
- 4. The group will be subdivided into as many groups of women and men as deemed appropriate to favor the dynamics.

Remind participants to take into account interpersonal relationships (among women and men of different ages, with elderly people, young people, boys and girls), as well as available resources, the community's convictions, customs and traditions, and the activities they carry

out, particularly considering whether these situations help or constraint the development of both women and men, and, most of all, whether they help them to become the community they wish.

5. Begin a plenary discussion about the outcome of the group work. As the work is presented, write down (or ask participants to do it) the aspects which are common to women and men. Subsequently, facilitate a discussion about the disagreement-related aspects, in order to determine whether or not they should be included on the summary sheet.

6. Remind the group that this information will be useful during the other steps of the planning process.

It should be remembered that the strengths and weaknesses refer to internal aspects of the community, and threats and opportunities to external aspects.

Step 4

Where it hurts most



To identify priority problem(s). Problem prioritization. What is most urgent? Who does it affect the most? How does it affect us?

Objective: To identify the major problem on which the project will focus.

Duration: 4 hours.

Materials: Flipchart paper, markers, tape.

- Methodology:**
1. Explain to participants the purpose of the meeting and usefulness of the expected results.
 2. Instruct the group to consider again the information about the problems (needs and shortages) identified by women and men during the appraisal stage.
 3. Ask women and men to individually write on cards the major problems confronted by the community. Assign different colors to women and men. Help the participants who cannot write or read.
 4. Tape the problems on a sheet of flipchart paper, and next to them the number of people (women and men) who identified each problem. Use colors to highlight this information.

5. Make sure the groups analyze causes as the major problems rather than just the signs. The facilitators must ensure, at all times, a balanced participation among the various participating groups, particularly with respect to men and women.

6. Ask men and women to group separately to comment on the way each problem affects them. Explain that we must comment on the reason why the statement is a problem, and write it again on cards.

7. Remind participants that they should write only one idea per card. The cards will then be placed next to the problem and read, at which time it will be possible to ask questions and acknowledge the different ways it affects women and men. The following table represents an example of the results obtained from the exercise proposed under this step.

Problem identified (shortages, deprivals)	How many people does it affect?		How does it affect us?	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Land shortage			There is not enough corn	We sell labour elsewhere
Many women are mistreated			Suffering	
Lack of health post			No place children can be taken to	To much money spent in doctors
Child diarrhea			Suffering More time spent taking care of children	Concern
Lack of school			Children do not attend school	Increase illiteracy
No credit available			Unable to undertake income generating activities	Production and income reduced
Women do not participate in community organization			Women's needs are not taken into consideration with respect to the organizations' endeavors regarding resources and services	The solutions identified by the organizations are partial and lack the desired impact

8. For the above result we selected, according to the number of people who marked the boxes, the seven problems that either affect the largest amount of people or have the most serious effect on people, particularly with respect to women, young people, children, elderly people.

9. Based on said selection, a prioritization exercise⁵ should be carried out. Explain that out of the seven problems, we will pick the one affecting us the most. Discussions should be directed towards conducting a negotiation of interests among the problems perceived by women and men. To this effect, some of the approaches included on the support concepts may be used.

To make evident the differences between the groups, separate tables may be prepared: one showing the problems perceived by men, and another showing the problems perceived by women, for subsequent comparison and negotiation to reach an agreement.

Support concepts:

- In this case, and to enable us to lead our actions towards the desired changes, we must take advantage of the essential needs of women and men. We must stress the fact that this is about the needs affecting the entire community, which solution we must share, as they are somehow related to people we know.
- We should attempt to generate the same feeling around the priority problems identified; we should not feel that only the access road or the community center for the men's exclusive use, are priority problems, but should acknowledge the existence of other needs, women's problems that also are related to the access road or the community center, or problems related to their bodies or the domestic violence they experience.
- If only men or women are asked about the population's needs, most likely the information gathered will reflect the particular needs of the group in question, and care should be exerted to avoid making generalizations based upon that situation.
- A **problem** is a situation or condition affecting people (men or women) in or outside the community, that will continue existing in the future and which we do not want to continue⁶ affecting.

5 ___ For this purpose, in the section "Techniques for prioritizing Community Problems" page 60, the techniques and prioritization criteria shown on Module 2 of the **Toward Equity Series** may be used.

6 ___ Schuler, "Program Planning for Service-Oriented Organizations", OEP, 1983. Cfr. In "Haciendo Camino al Andar", OEF Internacional. 1991.

- Gender education exerts influence on the definition given by women and men about the needs or problems. Women have been socialized to determine more easily what other people need: their children, husband, relatives or the community itself. For this reason, facilitators should poke more deeply on the women's answers about their needs, until their own needs are also pointed out.
- We can turn basic needs into strategic needs by introducing a democratic conception between genders, in the manner of relationships, attitudes, respect and possibility of expression.
- The extreme poverty conditions prevailing in most of our populations, entails many deprivations for men and women, particularly the latter. Identification of these deprivations makes it possible to decide which way to direct the efforts and determine priority matters. It is likely that we will find that within the group, women, children, young boys and girls, and the elderly people, experience the highest levels of deprivations.
- Deprivation categories should be established with respect to the resources, the environment, development resources: water, trees; adequate technology for sustainable development; time availability to educate and train the people, among others. This would make it easier to prioritize the needs starting at the highest levels of deprivation.
- It is possible to find specific problems having a great effect on women, young people, boys and girls, that until then had not been acknowledged by these same people as most urgent. However, it is important that full support from all the people be ascertained prior to proposing a specific project to help resolve these situations.

Recommendations:

Another way of doing it which helps participants to place themselves in the other gender's shoes, is by asking men to express how each problem affects women, and vice versa.

In addition to helping recognize the other gender's situation, this might generate an extremely valuable level of discussion to learn how the situation is perceived by the other gender. Another alternative would be for women to give the men a list of their problems, and for men to provide women with a list of their own problems. In this manner, they would be able to acknowledge problems, which because of their gender, are not so evident. Starting with the list of problems, each group will be asked to indicate on the corresponding boxes how each problem dealt with affected both genders. It is convenient for both groups to have the same number of problems to discuss.

Finally, both groups will present their work at the plenary session, where it will be complemented by other contributions. It is at this moment when time should be devoted to clarify doubts, express disagreements, discuss about the different way in which we are affected, and the different answers we should give to a specific problem, the changes that will have to be made with respect to our behavior.

Step 5

He who grasps all loses all



What do we expect to accomplish? How far are we willing to go to solve the problem? Formulation of objectives.

Objective: To define the project's objective based on the analysis of the data gathered on step 4. This objective must respond to the priority problem(s) identified by the community.

Duration: 3 hours.

Materials: Flipchart paper, markers, tape.

Methodology:

1. Keeping in mind the results obtained on step 4, the group should be informed about the purpose of this step. It is important to clarify certain aspects with respect to the meaning of an objective and how it is worded. Consider again the concept of objective: it is a situation or condition we wish to prevail in the future and which is also wanted by the community members.

2. Make reference to the vulnerability conditions confronted by the people most affected by the major problem. Stress that the objective formulated should resolve a situation of inequality where inequity of opportunity between genders is mentioned.

3. It should be mentioned that the objectives⁷ should clearly express how their achievement will have a beneficial impact on the life of the community women and men, or on the life of the most affected group, in accordance with the problem prioritization.

4. Start writing the objective based on the following elements of support: Ask the group to begin writing with one verb or action, as this provides clarity and helps to define what we wish to achieve. The objective should be worded with an affirmative phrase.

Ask the group to specify only one key result to achieve it, rather than several, to avoid confusion about what was achieved and what was not. In the event we should need to write down several results, then as many objectives should be specified.

An example of a concrete objective might be: "To decrease by 50% the diarrhea and itching rates in boys and girls of the Dangriga community, in 18 months". Or "To increase by 50% the income of male and female members of the Homecreek community, in 2 years". Through the objective we are able to determine what we will accomplish and when, although who and where may also be included.

Finally, the objective must be of an achievable nature, realistic; it should be balanced, neither too easy to achieve, nor too hard.

5. Once in agreement, we can then propose specific objectives needed to achieve the general objective we just proposed. We must remember that there should exist a direct relationship between the achievement of the specific objectives and the general objective.

Support concepts:

The objective should express what women and men wish to achieve to direct the group's future actions and attain specific results in connection with a certain problem. It is not the solution; but it points towards the way to go to solve the situation (Balarezo, s.f.).

Regarding community-formulated projects, it is very important for women and men to agree on the objective they want, which should make a clear reference to both genders, so as to avoid any situations of invisibility from the beginning of the project.

7 — Based on Rodríguez, R. "Metodología de extensión agrícola, comunitaria para el desarrollo sostenible. Plan internacional", IICA, El Salvador, 1996, pp. 49, 50.

All of the planning steps allow us to acknowledge the activities and roles performed by women, anticipate the decrease in their workload, men's adoption of other tasks, and acquisition on the part of women of new abilities and knowledge that will contribute to their wellbeing.

We can define two types of objectives: general objective and specific objectives. The general objective includes a broader purpose, without being too concrete. The specific objectives define certain aspects we must achieve to accomplish the general objective. The latter is more concrete and precise.

It is important to remember the communities desire image or vision, as this represents our big purpose. Although the projects proposed contribute to achieve the image, with only one project we will be unable to accomplish all the changes we wish to make. Therefore, the objectives of a project should be much more concrete, even though they will always be related to the main purpose.

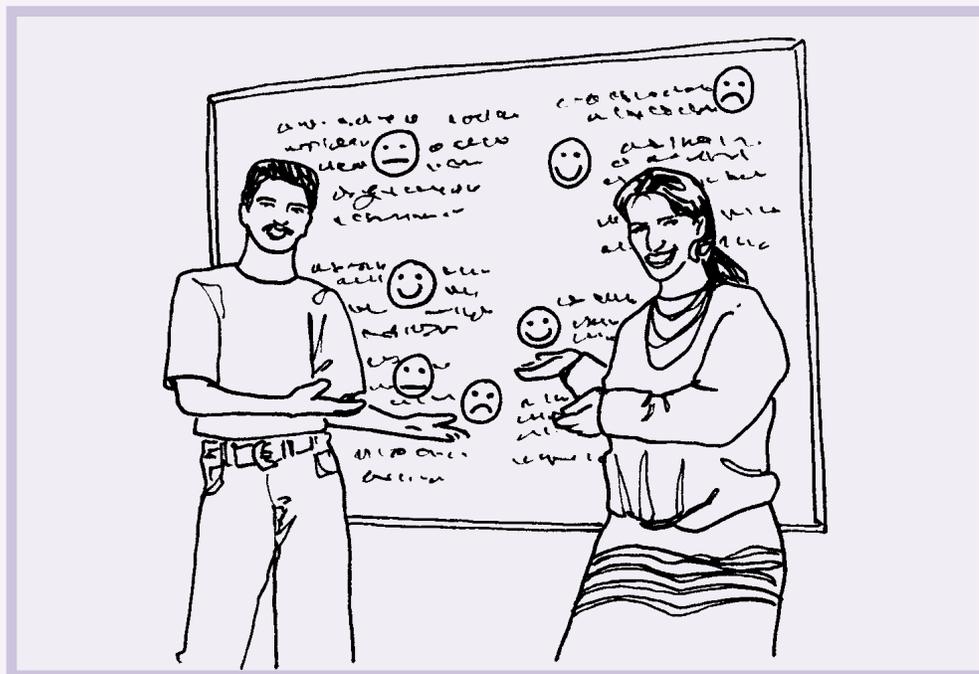
As shown by the process, an accurate idea about our time availability, will helps us make a determination about the dates and activities much more accurately and in line with the community's reality.

Although the proposed changes are usually slow, in terms of changing relationship forms between men and women, an estimated timeframe should be indicated for the achievement of certain goals, in order to obtain some indications that progress towards the objective is being made. In addition, a tangible product should be attained to help the group learn about the progress and encourage it to continue. It is important to achieve changes that we can see and feel. Therefore, as of this moment, preparations should be made to establish the basis for a monitoring system, which will enable management as well as project staff and community participants, to learn about the progress being made by the process, and assess on a continuous basis the status regarding accomplishment of the proposed objectives.

*Module 4 of
the Toward
Equity Series,
presents an in-
depth study
about gender-
focused
Monitoring and
Evaluation*

Step 6

Which is the best solution?



How can the possible solutions be identified: by considering the options we have to solve our primary problem and comply with our objective?

Objective:

To analyze all possible options to achieve the objective, taking into consideration strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities.

Duration:

4 hours.

Materials:

Flipchart paper, markers, tape.

Methodology:

If we are searching for answers to situations of inequality, creativity becomes essential to propose new ways of doing things to set the basis for a favorable transformation of the causes.

1. Certain gender-based criteria to offset the problems identified might be:

- Reinforces the individuals' rights.
- Makes easier the life of women and men.
- Contributes to the recognition due to the woman's role.
- Makes it easier for both men and women to adopt new roles, unattached to their gender.
- Decreases the women's workload, which results in the availability of more spare time.

- Helps those who have not had the opportunity of developing experiences and acquiring knowledge to build their self-esteem.
 - Generates sufficient income or benefits to justify the efforts generated by the project.
 - The participants themselves manage benefits (income) on an equitable basis.
 - Supports public recognition regarding the contribution made by the women to community development, and places them in a social position similar or equal to that of men.
 - Achieves results on the available timeframe.
 - Does not create external support dependence.
 - Promotes democratic power practices among and within the groups of women and men.
 - Promotes sharing decision making between women and men within the household.
2. Based on the following criteria, an analysis should be conducted regarding the feasibility of the proposed solutions:
- **Benefits everyone.** (It benefits men and women alike. Benefits men to a greater extent. Benefits women to a greater extent).
 - **Equity.** Encourages an equitable distribution of the benefits generated, and breaks down the traditional resource controlling forms.
 - **Income increase.** Improves living conditions.
 - **Profitable.** After all costs are paid off (including the labor cost of the women involved in household chores), profit is obtained.
 - **It is technically and socially feasible.** The solution is adequate to the context of the community, and its implementation is technically possible.
 - **Timeframe.** Will we achieve it in the short term? Is it a long-term solution?
 - **Local resources.** Are resources available in the community to solve it?
 - **Sustainable.** Will impact be of a long-lasting nature? Can we accomplish it with little external assistance and continue doing it once the assistance is withdrawn?
 - **Participatory.** It involves a large portion of the population, 50% of which are at least women.
 - **Decision making.** It promotes the involvement of women and men under equal conditions.
3. Ask women and men to split into groups of three and to write on the cards out of the above-mentioned criteria, those considered adequate to determine the feasibility of the solutions.

4. Subsequently, place the criteria on a sheet of flipchart paper. The plenary should select the cards containing the same criteria and group them into one. Plenary discussion should be held about each criterion. Place all approved criteria on another flipchart sheet, as shown on the example:

- To assess possible solutions:

Solution				
Benefits				
Requires help				
Local resources				
Profitable				
Benefits the groups which are at a higher stake				
Implementation is possible				
We must wait				
Promotes participation				
Score obtained				
Priority				

5. It is quite possible for all of the above criteria not to be considered, for which reason the plenary may be consulted about their inclusion.

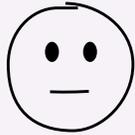
6. Once a decision has been made regarding the criteria upon which the solution will be assessed, women and men should be divided into groups of three. Each group should pose the solution alternatives deemed convenient, one alternative per card, to be then placed on the first column of the flipchart sheet.

7. When all groups have placed their proposals, time will be allowed to clarify any doubts regarding the proposals submitted by the small groups.

8. On the upper hand columns, key words are placed to identify the criteria of the evaluation. The same groups of three participants discuss each alternative assigning one of the following faces:



Sad (score 0) when it is a bad solution with respect to the criterion under assessment;



Serious (score 1) when the solution is fair with respect to the criterion; and



Happy (score 2) when the solution is good.

9. Upon completing the discussion, each group places the faces on the corresponding solution and criterion. A plenary discussion should take place about existing disagreements among the various groups' opinions, until only one "face" is decided upon to represent the opinion of the women and men of the group. Do not place the face but only the score (0, 1 and 2).

The facilitator should make emphasis on the solutions, which are adequate for both women and men, instead of defining them from only one point of view.

10. During the plenary session, the score obtained by each solution is determined. Together with the group the facilitator reviews whether the solution obtaining the highest score has the lowest rating regarding the generation of equitable benefits, or whether it is based on efforts made on the part of the less favored, as it would clearly indicate that this would not be the soundest option to either achieve equity or community development, even if it represents a strong income increase, for instance. In this case, this option would rather reinforce inequality.

11. Upon completing this analysis, the need to raise again the question about the objective, could very well become evident, in which case, the procedure should be repeated.

Support concepts:

The best alternative is one meeting the following conditions:

In this sense, the role performed by the technical advisors is of great importance. We are aware of the existence of new technologies, but we also know that certain traditional technological

procedures maintain their validity. Thus, we must consider all possibilities, particularly those guaranteeing the adequate use and conservation of the natural resources.

The implementation of technologies defines the tasks to be carried out by women and men. The search for alternatives that allow women to enjoy more free time and reduce their workload, must be directed towards alternatives which contribute to define the type of technical responses we will give to our problems.

This includes, of course, the creation of adequate conditions for women and men to obtain access to technology, the revaluation of ancient technological practices—which in many instances have been preserved by the women themselves—plus adequate training to put said technology to good use and application, in addition to creating new scientific knowledge and solutions, without relying all the time on external technologies.

Step 7

How shall we proceed?



We prepare a tentative plan and determine the people who will be responsible, the deadlines, and costs. Which activities should be undertaken to achieve our objective and solve our problem? Which actions should be carried out? Who? When? With what?

Objective: Elaboration of the action plan covering the activities undertaken by the project.

Duration: 2 four-hour sessions.

Materials: Flipchart paper, markers, tape.

Methodology:

1. Ask the group to identify the results expected for each specific objective. Stress the fact that this step refers to the results expected to be achieved through each concrete objective.

We can work on the expected results in different ways, depending on the number of participants; for example:

- Conforming one group per specific objective, giving due consideration to the number of participating women and men.
- In the case of larger groups with few objectives, two groups can be assigned the same objective, to be subsequently shared and presented to the plenary as a single proposal.

2. Each group presents the expected results to the plenary, for discussion and approval. The group can be asked to make a drawing depicting how they imagine the expected result, and the facilitating team may provide assistance in putting it in writing⁸.

3. The group is to be divided into pairs or trios to work on the following table for each expected result. Specific activities should be proposed to favor the best possible result achievement.

Once the list of activities has been completed, they are placed on cards and ordered in sequence, that is, the first activity comes first, followed by the next, etc., until there are no activities left for each expected result.

The activities will subsequently be divided among groups conformed by equal numbers of women and men, and for each activity the group will fill the following table:

Expected result: *Land improvement to increase productivity.*

Activity	Responsible	When	Resources	
			Community M W	External
	Person's name			

4. Each group will make an analysis of each activity, to which effect the following factors must be taken into account:

a. **What are we going to do? (Definition of the activity to be undertaken).**

It is most likely that the definition of the activities will give way to considerable negotiations among the people involved. The activities defined must represent an opportunity for the population sectors in a disadvantageous situation. Nevertheless, as activities become identified, measures should be taken to ensure that potential beneficiaries are really able to take advantage of this opportunity. The community should make plans to support these people, who generally consist of women, so that they can set time aside to take advantage of the training opportunities.

8 ___ This recommendation is applicable to all of the above-mentioned steps.

This is when group creativity and solidarity can make a difference with respect to a successful project implementation.

b. What are the necessary actions for activity accomplishment?

Breaking down activities into actions also implies looking at responsibilities. At the time of considering which activities need to be implemented, we must take into account the women's and men's time availability; the activities they carry out, cultural prejudices and stereotypes. Care must be exerted to avoid excluding people simply because they fulfill roles determined by patriarchal socialization. It cannot be stressed enough that the implementation of equity mechanisms consists, precisely, in creating the conditions to encourage community members' participation, ensuring their gender does not impair their participation, without involving additional workload.

These must be activities that take into account the above-mentioned criteria to assess the potential solution. For further reflection purposes regarding opportunities for an equitable human development, we can take certain actions to assist us in changing behaviors and sharing opportunities. The following example might help us:

Example 1. Expected result: *Land improvement to increase productivity.*

Activity	Sub-activities	Women's limitations to carry them out	Men's limitations to carry them out	Activity-generated benefits in terms of equity	Conditions that need to be met for men and women to conduct the activity
Organic fertilizer application to the soil.	<p>Work session to explain the procedure.</p> <p>Collection of the ingredients needed to make the fertilizer.</p> <p>Preparation of the mixing pot or site where the fertilizer will be prepared.</p> <p>Fertilizer mixing.</p> <p>Fertilizer application to the soil.</p>	This is an activity that overloads the work at home, at the cornfields, and children caring.	<p>Wage-earning employees at other farms.</p> <p>Have no time to participate in training activities.</p>	<p>Training provided to women.</p> <p>Identification of women having technical knowledge.</p>	<p>Women will be paid to look after the children, while other women participate in the explanatory session and the tasks related to the preparation and attention of the fertilizer site.</p> <p>The men will bring the water before going out to the field.</p> <p>On Saturdays, women will teach the men how to prepare the fertilizer site.</p>

Example 2. Expected result: *Women's utilization of productive land.*

Activity	Sub-activities	Women's limitations to carry them out	Men's limitations to carry them out	Activity-generated benefits in terms of equity	Conditions that need to be met for men and women to conduct the activity
To determine the type of crops and the conditions under which they will be undertaken.	Discussion session to identify the crops, participation and benefits.	Time. Their partners or spouses are not convinced about sharing with women the use of the land.	Fear about sharing their control over the land.	The use of household resources becomes democratic.	To assign children's care. Decision-making power granted to women over the crops they wish to plant. Control over family land. Equality regarding the benefits.

Upon completion of the above analysis, we might notice that we need to include other type of activities to enable participants to fulfill their tasks, i.e., training, sharing activities which are not normally undertaken by their gender, changing roles and activities they previously carried out. Although these are activities that require time and resources, they will contribute to put into practice equitable approaches. For example, who will pay the people taking care of the children?, and in the case of women, won't this mean an additional work burden?

It is essential to take advantage of this analysis to visualize said differences between women and men, and that the decisions taken about the activities encourage the participation and empowerment of the people in disadvantageous conditions.

c. Who will carry out the activities? How long will this take?

In addition to the above, it is essential for the people involved in the process to be present at all times, since they are the ones who must decide whether or not they will carry out the tasks, as well as the type of activities they wish and can carry out. The information about the activities' schedule, the one-day clock, and the mobilization map prepared during the appraisal process, will help us to propose activities much more realistic and imagine their impact on the lives of women and men.

d. **Are there enough resources available in the community, or should they be externally secured?**

The implementation of a solution is based on the availability of resources. At the time of planning we must know the status and quality of the resources available within our community, in whose hands they are, and whether it is possible to make use of them for project support.

Information is also gathered about the resources provided by other projects and institutions operating in the community, which could be used also. It is important to have written agreements that will help to undertake activities based on a collective commitment. Furthermore, this entails undertaking real negotiations, instead of speculating about resources not yet available or not yet committed.

In this respect, it is also important to define the resources that are not available in the community, which availability is essential for project implementation. This factor is of the utmost importance for the successful execution of the project.

In addition, a separate analysis must be made regarding the resources available to women and men, including whether these resources are really controlled or managed by non-participants or individuals with whom there is little or no affinity. In this case, a negotiating strategy will have to be determined.

As is the case with the activities, an equity-oriented project, must be planned based on an equitable access to the project's resources and its benefits, whether economic or environmental, but most of all, human benefits, opportunities for empowerment, and power exercising. The topic regarding access to training is essential, as it contributes new knowledge to activities, which are, most likely, being conducted in an empirical manner. In the case of women, the reproductive role represents an actual inequality-generating limitation regarding participation in these educational activities, which are essential to any productive process.

We must ensure there are no gender-related obstacles preventing an individual from benefiting from the internal as well as external resources provided by the project. For example, in the case of access to the land or credit, most women are unable to meet the collateral requirements to obtain and manage significant amounts of money to be invested in larger projects, which, in turn, would permit them to capitalize and have control over larger investment funds.

The projects' internal resources should be made available to all participants; the vehicles, computers, didactic materials and technical tools should not be assigned based on gender stereotypes. This attitude does nothing but reinforce gender inequality.

Regarding project-generated productivity, it should not only cover operating costs, but should also generate sufficient income to encourage capital reinvestment and even savings. Within very poor populations, saving becomes extremely difficult, particularly because neither women nor men have any control over minimum resources that would allow them to participate in income-generating activities, much less savings. Which strategies could be followed in these cases?

This analysis should take into consideration the income sources of both women and men, as well as their present spending patterns, that is, which is the origin of the resources needed to cover their basic needs, and how are these resources spent according to their particular interests. This will permit us to learn whether the resources used and the benefits generated by the project will be used to cover the basic needs of men and women, whether other type of needs will be covered by investing larger amounts of money on strategic interests (training, women's education), or whether we will be able to invest them in other type of expenses.

e. How much will it cost us?

The success of a project lies—to a great extent—on an appropriate definition of expenses. In this respect it also becomes necessary to vary the criteria upon which we calculate our expenses.

As stated at the beginning, cost calculation has corresponded to a partial reality where the actual value of the activities undertaken is not considered. Under the poverty conditions experienced by most of our countries' population, there exists too much exploitation of untrained labor, especially women's labor.

Nevertheless, maintaining a significant number of untrained labor for the purpose of decreasing the cost of products, is one of the most anti-democratic measures, particularly when we are aware of the fact that education and training opportunities are becoming more difficult and specialized.

Development projects that really attempt to achieve sustainable wellbeing for women and men, must include the real costs of the activities proposed, and consider the difficulties faced by people in light of each activity's development.

To the extent that income covers real expenses, to that extent will people of all ages be able to feel they are performing an activity, which does not only have economic value, but which also is valuable to themselves and the community. Furthermore, economic recognition with a social meaning, helps to increase the internal resources which promote processes.

Therefore, costs must be calculated taking into consideration the precarious conditions of the families, differentiating the particular situation of women and men, without underestimating or overestimating the abilities of both. In this respect, it would help to secure a technical opinion to support the visualization process of the activities, and gather information about the actual amounts.

Cost analysis is important, because it enables us to guarantee the project's productivity, as well as the incorporation of new criteria related to sustainable human development.

Finally, equity must be ascertained at the time of budget preparation, which should reflect the priorities of women and men alike.

III

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE FEEDBACK PROCESS

This module is intended to guide our steps towards participatory planning from a gender equity perspective, thus, ensuring a full and decent life for women and men alike.

Naturally, along the way we will learn there are certain factors, which had not been considered, or certain activities, which are hard to undertake. However, the overall idea is to learn over the course of time, and accumulate experiences that will help us build for the future.

It should be remembered that this is the first step we take, that it is not nearly enough to put an end to all the constraints and problems we will have to confront in pursuit of our development. Quite on the contrary, we must view this project as one of the actions to be undertaken, which will subsequently be followed by the other priorities determined by the institutional mission.

However, as the last step in this stage, it might be a good idea to assess what we have learned from this planning process, both individually and as a group:

- What have we women and men of the facilitating team learned?
- Were we able to work as a team, or was this too difficult?
- Did we succeed in getting enough women and men to participate in the project planning activities?
- What was our attitude like?
- Have we changed some behavioral patterns as a result of this stage of the process, are we still imprisoned by the same mold that is trapping us?

Upon completing the assessment exercise, we recommend a discussion between the facilitating team and the participants, aimed at asking, just like we did about ourselves, about the limitations and lessons learned from the process.

IV BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aguilar, L. et. al.

Género y figura no son hasta la sepultura. Guía para la construcción de relaciones de equidad en iniciativas de desarrollo sostenible. UICN-Ed. ABSOLUTO S. A., San José, Costa Rica. 1997.

Ayales, I.

Género, comunicación y desarrollo sostenible, aportes conceptuales y metodológicos. IICA. Specialized Service: Training, Education and Communication. Communication, Gender and Sustainable Development Project IICA/ASDI, San José, Costa Rica. 1996.

REDNA/IICA-ASDI

Ayuda memoria Ciclo de conferencias de la Dra. Marcela Lagarde para formación de técnicas y técnicos de proyectos. Guatemala. 1998.

Instituto Cooperativo Interamericano - ICI

Ayuda memoria Curso Género en nuestras organizaciones: una perspectiva latinoamericana. Panamá. 1995.

Balarezo, S.

Guía metodológica para incorporar la dimensión de género en el Ciclo de Proyectos Forestales Participativos. FAO. sf.

Barrig, M. and Wehkamp, A.

Sin morir en el intento. Experiencias de planificación en el desarrollo. NOVIB. Red entre mujeres. Lima, Perú. 1994.

Camacho, G. and Prieto, M.

Género y desarrollo rural. Manual de capacitación para operadores de proyectos y guía para el facilitador. MBS/IICA. Quito, Ecuador. 1995.

Campillo, F. and Pérez, L.

Género y gerencia empresarial en pequeñas empresas rurales y organizaciones de desarrollo. Manual de capacitación. Consultorías Futura. San José, Costa Rica. 1998.

Proyecto de Cooperación IICA/GTZ y IICA-Holanda/Laderas C. A.

Herramientas para el desarrollo participativo. San Salvador, El Salvador. 1998.

PROEQUIDAD

Herramientas para construir equidad entre mujeres y hombres.
GTZ Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia. 1975.

Lagarde, M.

Género y feminismo. Desarrollo humano y democracia. Cuadernos Inacabados. Horas y HORAS, la Editorial, Madrid, España. 1997.

Meentzen, A.

Entre la experiencia y la ciencia. La igualdad en la diversidad. Manual para promotores de proyectos con mujeres rurales. Ediciones Flora Tristán. Lima, Perú. 1993.

Moser, C.

Planificación de género y desarrollo. Teoría, práctica y capacitación. Entre Mujeres. Flora Tristán, Centro de la Mujer Peruana. Lima, Perú. 1995.

Prado, C. and Gutiérrez, F.

Todos son procesos. Módulo II. Pedagogía para la educación en derechos humanos. ILPEC, San José, Costa Rica. 1997

Rodríguez, R.

Metodología de extensión agrícola comunitaria para el desarrollo sostenible. Plan Internacional, IICA, El Salvador. 1996.

Schuler, Program Planning for Service-Oriented Organizations.

OEP, 1983. Cfr. en Haciendo Camino al Andar, OEF Internacional. 1991.

World Conservation Union (IUCN)

An Approach to Assessing Progress Towards Sustainability: Approach, Methods, Instruments and Field Experiences, IUCN
Publication Service Unit, IUCN: Gland, Switzerland, 1997.

