

Creating Empowered Communities: Gender and Sustainable Livelihoods in a Coal Mining Region in Indonesia

Glossary of Key Terms

Action Research

Action research is a collaborative research process that involves practical and progressive attempts at problem solving. Also known as participatory action research, action research is a form of 'learning by doing' where a group of people identify a problem, agree to undertake a course of action to resolve the problem and continue to evaluate and modify those actions until the problem is resolved. Influenced by the work of educational theorist Paolo Freire, participatory action research emerged in response to 'top-down' development interventions which excluded people in recipient communities from defining and solving problems themselves, using their own knowledge and resources.

Rather than adhering to a set format or methodology, action research is a relatively open, cyclical process, involving stages of information gathering and analysis, planning, action, observation and critical reflection. Any of these stages may be revisited at any time as required. The range of tools and methods that are used during action research are selected to suit the particular circumstances and the stage of the research process. Qualitative research methods and those that are accessible and appropriate to the people or community involved are generally used, such as participant-observation, journal keeping and visual diaries, flow diagrams and map-making, structured and unstructured interviews, and questionnaire surveys.

Although it is informed by social theory, it is the participative and practical nature of action research which distinguishes it from other forms of social research. Guided by a lead researcher, the people involved become the researchers themselves, applying their own knowledge and experience to problem solving and learning from the process of active intervention. The findings of action research can inform theory, but the real value of the research lies in its ability to improve the lives of the people involved and resolve problems in their immediate environment. Action research is thus regarded as a process that can empower local people and communities who undertake and coordinate their own research and analysis, draw on and expand their knowledge base, and use their own resources to resolve problems or bring about social change.

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Capacity building

Capacity building is the process of increasing the skills, resources and competency of an organization or community to effectively and independently meet its development needs. Rather than focusing on one activity, capacity building involves expanding and improving capabilities across a range of interconnected areas, such as human resource development (education, skills and training); organizational development (building effective legal, financial, management and administrative structures and procedures); institutional strengthening (improved governance, policy development and implementation) and building collaborative partnerships and networks to deliver programs and services.

The increased focus in recent years on capacity building in international development reflects the move away from funding stand-alone aid projects and the trend toward implementing long-term, sector-wide programs and strengthening civil society as a whole. The United Nations Development Program has defined capacity building as:

- the creation of an enabling environment with appropriate policy and legal frameworks;
- institutional development, including community participation (of women in particular);
- human resources development and strengthening of managerial systems.

International aid donors and development agencies now routinely provide assistance for capacity building programs in addition to financial and technical assistance, to increase aid effectiveness and foster sustainable development in less developed countries. Capacity building initiatives may be implemented to address gaps and strengthen the public, private or NGO sectors, as well as community groups. Examples of a range of capacity building programs can be found at the Development Gateway Foundation's dgCommunities Capacity Development webpage, available at:

<http://topics.developmentgateway.org/capacitydevelopment>

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Empowerment

In the past decade 'empowerment' has emerged as a key goal of development, particularly in relation to women. Empowerment has been defined as, "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable the institutions that affect their lives" (Narayan 2001). There has been a rapid expansion in the number of development initiatives that have empowerment as their stated goal, yet empowerment can and does mean different things to different people and defining what empowerment means, how it can be achieved and measured is an area of ongoing debate in development circles.

In the broadest and most simple sense, empowerment is equated with the ability to make choices and to act on those choices – to exercise 'agency'. Alsop, Bertelsen & Holland (2006), authors of the World Bank publication, *Empowerment in Practice: From Analysis to Implementation*, define empowerment as "the process of enhancing an individual's or group's capacity to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes". In order for people to make and exercise choices, the social and institutional environment or "opportunity structure" needs to be conducive to the exercise and fulfillment of those choices. An individual's or community's assets and access to resources – material, psychological and social - also influence the degree to which they can exercise their agency and make use of opportunities. Development initiatives such as women's credit and training schemes provide examples of projects which seek to 'empower' women by providing them with access to finance and opportunities to pursue alternative livelihoods, thereby increasing their skills, capabilities, confidence and status. Such approaches, which bring together individuals from marginalized groups in partnership with institutions such as credit providers, are in keeping with the view that agency alone cannot lead to empowerment, but must be combined with an enabling institutional environment.

Discussion and debate about empowerment centre on competing definitions of empowerment and how it can be achieved and measured. Malhotra et al. (2003) have proposed that empowerment occurs along six different dimensions: economic, socio-cultural, familial/interpersonal, legal, political and psychological. By extension, a multi-faceted approach to empowerment is required, rather than on-off development projects that focus on one activity, such as microcredit or employment. Whether empowerment influences development outcomes or poverty reduction is also an area of research and debate. Empowerment is viewed by many commentators as having an intrinsic value, regardless of whether it plays an instrumental role in fostering development. The intrinsic value of empowerment is linked to a rights-based approach to development and the principles of justice, fairness and equality for all members of society. Others view empowerment as also having an instrumental value that is borne out in studies linking increases in women's education levels with lower fertility rates, which has been associated with increased economic participation and productivity. Thus increasing people's empowerment – their access to resources and assets and ability to make and exercise choice – can facilitate and encourage other development outcomes. However viewed, the proliferation of programs and initiatives that seek to empower people has created the need to define and measure empowerment in order to assess and evaluate their effectiveness.

Part of the difficulty in establishing links between empowerment and development outcomes lies in creating indicators and measuring such a variable, qualitative concept. While women's empowerment in a given society may be suggested by examining quantitative indicators - such as the proportion of women that are literate, represented in politics or in well paid employment - measuring a person's self-esteem, ability to make and exercise choices, or assessing the value of different choices, requires a qualitative approach. The relative nature of empowerment also makes it difficult to measure by quantitative indicators alone. While formal national institutions may appear to provide enabling environments by legislating against inequality and discrimination, informal institutions – local customs, values and laws – may not. Equally, while people may feel empowered within their own homes or community, they may find this diminishes in other realms or in relation to other groups or institutions in society. Measuring empowerment thus requires a multi-dimensional and context-specific approach, to allow for the complex interplay of resources, assets, institutions and other social factors that underlie both inequality and empowerment, and the different understandings of empowerment that exist in relation to different activities and domains across societies and cultures. Arguably, the meaning and the measure of empowerment should be determined by the people being "empowered" themselves, who are best placed to assess whether a development program has led to changes in their self-confidence and status, or ability to make choices.

Kabeer's (1999) approach to measuring empowerment involves the analysis of three inter-related dimensions: access to resources (the preconditions for empowerment), agency (the ability to use these resources to bring about new opportunities) and achievements (outcomes). This relational understanding of empowerment is currently regarded as one of the most effective and also helps to temper the expectation that particular development initiatives alone can 'empower' people. The empowerment of people that experience social marginalization, discrimination or exclusion may take considerable time and changes across a range of spheres and institutions – political, social, cultural, legislative, and economic – to be realized. As such, most commentators agree that like development, empowerment should be approached on a broad front and viewed as a long-term process of building capability, rather than an end product or goal.

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Gender Analysis

Gender Analysis is the process of systematically examining the roles and status of men and women in a given population to understand the differences that exist in men's and women's lives, identify underlying causes of social and economic inequity and the different impacts of development initiatives on men and women. Gender analysis is a key part of any situational or social analysis and is undertaken by policy makers and development practitioners to gain a greater understanding of gender roles and men's and women's diverse needs, interests and priorities in order to develop effective, gender-aware policy and program options. Gender analysis can be employed throughout the policy and program cycle – as the first step in examining the gender dimensions of any particular issue, as part of the policy development process, and to inform ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) has defined gender analysis as:

1. a process that assesses the differential impact of proposed and/or existing research on men and women of different races, classes or castes, for example; and
2. a tool that makes it possible for research to be undertaken with an appreciation of gender differences, of the nature of relationships between women and men and of their different social realities, life expectations and economic circumstances; and
3. a tool for understanding social processes and for responding with informed and equitable options.

Broadly speaking, gender analysis draws on two sources of data to build a picture of gender roles and relations within a beneficiary community or population. The first stage of gender analysis usually involves the collection and analysis of quantitative data disaggregated by sex which can provide statistical information on differences and inequalities between men and women in relation to areas such as education, health, income and asset holdings. The second step involves the collection and analysis of qualitative information through desk-top research, observation, meetings with stakeholder groups and participative research methods. This includes analysis of cultural patterns and norms, government policies and legislation where relevant, consultation with NGO groups involved in gender-based work and advocacy and most importantly, in-depth interviews, surveys and focus group sessions with community members. Over the past three decades several different gender analysis frameworks have evolved, reflecting different policy approaches to gender and development that have emerged over that time. Amongst the more well known are the Harvard Analytical Framework, the Moser Framework, the Social Relations Approach and the Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis Framework. Although all gender analysis frameworks share a similar primary concern with identifying and analyzing the differences between men's and women's experiences, there are distinct differences between the various frameworks in terms of the location and level of analysis, as well as the aims of the research in terms of maintaining or transforming existing gender relations.

At its most simple, gender analysis examines gender roles at the household level and is concerned with the distribution of productive and reproductive activities, assets and resources and how this impacts the ability of men and women to participate in and benefit from development projects. Early models of gender analysis developed in the 1980s, such as the Harvard Framework, feature this simple and relatively conservative form of analysis, which does not seek to transform gender roles, but to achieve gender equity through the removal of productive inefficiencies or obstacles to the participation of women in development activities. More recent gender analysis frameworks, such as Longwe's Women's Empowerment Framework, have expanded to consider a much broader level of social relations and institutions in investigating the causes of gender inequity, including the role of government policies, legislation, culture and religion; and seek to transform gender relations in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Different gender analysis frameworks thus offer different approaches to gender and development for researchers and development workers, and also differ in the level of participation, complexity and time needed to undertake the analysis, which may be a factor in selecting a particular framework for use in the field. Some commentators suggest that as no two programs or situations are alike, existing frameworks should not be strictly followed, but used as a helpful starting point or guide for the development of a context or program-specific framework. If a particular policy or program has a specific 'empowerment' goal, then it may be appropriate to be guided by a framework such as Longwe's. For other initiatives, combining elements of two or more different frameworks may be appropriate. The framework and methods which are chosen should ultimately reflect and support the gender-related goals of the development program or policy in question as well as the context. The International Labor Organization website (<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/mdtmanila/training/unit1/plngaps1.htm>) and Bolt and Bird (2003) (http://www.chronicpoverty.org/pdfs/32Bolt_Bird.pdf) provide a helpful overview of the best known gender analysis frameworks, including research methods and matrices used, the relative strengths and limitations of each framework and suggested applications.

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Gender-based Monitoring and Evaluation

All policies and programs require a strategy for monitoring and evaluation to ensure they are relevant and effective. Gender-based monitoring and evaluation enables policy and program developers to identify the different impacts of a policy or program on women and men, measure whether it is effective for both, and make use of evaluation findings to continuously improve and change policies and programs as required. Gender-based monitoring and evaluation is aligned with a rights-based, people-centred approach to development, based on participative and transparent decision-making. If gender inequities are to be clearly identified and addressed, then women and men need to be involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies and programs. On a practical level, gender-based monitoring and evaluation ensures that development is targeted, accountable and effective.

According to UNIFEM, a gender-based evaluation should be empowering to all participants, particularly women; involves quality time and the building of trust with and between stakeholders; is attentive to diversity; participatory; explores avenues for social change; uses a rights perspective as a basis for analysis and follows strict adherence to ethical standards in the collection and interpretation of data. The realities of men and women's lives should form the centre of evaluation planning and analysis and it should be a process that is useful to women as well as all stakeholders and adds value in terms of expanding knowledge and contributing to the goal of gender equality. Lastly, gender-based monitoring and evaluation should be informed by gender analysis, with particular attention to the structural inequalities and power relations between men and women.

Tools and methods used in gender-based monitoring and evaluation are typically qualitative and accessible, allowing participants to define and discuss positive and negative impacts of policies or programs that affect them and create knowledge that reflects their own realities and experiences. The evaluation should be designed to assess whether a program has resulted in positive changes, transformation or learning amongst participants, such as the ability to make choices and decisions or gain access to resources. The identification of gender-sensitive quantitative and qualitative indicators is vital for ongoing monitoring and evaluation and to assess whether a program or policy has met its objectives. The formulation of qualitative indicators in particular should be a participative process, based on local men's and women's experience and understanding. The GEM Tool (Gender Evaluation Methodology) developed by the Association for Progressive Communications Women's Networking Support Programme (APC WNSP) provides an example of how to conduct a gender-based program evaluation, including participative methods of data collection that can be used, such as storytelling and journal keeping (http://www.apcwomen.org/gemkit/en/gem_tool/index.htm).

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Gender Impact Assessment

Gender impact assessment is a process of estimating the different effects (positive, negative or neutral) of any policy, program or activity on men and women. The aim of gender impact assessment (GIA) is to get policy makers to think about the different impacts policies have on men and women and to assess whether they will contribute to or help to alleviate gender inequality. As such, gender impact assessment is a key part of gender mainstreaming.

Ideally, gender impact assessment should be carried out before implementation begins so that policies and activities can be modified or replaced if negative impacts are identified. Gender impact assessment can also be carried out once a policy or project has commenced or is complete to assess interim and final outcomes and impacts. All policies can be subject to GIA - not just those formulated to address men's or women's needs - to reveal and examine indirect gendered impacts that may have been overlooked during the formulation of policies.

The first step in GIA involves identifying the issue and examining the goals and objectives of the policy response, paying particular attention to gender-based impacts and the goal of gender equality. The second step is to collect statistics disaggregated by sex of the target population and other demographic data (such as ethnicity, age, religion, marital status etc.) which will help to inform the development of a range of policy options. This baseline data is also important for establishing indicators that can assist in measuring the impact of the policy and progress toward policy objectives. Conducting more detailed forms of gender analysis and qualitative research may also be required to help inform policy or program development. Policy options can then be examined and assessed in terms of possible negative impacts on men and women, unequal benefits or inequity, before a particular course of action is selected. Involving and communicating with men and women in the target population should be an ongoing part of gender impact assessment and the policy formulation process, as well the ongoing monitoring and evaluating of the policy or program once it has been implemented.

For examples of gender impact assessment methods, the UK Government's Women and Equality Unit has published a guide for policy makers (http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/equality/gender_impact_assessment.pdf). Women's Health Victoria (http://www.whv.org.au/health_policy/gia.htm), a peak policy research group, has produced a GIA template and a series of gender impact assessment papers on a range of health policy areas, as a strategy for gender mainstreaming in policy and planning. Like social impact assessment, gender impact assessment can be carried out to assess the impact of a range of events, including natural disasters and conflict. A gender impact assessment on the impacts of Hurricane Ivan on the population of Grenada was carried out by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) with the support of UNIFEM and UNDP, to identify gendered impacts of the disaster and the relief and recovery effort (<http://www.eclac.org/publicaciones/xml/7/23217/L.48.pdf>).

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Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for achieving gender equity through bringing a gender perspective and the goal of gender equality to all activities, policies and programs. As a process, gender mainstreaming involves assessing all organizational activities in terms of their potential gender impacts and integrating the consideration of men and women's needs and concerns into any planned course of action.

As the term suggests, gender mainstreaming seeks to bring considerations of gender from the margins to the centre of policy and program design and implementation across all levels and areas. Gender mainstreaming is a systematic, embedded approach to gender equity which has evolved from earlier approaches that limited considerations of gender equity to separate 'women's activities', often as an afterthought to major policy initiatives. This does not mean that targeted gender initiatives to address areas of inequality or specific priorities for women and men are not needed. Rather, gender mainstreaming complements targeted initiatives by ensuring that they do not become one-off or isolated activities, but are sustained and supported by a comprehensive institutional framework approach to gender equity.

At an international level, gender mainstreaming was established as an intergovernmental mandate following the 1995 UN International Conference on Women and the adoption of the 'Beijing Platform for Action for women's advancement. Gender mainstreaming as a strategy to promote gender equality as a development goal was re-affirmed in the follow-up UN General Assembly special session held five years later in June 2000. Member states have begun adopting gender mainstreaming in consensus as a global strategy for promoting gender equity and implementing gender mainstreaming across a wide range of national policy areas and institutions.

A number of non-government aid agencies have also embarked on gender mainstreaming, both in terms of internal organizational processes and the delivery of their programs. For an organization, gender mainstreaming usually commences with a gender 'audit' to assess the level of gender equality across all operations and the extent to which internal policies contribute to gender equity. For aid and development organisations, this logically extends to the programs and projects which they facilitate and support. A gender audit involves asking questions such as whether the organisation has data disaggregated by sex for its various operations and programs, whether there is gender balance in its decision-making bodies and the stakeholder groups it consults. Conducting a gender audit of development programs involves also assessing whether proposed interventions involve and reflect the needs of women and men, whether potential negative impacts on men and women have been identified, whether gender roles present a risk to program delivery or effectiveness, whether the goal of gender equality is embedded in the program cycle and to what extent program development is gender sensitive. Gender analysis, gender impact assessment, gender sensitisation training, gender-based monitoring and evaluation and the development of gender-sensitive indicators are all gender mainstreaming tools that may be employed to assess organisational culture, processes, policies and programs in terms of how they contribute to the goal of gender equality.

As different international organizations and governments have developed and adopted gender mainstreaming, a range of different approaches to and definitions of gender mainstreaming have also emerged. As a relatively recent phenomenon, there is currently little evaluation of the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies or research into its effectiveness in terms of increasing gender equality. As with measuring empowerment, developing appropriate indicators to assess the outcomes of gender mainstreaming is still an emerging area, with most commentators agreeing that both qualitative and quantitative approaches are required.

Guidelines and examples of gender mainstreaming are available from several websites. As part of its gender mainstreaming strategy, the International Labor Organisation's Gender Equality division has produced a gender mainstreaming checklist for all ILO operations and programs (http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_084294.pdf). The European Commission (EC) has also produced a toolkit on methods for gender mainstreaming its development cooperation activities (http://www.iav.nl/epublications/2004/TOOLKIT_on_mainstreaming_gender_equality.PDF), as has the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (<http://europeandcis.undp.org/public/show/6D8DE77F-F203-1EE9-B2E5652990E8B4B9>).

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Intra-household Gender Roles

Gender relations and the status of men and women can be analysed on various levels – at the ‘macro’ level of national policies, institutions and census data; the ‘meso’ level of local community, village or region, and at the ‘micro’ level of intra-household dynamics. Research has shown that contrary to assumptions, households do not always act as one when making decisions, but are often divided along gender lines. Not all household members receive fair treatment or share equally in benefits. Examining intra-household gender roles enables researchers to identify the different contributions men and women make to the household in terms of their assets, labor and income, how household resources are distributed, who controls what, who takes responsibility for what, who makes decisions and how decisions are made. Intra-household gender analysis can build a picture of the different demands that family responsibilities place on men and women, how power is shared or negotiated within the household, whether gender inequality resides at the micro level, how and why, and the relationship to gender roles and relations in the wider community or society. Analysis of intra-household gender roles and resource allocation can also help to assess whether the benefits of development are reaching all members of the household and can shed light on the gender dimensions of poverty and the effectiveness of poverty-alleviation strategies.

Methods and tools available to analyse intra-household gender roles are mostly derived from gender analysis frameworks which take the household as the starting point to investigating gender issues in a population. Intra-household gender analysis typically examines the assets held by women and men and asks whether the individual resources they bring to the household or the responsibilities they fulfil give them bargaining power in deciding how household resources will be allocated. Participants in surveys and focus groups are asked to reflect on a range of questions about how household decisions are made. Do men and women pool their income and assets or do they allocate them individually according to their preferences? Do men control and determine the use of all household resources, including women’s income? Do husbands and wives get equal share of resources such as food? Are sons and daughters treated differently or given different levels of access to resources or responsibilities? What impact does income dependency, extended family networks, dowry, inherited assets or bride-price have on gender roles and bargaining power within the household? Do men and women invest and allocate resources differently – such as on children’s education and welfare? What is the influence of income, education, religion, ethnicity or culture on intra-household gender roles?

How men and women share and divide household resources and responsibilities may significantly influence the outcome of development programs or services which target either women or men or appear to be ‘gender-neutral’. Without investigating the dynamics of intra-household gender roles, poverty assessments and development initiatives risk being ‘gender blind’ and producing adverse consequences, particularly for women or marginalized household members, who may have little influence over how income or benefits are accessed, distributed or invested. As a consequence, some commentators have suggested that intra-household analysis should form an integral part of the impact assessment and the evaluation of development programs.

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Participatory Needs Assessment

Participatory needs assessment involves people collecting information and undertaking analysis on the needs of their community to establish areas of priority and how best to design and deliver programs and services to meet those needs. The principle behind participatory needs assessment is that services and programs designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated by the recipient population will be better targeted and therefore more effective and sustainable. Participatory needs assessment is also undertaken post-facto to evaluate programs and examine whether it has met the needs of the people it was designed for. Participatory needs assessment is an important component of gender-based analysis, providing an opportunity for men and women to discuss and analyse their needs and interests, what barriers prevent them from being met and possible solutions.

Early forms of needs assessment tended to focus on women's immediate practical and material needs in terms food security, shelter and health. Moser (1989) expanded this focus to include women's long-term strategic needs and interests. A focus on strategic needs and interests recognizes that women's ability to meet their basic needs is influenced by broader gender inequities – lack of rights and equal opportunity in the home, workplace and the public sphere. Women's strategic needs might include changing policies to increase women's levels of pay so that they are equal with men, legal reform to outlaw domestic violence or sexual assault, increasing access to reproductive and family healthcare, or sensitizing and working with men to overcome discriminatory practices and attitudes toward women. Exploring and addressing women's and men's strategic gender needs is in keeping with a transformative approach to gender relations, which involves working toward gender equality on a long-term basis across a range of social areas and institutions.

Like other participatory research methods, participatory needs assessment is a collaborative process between a lead researcher and the community which utilizes qualitative research methods, such as surveys, focus groups, in-depth semi-structured interviews and community forums to identify, discuss, record and analyze the diverse needs of a population. Community or village mapping, problem analysis through the use of matrices and ranking and diagrams are other methods which may be used to aid assessment.

Participatory needs assessment of women is undertaken to identify the specific needs and interests of women within a population. In a focus group setting, women may be asked to self-identify their own needs; whether these needs are being met; and what barriers, if any, are preventing them from being met. Women individually and as a group may be asked to rank their needs in order of importance as well as the most significant barriers to meeting these needs, in order to prioritise and explore solutions. A broad participatory assessment of women's needs should prompt women to discuss their needs in relation to a range of life experiences – family, work, education, health, housing, community, transport etc. Women are not a homogenous group and perceived needs and their prioritization can vary considerably according to age, socio-economic and marital status and education levels. Strengths of participatory needs assessment is that it is open-ended and flexible and can raise the awareness of and mobilize participants on a range of issues when discussing constraints and barriers to meeting needs. When combined with available quantitative data, qualitative data drawn from participative needs assessment should allow for the full range of needs within a population – both practical and strategic - to be gauged, analysed, ranked and targeted solutions explored.

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