Integrating a Gender Perspective into Development: What Works and Why?

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This report first provides an introduction to gender inclusion in the U.S. Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). The second section provides the text of the Annual James P. Grant Lecture, given by The Honorable Melanne Verveer, Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues in the U.S. State Department. The third section offers a summary of a Roundtable at which five experts on women in development provide examples from their experience on what works in promoting and implementing a gender perspective in development policies, programs, and projects. Each speaker provides a concrete example of success. The report concludes with a section on data needs for gender-responsive development.
The Global Gender Program of the Elliott School of International Affairs invited Ambassador Melanne Verveer to give a keynote address on April 14, 2011 which was preceded by a Roundtable of five development experts exploring what works and why in a gender-focused approach to development and one that specifically targets investments in women and girls. The event was inspired by the work of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Ambassador Melanne Verveer in promoting attention to the importance of a gender focus across the U.S. government in order to promote gender equality worldwide.

A focal point for the event was the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review: Leading through Civilian Power (QDDR), prepared by the U.S. Department of State and the Agency for International Development in 2010. It offers a long-term strategic plan to supersede year-by-year thinking and appropriations. Within this lengthy document, several areas explicitly discuss the needs and capabilities of women and girls worldwide in contributing to peace, security, and development.

According to an analysis of gender content in the QDDR by Women Thrive Worldwide (2011), the QDDR places an "unprecedented" focus on women and girls by the U.S. government across its foreign policy agenda. Following are some extracts from the Women Thrive Worldwide report:

"…What is historic also is that the QDDR approach impacts tens of billions of dollars worth of funding. It recognizes that women and girls are key to overall U.S. foreign policy and national security interests, and that U.S. efforts overseas will be more efficient and effective across the board, from food security to health, climate change, promoting economic growth or democracy, and responding to humanitarian crises – because they will be designed with both women and men in mind.

The QDDR builds on one of the most important lessons from decades of international policy and program work. There are profound differences between women and men around the world in terms of their roles, resources, rights and responsibilities. When these are examined and taken into account in the conception, design and implementation of foreign assistance, it can truly reach the people it’s intended to benefit – so that both women and men can contribute to the growth and development of their countries.

Women are usually the ones left behind, so the QDDR’s emphasis on ensuring that both women and men’s unique circumstances are considered in the breadth of all U.S. foreign policy and aid is a landmark change. When implemented, these reforms will result in real improvements in the lives of countless women and girls, and also families and communities around the world, especially since investments in women yield greater benefits in terms of the health and education of children and families...The QDDR is truly a turning point for how the United States delivers aid and conducts diplomacy."

The remainder of the Women Thrive Worldwide analysis provides a section by section guide to gender content in the QDDR with page numbers for easy reference. The QDDR states for example, that in "elevating development," the U.S. government “…will seek to create opportunities for women and girls, whose full inclusion will expand prosperity for all” (p. 21). Elsewhere, women’s empowerment is tied to economic growth, democracy, governance, and humanitarian assistance (p. 87). And later, gender equality is named as one of six foreign assistance effective principles (p. 110). The QDDR also makes a commitment to gender awareness in planning, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation (p. 198). Clearly, the QDDR is a landmark policy document with far-reaching potential for improving the status and welfare of women and girls worldwide.
Thank you for inviting for me here. I see so many people I know and respect and admire and who do so much difficult work every day. I am honored to be here to give the James Grant Annual Lecture.

Jim Grant was someone I knew. He was an incredibly dedicated human being in ways that few if any could measure up to. I am so pleased that today his son Bill is here, his daughter-in-law Maria, his grandson Jim, and his brother-in-law Ted Thomas.

Hillary Clinton was one of the eulogists at Jim’s memorial service. I remember the day so well. She said that Jim was one of those leaders to whom we all owe a great deal because no one, no one, saved more lives than he did during his 15 years leading UNICEF.

Jim was a tireless advocate for children. He was the best friend in the world that any child had, particularly children who have so little. He had an unflagging commitment to addressing the daily tragedy, as he said, of the millions of children around the globe trapped in poverty and suffering the terrible consequences of that entrapment.

When I was the Chief of Staff to the then First Lady, Hillary Clinton, Jim was a very large presence in our lives. He and the then first lady were extremely simpatico – they were two peas in a pod in many ways. He was such an inspiration in all of the things she cared about with respect to women and children. I cannot count the number of times that she talked about the cost-effective, simple intervention that Jim championed to save the lives of children: oral rehydration therapy.

Anyone who knew Jim knew about ORT. He would take out a sachet from his pocket and he would give us a lesson – even if we’d heard it ten times before – about the benefits of this simple, cost effective therapy. His message was: we have to get ORT to all the children suffering from diarrheal diseases and close to death or even dying because they do not have access to this simple life-saving solution.

I remember being at the anti-diarrheal center in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and seeing how excited Jim Grant and Hillary Clinton were about the work that was going on there. It was lessons without borders: coming up with cost effective and simple interventions that could save millions of lives. It’s a lesson to us about everything we are trying to do.

Jim was responsible for inaugurating the State of the World's Children Report which is something we all refer to. It’s such an important tool, and he continues to live on in every volume.
And then there was the UN Summit on Children. It did for children what Beijing did for women. Out of that Summit eventually came the declaration that is fundamental to the Millennium Development Goals that drive the work we are doing today. He also did so much in terms of working to cut maternal mortality rates, to improve child survival rates and to make family planning much more accessible.

Jim had so much to do with everything we continue to do for women and girls. No one fought harder to get every country to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child which the United States still has not ratified. The United States is in a small minority in that category. I remember President Clinton telling me how he got a call from Jim when Jim was on his death bed. Jim called to say: Mr. President, please sign the Convention (a president's signature is required before it goes and get submitted to the senate before ratification).

Jim also talked to the then first lady about it. She kept saying, “I don’t understand why we haven’t signed it.” And as she mounted the pulpit at St. John the Divine for Jim’s memorial service, she announced that President Clinton would sign the Convention.

Jim’s final request – the last thing he spoke to her about before he died – was fulfilled. Yet, though we have signed, our country has yet to ratify the Convention.

I think Jim would be very pleased that we are continuing to make efforts to address the issues and concerns to which he dedicated so much of his life. Improving the lives of women and girls around the world has much to do with improving the state of the world’s children. All of these things are closely intertwined.

The timing of this discussion could not be more appropriate as we and the State Department and AID are working to integrate the gender lens into our diplomacy and development endeavors. I am sure the panel that preceded my coming here this afternoon reiterated that point. This administration has made it clear that elevating the status of women and girls is key to the foreign policy of the United States. We recognize that no country can get ahead if it keeps half of its people behind.

The status of the world’s women is not simply an issue of morality or fairness which it is -- but it is also a matter of national security. That is why President Obama’s national security strategy explicitly recognizes that countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women are accorded full equal rights and opportunities, and that when those rights and opportunities are denied, countries lag behind.

The Secretary of State has repeatedly emphasized that women are critical to solving virtually every challenge we face as individual nations and as a community of nations because women’s rights are essential to stability, to prosperity, to peace and to all that we want to see in terms of the kind of world we hope that one day will evolve. Women therefore need to be a part of our development and diplomacy efforts not simply as beneficiaries but as agents of peace and reconciliation, development, growth and stability. This point coincides with the observance last year of the 10th year of the Millennium Development Goals and so much of Jim Grant's work and legacy. It also coincided with the recent observance of the 15th anniversary of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. Beijing and the MDGs are linked because Beijing recognized that women’s empowerment and rights are a requirement for the empowerment and advancement of humanity in general.

Today there is broad recognition that MDG 3, which focuses on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, is the key to the achievement of all of the other MDGs. The Secretary of State has said that women and girls are one of the world’s greatest untapped resources and investing in them is one of the most powerful forces we have for international development. But I sometimes think we operate in an evidence-free zone where this mountain of research so little impacts how we target our resources.
That is part of what we are attempting to do: investing in ways that create the kind of outcomes we all seek to achieve and that require investing in women and girls.

Women are still the majority of the world's poor. They do 66 percent of the world’s work in return for less than 5 percent of its income. This fact has untold consequences on economic growth and development. Despite great progress in education, the majority of the unschooled children are girls and 75 percent of the illiterate population worldwide are women. Women and girls disproportionately suffer from inadequate health care, and violence against them is a global epidemic.

If we are to achieve the MDGs, women and girls must be at the core of our development strategies. The question is not whether we can afford to do this, but whether we can afford not to do this. Today there is so much evidence to support the basis on which we make these decisions. There are literally volumes of research that demonstrate that investments in women and girls correlate positively with poverty alleviation and a country's general prosperity and that women who run small and medium sized business are proven drivers of GDP.

Many of you know that the World Economic Forum annually publishes a Gender Gap Report where they look at the parity between men and women in various countries on four indicators: health and survival, educational attainment, economic participation, and political empowerment.

In no country is there parity between men and women. In no country are men and women equal in these four indicators. But the gap is narrower in countries that are more economically prosperous and economically competitive. That is one of the reasons the World Bank says that gender economics correlates with gender equality: smart economics correlates with gender quality. Women are a reliable investment because the money they borrow is likely to be repaid. They have a multiplier effect because they use their income to benefit their families and communities.

When women take their rightful place and use their talents and experiences in the political process they tend to make greater investments in the public good. Many years ago, the government of India realized that they needed to reserve places on village councils for women in order to make any breakthroughs in politics. Today there are over a million women, many of them no longer in reserved seats, in the village councils, and I believe they are the silent revolution of democracy in India. Data confirm that women council members support investing public resources at the local level for water, sanitation, and education. It is amazing to sit with these women leaders and hear them talk about what they are doing. Many are illiterate, but they are trying to build a better future for their children.

We also know that educating a girl is the single best development investment that can be made. It yields positive payoffs in so many ways, from the girl’s future employability to the way that she will confirm nutrition and health outcomes for her family.

We are working to put women and girls at the core of our development and foreign policy. If we are successful (and I say if because this is a tough task) if we are successful in mainstreaming gender into our work, we will have the kind of outcomes that we hope to see in terms of greater progress. This means that we will consult women as we design and implement our policy, carefully considering the impact they will have. It includes measuring our progress in part by how much we improve the conditions of women and girls.

If we are to achieve our development outcomes we have to do careful evaluation and we have to ensure that gender-specific indicators are in place. It means gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive budgeting. It means a core consideration of all of these things, which is why they are so centrally placed in the QDDR.
Our first commitment is to our Global Health Initiative that seeks to improve the health and strengthen health systems worldwide. This is an enormous undertaking, a very tall order. So we need to employ a strategic focus on those whose health has the biggest impacts on families and communities; namely women and girls. We are scaling up our work and maternal health and child health, in family planning, and in nutrition. Maybe, somehow, Jim Grant is the presence guiding all of this.

MDG 4 and 5, that have to do with maternal and child death, are long overdue for progress. What has been truly heartening over the last many months is the numbers of donors, governments, multilaterals, and thinkers who have come together to underscore and commit to bringing about, once and for all, progress in this area. As the Secretary has said, saving the lives of women and children requires a range of care from improving nutrition, to training birth attendants who can help women give birth safely. It also requires increased access to family planning, which represents one of the most cost-effective, public health interventions we have. That is something Jim Grant has said many times as well.

Through efforts under our Global Health Initiative, we are committed to promoting sustainability, by focusing on strengthening existing health care systems and by building on them to help countries develop their own capacity to improve the health of their people. This effort will provide women with access to an integrated package of essential health services. We are also working to develop, particularly through AID, innovative strategies to improve health through technology, for example, mobile technology, to deliver health information to pregnant and new moms. Further, we are linking our health programs with successful efforts to remove economic, cultural, and social barriers, those deeply entrenched norms that so often stand in the way. Jim Grant mentioned the lack of value that a girl represents in so many places. We have to work at chipping away at that problem and to see the kind of changes that will make a difference. The GHI also reinforces the U.S. commitment to addressing the global pandemic of HIV/AIDS and strengthening our focus on prevention, treatment, and care. We hope to increase funding for PEPFAR, as well its impact through prevention strategies and so much more.

Feed the Future is our second major commitment which includes dealing with the issue of hunger and increasing agricultural productivity. Investing in women is a key pillar of this initiative. It also focuses on increasing the world food supply and sustainability by recognizing that most of the world’s food is grown, harvested, stored and prepared by women. Women comprise the majority of small farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and in so many other places.

Yet, even though women comprise the majority of agricultural workers in Africa, they receive less than 10 percent of all credit going to all farmers. Moreover, although women represent the majority of farmers in the developing world, they seldom own the land on which they work. So the reform of land tenure and property rights as well as inheritance laws can help women succeed in farming in ways that will help secure the world’s food supply.

There are a number of other initiatives in terms of the kind of development investments we are making. But I want to move to the need for economic growth, which is also a centerpiece of what we are doing to alleviate poverty. Because women-run small and medium sized businesses are key accelerators of growth, we have focused much of our diplomatic and interagency efforts on increasing women’s economic opportunities. Studies show that if we can make these investments and if women can overcome the barriers that confront them, the payoffs will be significant for them, for their families and for their community. But women confront an array of barriers from training to mentoring to networks, access to finance, access to markets, property rights, discriminatory regulations and laws, and so much more.

The more women entrepreneurs can overcome these barriers, the greater their possibilities will be. For example we are working with the AGOA (Africa Grow and Opportunity Act) to create a women’s entrepreneurship program to provide women with the tools and skills they need to more successfully
access AGOA. We started this program last year and, in just that time, what the women have done for their success rate and to help other women in their countries is breathtaking. When the next AGOA takes place, we have urged the ministers to ensure that women form part of their delegations.

Similarly in the Asia Pacific region, those 21 economies, many of which are developing economies, people confront very serious needs. We have worked to bring this issue of women’s economic entrepreneurship to policy decisions in this region.

Additionally, women need to access financial services such as savings accounts, insurance, remittances regimes that will allow them to have financial identities, something very difficult for poor women who lack even formal ID documents. Today there is a wide array of financial arrangements from mobile banking to self-help organizations, like so many in India, that are making it possible for the poorest women to come together. Individually each of them would have a rough time having this type of economic clout. But as they become organized and are able to bring their economic activities together, there are enormous developments.

Finally, when women take their rightful place in public leadership and bring their talents and experience to bear, they are much more likely to invest in the public good. The number of women serving in so many positions in the developing world has given us the kind of example of differences this can make. In far too many places, however, women are outnumbered significantly in parliaments and provincial councils. Peace processes and democracy without the participation of women is a contradiction of terms. So women need to be very active and this is something we are deeply committed to, in peace processes as they go forward.

Whether it is in the DRC or Afghanistan or so many places – too many places, where there are conflicts around the world -- if those places are to be stabilized and any sustainable peace is to result, they need to bring women and the experiences they represent to the decision-making table, to the negotiating table so that we can see a peace process that will hold and be sustainable.

Secretary Clinton announced at the UN some months ago that the U.S. would create a National Action Plan that so many other countries have done to fully implement Security Council Resolution 1325. UNSCR 1325 brings together women, peace and security. We will do everything we can, particularly through the Department of Defense and the State Department and the Agency for International Development, to make that possible.

What most people will say and you may be among them is: well it sounds good, but how the heck are you going to make this happen? How are you going to institutionalize these goals?

You’ve probably heard about the QDDR. For the first time, we are focusing on how we will advance strategically by thinking through our defense and development goals together. A part of that effort is to fully integrate gender into all of our endeavors. It will be critical to realizing the outcomes we all seek.

The office that I have has as its first mission and perhaps most fundamental work is to integrate women’s issues in the work of the State Department. That means that in the economic bureau, in the regional bureaus, in the human rights office and so much more. As work goes on everyday are we thinking about the difference that could come to the outcome we want to achieve if we factored in the topic we’re here discussing today.

For example, in the evolution in the Global Health Initiative we have been working closely with AID. We are leading the interagency working group on women, girls and gender equality under the GHI. There is a task force to develop the guidance for the entire field, some 80 countries, with health programs. During
the policy development phase we will be working on maternal and child health, family planning, and nutrition. In order to do the integration we need to have a very collective, participatory effort that goes forward in order to strengthen the work that goes on in our functional and regional bureaus at State, to strengthen the work that Caren Grown so ably represents at AID, and to strengthen the work that our missions do all over the world.

The QDDR stresses that women and girls must be integral to those efforts. We have been working toward gender integration in every mission. For the first time ever the Secretary convened all of the chiefs of mission in Washington with the purpose of bringing them together to understand the goals of this process. We are working to ensure that we elevate this integration into operations in Washington, that we expand training and capacity development on this integration into our Foreign Service and civil service personnel development, and that we integrate gender into our strategic planning and our budgeting process.

Gender integration is meant to improve the bottom line, not to be an ideological overlay, not to be somebody’s special project, but to enable us to get the kind of outcomes we all want to see as we drive out diplomatic and development missions about the world. Gender integration has to be accompanied by efforts to measure impact. Both the State Department and AID are working to strengthen our efforts to measure the impact on women and girls by refining and developing indicators and long-range, long-term evaluation systems, so that we will know what is working, and so that we can grow what works by scaling up programs that are making a difference.

Gender integration across the U.S. government is a very tall order. But the President, the Secretary, and everyone engaged understands that it needs to be addressed if we are more effectively going to execute our diplomatic and development missions and, in the process, build the kind of world -- a better world -- that we would all like to see.

I have a deep feeling that Jim Grant, up there, is hoping that we succeed.

*The James P. Grant lecture, co-sponsored this year by GW's Department of Global Health and the Global Gender Program of the Elliott School, is given in honor of James Grant's remarkable contributions to UNICEF and in recognition of the many millions of children's lives saved through his work.

Watch a recording of Ambassador Verveer's speech: [http://media.elliott.gwu.edu/video/216](http://media.elliott.gwu.edu/video/216)

*Photo: [from left] Jim Sherry, Chair and Professor of Global Health and International Affairs and Melanne Verveer, Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues*
**Introduction to the Roundtable**

Barbara Miller opened the Roundtable explaining that it would include five experts discussing what works in women and development and gender mainstreaming in development. The following material draws on and expands upon Barbara Miller's welcoming remarks:

I promise that, with the assembled panelists with Ambassador Verveer delivering the James P. Grant lecture, and with your participation, we stand to learn a lot today. I thank Dean Michael Brown of the Elliott School of International Affairs for his support of the Global Gender Program, and I thank my colleague, Professor Jim Sherry who is Chair of the Global Health Department, for his collaboration and support. I also thank Professor Andrea Bertone of the Elliott School for her inspiration and involvement in making this event a reality.

Before I introduce the speakers, I want to convey a cautionary note about terminology (see Glossary). It is not easy keeping track of, or understanding the meaning of, the many terms related to our event today: gender in development, women in development, gender perspective, gender integration, gender mainstreaming, gender sensitivity, and more. I ask you to please avoid getting too entangled in the terminological details and instead use this rough framework: women/men and girls/boys typically have different entitlements (assets), opportunities and experiences, within their social context. Keeping attuned to the different patterns of well-being of women/men and girls/boys is the basis of a gender perspective. Likewise, all policies, programs and projects affect women/men and girls/boys differently, with their particular context. Taking these differences and their effects into account constitutes a gender perspective.

Failing to assess gender differences means overlooking key entry points for making everyone's lives better -- women's lives, men's lives, girls' lives, and boys' lives. Recognizing gender differences in assets and abilities, as well as gender differences in risks and insecurities, pays off in terms of smarter policies, programs, and projects which in turn will lead to a more secure world for everyone.

I do not mean to imply that a gender perspective is easy. It's not. It requires constant questions, rethinking of basic approaches to development, new ways of doing monitoring and evaluation, and constant vigilance. It's hard work. But to not take a gender perspective is to waste time, resources, and lose opportunities for building more stable and sustainable societies.

The Roundtable experts will address what works and why in development focused on women's needs and potentials. They will provide specific examples and then, in discussion, we will consider cross-cutting themes about what works.

**The Roundtable Participants**

Ritu Sharma was supposed to be our first speaker. She would have offered framing remarks about why it is critical to put women and girls first in development aid, policy, and programs. Ritu is president and co-founder of Women Thrive Worldwide. Unfortunately, she cannot be with us because she was called to testify today before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations to discuss priorities for the fiscal year 2012 budget. In her testimony, she will discuss the importance of U.S. international aid and why aid must reach both women and men in the developing world in order to be efficient and effective.
Instead of having Ritu here in person, I will share with you some key points from a report she wrote in 2005. If she were here, she would have reminded us of the importance of including explicit attention to women and girls in every single policy and program put forth--because if you fail to do so, you will be hurting half of humanity. But if you do, the pay off (no matter how you define it--from economic to humanitarian) will be geometric.

My hunch is that most people in this room do not need to be convinced that gender equality is an important goal globally and locally. But not everyone is in this room. Sadly, substantial resistance to gender equality exists. Those of us who support gender equality and gender mainstreaming in international aid and development -- or putting women and girls first -- are often asked to provide evidence of what good it does to invest in women and girls or to pay attention to gender at all.

In the current political climate in the United States, it is not enough to make a rights-based argument: that women and girls are people, too, and deserve to be included equally in all aspects of society and well-being. Instead, the current political climate requires that a gender perspective in development and a focus on women and girls in development, must be couched in terms of how it contributes to U.S. national security.

Challenging as it may seem, it is in fact possible to find evidence to support an argument that focusing on women and girls in development policies, programs, and policies will contribute to U.S. national security and global security more widely. Future GGP studies will follow-up on this argument using a variety of data sources and arguments.

I am pleased to present out panelists who represent diverse organizations, areas of expertise, and experience (in order of their presentation):

• Dr. Caren Grown is the Senior Gender Advisor of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and an Economist in Residence at American University in Washington, DC. She is charged with revising the gender strategy for USAID.

• Leigh Carter is executive director of Fonkoze USA, a microcredit lending institution serving the ultra poor in Haiti.

• Dr. Nilufar Ahmad is senior gender specialist at the World Bank. She focuses on ensuring that gender is taken into consideration in large scale construction projects funded by the World Bank.

• Dr. Winnie Tay is director of program management at Plan International USA where he leads girls’ education projects in sub-Saharan Africa.

• Dr. Anju Malhotra is the vice president for research, innovation, and impact at the International Center for Research on Women in Washington, DC. She focuses on women’s empowerment, gender equality, and demographic and social change.

Caren Grown

There is no blueprint or magic bullet for incorporating gender into development projects. Many different kinds of context-specific, relevant interventions work well, such as ensuring gender-sensitive legislative frameworks (many countries still have unequal laws); promoting judicial capacity (lawyers, judges, prosecutors, and well-functioning court systems need to protect and enforce women’s rights); and enacting institutional reforms (such as giving women access to joint or individual land titles).
Economic growth in most countries over the last 20 years has been based on social inequity and joblessness. Access to jobs is important for women. A very large literature shows that women’s access to livelihoods and employment is absolutely essential to enhancing their bargaining power within households and giving them returns in economic and political life. There are also health benefits and education benefits as well as generational benefits through their often primary role in child care.

Public investment is critical during good and hard times. Public work programs in India, for example, guarantee poor laborers 100 days of work per year. South Africa, Ethiopia, and Argentina also have public employment schemes. The programs are targeted towards male heads of households but the take up rate has been highest among women.

Targeted public investment in physical infrastructure has an important complementary relationship in an economy because it reduces the costs for doing business. Much solid research shows the relationship between physical infrastructure investment (roads, and transportation, sanitation, and energy) and women’s unpaid work burdens. These investments can reduce the time women spend in unpaid labor, freeing up their time for paid labor or for girls to go to school.

Many low cost green investments can be delivered in ways that not only reduce women’s unpaid work burden but enable them to become entrepreneurs and earn income from these types of investment. Interesting examples have been researched and presented by the World Bank in Bangladesh and Mali.

Asset ownership for women is sometimes more important than jobs. The first-ever national level survey on asset ownership, land, housing, financial assets, and livestock is being conducted in Ghana, Ecuador, and India. Another way to conceive of ownership is perception. One can ask people: who in this household owns this land or this dwelling? However, people may think they own a piece of property, but they may not. Another way of getting at the issue of ownership is by asking people what are their rights. Do they have a right to mortgage or bequeath this property? A survey currently being undertaken by USAID asks about ownership in different ways.

In terms of what works with regard to increasing asset ownership: legislation is a first step and an important framework. Many governments do not currently guarantee women’s inheritance rights or property rights. Ironically, these same governments have contradictorily signed on to CEDAW. These countries should be standardizing formal statutory law with CEDAW. In many countries, there are systems such as religious and customary legal systems that might be used to support women’s rights.

For example, with regard to awareness of rights, Ecuador has the most egalitarian property rights. Most women in Ecuador know their rights and they know to what they are entitled. In Ghana and India, women generally do not know what the laws are; therefore, they do not know what they can claim. Organizations need to train judges, lawyers, and paralegals on legal literacy, especially for women.

The concept of ownership is complicated, and the definition of ownership is contested. One way of conceiving ownership is in terms of legal ownership: does an individual have a title or a document for a piece of property, and if he or she does, whose name is on it? Not all countries have titles; therefore, ownership questions should be approached in other ways. The development community does not have detailed individual level information about ownership.
The distinction between ownership and tenure security (use rights), particularly with pieces of property, is important. Surveys conducted in Latin America have generated some surprising results about individual property ownership: women own more than was previously assumed. In Nicaragua and Panama, for example, women’s ownership of houses is equal to that of men because of the remittances they receive from family members. In both countries, men own horses and cattle; women own pigs, chickens, and guinea hens. The gender gap of assets may not be that large, but the wealth gap is what matters more. My colleagues and I working on the Gender Asset Gap Project are pursuing these and other questions.

Leigh Carter

Fonkoze is an indigenous Haitian institution whose foundation is based on 11 principles created by Fr. Joseph Philippe in Haiti in 1994. Two of these principles resonate with what we are talking about today.

First, the priority is women. Liberation of the woman is liberation of the family. Women are the backbone of the Haitian economy.

Second, credit is not enough. You cannot hand a woman a loan and walk away. You have to help a woman out of poverty.

Fonkoze, from the very beginning, focused on the economic empowerment of women. Hardworking women such as micro-entrepreneurs go from market to market each day carrying their business on their head or on an animal. They live on 1-2 dollars a day and are heads of their household. The founders of Fonkoze wanted to see that the poor, especially women, had access to financial services to rebuild their country and their lives. In post-earthquake Haiti, this is very important.

Fonkoze is a holistic institution that is committed to the alleviation of extreme poverty. With 55,000 borrowers and 230,000 microsavers, Fonkoze accomplishes its mission by meeting women wherever they are on their journey out of poverty.

On the stairway out of poverty, women can climb, but they also can fall off. The first step of the Fonkoze program is Chemen Lavi Miyò, a program for ultrapoor. Fonkoze works with women who are not yet ready for microcredit. For two years the women are given training, one on one supervision, encouragement, and confidence building. The second step of the program is Ti Kredi, or “little credit.” Women receive loans no larger than $25, education, and training. The third step, solidarity lending, is where groups of women come together and guarantee each other’s loans. Four to five groups work together at a solidarity center. The solidarity centers are the soul of Fonkoze. There are 2,000 solidarity centers around Haiti. These centers are the platform on which Fonkoze launches all other programs. The fourth and final step is business development where individual loans are given to women to enter the formal economy and grow medium to large businesses.

Fonkoze has an extremely sophisticated social performance monitoring department that collects data on a daily basis. Every client, upon entering the program, is interviewed extensively. But Fonkoze workers' time is taken up with providing loans, so we do not have time to analyze the information on file. If you have a proposal to analyze our information that would help women, please contact us as we are willing to share the data for a worthy research project.
The World Bank is part of the UN family, and in 1975 when the Decade of the Woman was declared, the Bank started working on issues of women in development. There was an evolution of the Bank’s policy on women. The most important policy change was the 2006 Gender Action Plan. Before 2006, there had been more of an emphasis on health and education. In a 2006 evaluation, the Bank found that 95 per cent of the health and education programs integrated gender very well. However, if you looked at the MDGs, women’s economic empowerment goals were lagging. Therefore, educating women was not enough.

To help women improve their lives, they need to access infrastructure – transport, energy, and clean water – which saves women time so they can do productive work. Research in sub-Saharan Africa shows that 80 per cent of women’s daily energy is used to collect water and fuel for the household. These women do not have time for much else.

Therefore, the 2006 World Bank Gender Action Plan focused on how to incorporate gender into economic sectors, particularly infrastructure. I work in an area called the Sustainable Development Network. It has 9 large sectors which represent 70 per cent of the Bank’s lending: 8-10 billion dollars. Historically, these sectors have been gender blind. For example, engineers who are building roads in developing countries do not necessarily understand why they need to take into consideration gender issues for an apparently public good.

The World Bank has had success in incorporating gender into several projects. For example, the Bangladesh Second Rural Roads and Markets Improvement and Maintenance Project mandated that thirty per cent of construction jobs would go to women and women would to have equal pay. Women demanded their space in the market: 30 per cent of the shops would be for women, 30 per cent of the market committee would be comprised of women, and women’s labor would come from a labor contracting company. Ten years later, more than 50 per cent of the construction workers are women. These changes brought about a decline in poverty in the project area. The Bangladesh government has assumed this program since World Bank funding ended, and it continues to support employment of thousands of women annually.

In another project, the Pakistani government instituted affirmative action policies for women in traditionally male-dominated sectors such as road construction. When only men worked on rural road paving projects, they would drink alcohol on the job, productivity was very low, and there was a lot of violence. Women started working on road projects, and male behavior changed, alcoholism dropped, and productivity improved.

The Asian Development Bank has also sponsored projects in several countries where engineers talk about the benefits of not just getting women’s views on the project but also involving women in design issues.

It is a daily struggle for those of us at the Bank who are working on gender. In addition, the governments of the countries working with the Bank need to be engaged on the issue of gender. To integrate gender, three issues are critical: Are men and women both benefiting equally from this project, do women face more risks than men, and how do we turn risks into opportunities?
Winnie Tay

I will talk about the BRIGHT (Burkinabé Response to Improve Girls Chances to Succeed) project in Burkina Faso implemented by Plan International USA and jointly funded by USAID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). The project objectives are to increase girls’ chances of success in school. The project takes the perspective of girls so that they do not face the same issues that their grandmothers and mothers faced.

Some successful project outcomes are that more girls are enrolled in school, attendance has improved, and girls are learning how to read and write.

The project first focuses on improving the infrastructure so that there are classrooms where girls could go to school. The communities selected the most remote schools where girls’ enrollment was the lowest. Access to these remote communities was very difficult, but these were the areas where we would likely have the most success in increasing girls’ attendance rates. The BRIGHT project also focused on providing lodging for teachers, ensuring access to clean water, building gender specific latrines, and establishing a daycare center on the school compound to take care of small children so that elder girls could be free to go to school.

Second, to make the schools functional, community mobilization became a key component to the project’s success. The community has to be behind the project because it influences women’s roles in the family and that in turn affects girls’ enrollment in school. One of the partners in the consortium, FAWE, was tasked to conduct awareness-raising on the issue of girls’ education, and thus motivate more families to bring girls to the schools. Female teachers became role models in the schools.

Of the 17,200 students enrolled, 9,248 were girls, many of them attending school for the first time. An evaluation of the project was conducted by the organization Mathematica and funded by MCC (MCC mostly works on infrastructure; this was the first the work was socially-oriented).

Anju Malhotra

Two issues of achieving gender equality are particularly interesting to me: innovation and scale. The U.S. QDDR is exciting is because it brings gender equality to the table with innovation and scale. Historically, these connections have been made more accidentally than deliberately. What do we need to do to make them deliberate?

Most people do not speak about innovation and women’s empowerment in the same breath. But both are inherently connected, are fundamental to human progress, and require thinking outside the mold, and require breaking the mold. The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) has identified several ways to build scale and innovation into gender projects. Over the last half century, there have been two areas of gender and development where innovation and scale have combined accidentally, but hopefully in the future deliberately: family planning and reproductive health.

In 1960, only 10 percent of the world’s women were practicing contraception while today more like 33 percent. Fifty years ago, women were having six to seven children in the developing world. Now that number has dropped to two to three children. We now have the largest generation of youth wanting to
practice contraception and the largest population wanting to control how many children they have – that is revolutionary. The issue is, can we continue using those types of investments for this generation of women and for the 200 million women who still have unmet needs? Some of the most cutting edge programs are thinking along these lines.

For example, Bindaas Bol (Just Say It) Condom Campaign in India, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), was developed for another USAID-funded Program for Advancement of Commercial Technology – Child and Reproductive Health (PACT-CRH) with technical assistance by Private Sector Partnerships-One (PSP-One) project. Its innovative, multi-faceted campaign aimed at normalizing the image of condoms and the condom user and eliminated the barrier of talking about condoms.

The campaign helped to increase condom use by married men with their spouses by over 30 per cent in urban centers of north Indian states. Its effectiveness was due to its focused 360 degree strategy that included on-the-ground activities where retailers were asked to be change agents in helping their consumers overcome their embarrassment about condoms. Why is condom use generally going up among urban, well-educated men and women in India? The answer is: because men and women are learning how to communicate about sexuality. This is an amazing change.

Most of the 30 to 40 million women working in factories around the world are in entry level positions, and they are unable rise to management positions. In a particularly interesting project called P.A.C.E. (Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement) – a partnership between Gap Inc., ICRW, Swasti, and CARE in India, Cambodia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and China – Gap Inc, ICRW and partners worked with Gap-outsourced factories in Asia. The P.A.C.E. program provides female garment workers with life skills so that their job becomes a platform for personal empowerment and career advancement into supervisory and other roles. From the very beginning, Gap and ICRW saw the innovation in the program in its scale and sustainability.

It was clear that the program had the best chance of continuing on its own if it affected the vendors’ bottom line, increasing efficiency for the vendor, decreasing absenteeism, and producing a better product. In fact, that is what happened. With P.A.C.E. training, women were more effective in their lives, but also at their job. In the factories, efficiency increased. The program went from Gap telling the vendors to train women, to the vendors making it part of the training program. The training creates self-efficacy and confidence in women.

When ICRW is doing measurement, it is these soft concepts that have to be defined. What does normative change mean when you have legislation that shifts an entire village’s thinking about what women can do differently?

**Cross-cutting Issues from the Roundtable Discussion**

• No single social policy will work everywhere and policies that may work for men/boys will not necessarily work for women/girls. Example: schools need to build separate and secure latrine areas for girls.

• Macro-economic policies are not attuned to the particular employment challenges women face, and so they miss the opportunity of supporting and promoting women's entrepreneurship and small businesses.
• Across the spectrum of development policy, a gender perspective is needed to increase aid effectiveness.

• One of women's most basic needs is secure asset ownership.

• More progress has occurred in incorporating a gender perspective with positive effects for women in health and education projects than in economic empowerment.

• Significant progress has occurred over the past few decades in women's reproductive health and fertility decline.

• Bringing more women into the development process, at all levels, including formal political participation shows promise for increasing positive outcomes. Yet, solid longitudinal data are lacking to definitely prove that investing in women and girls "pays off" for women and girls and for society as a whole [see box].

• Demonstration is a powerful way of promoting social change, for example, providing female leadership role models to young girls; creating entry points like sports, scholarships, and awards; and introducing quotas for women’s political participation.

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**Toward Smart Development through Improved Data on Women and Girls**

Donors typically do not support research and monitoring to assess long-term social change but instead focus on quick output data which fail to capture long term effects. NGOs, such as Fonkoze, do not have budgets that allow for long-term analysis of impacts: they are busy delivering service on a day to day basis.

Thus, a major change in development budgeting, to establish long-term smart development, is required. This will require that budgets support collecting strong baseline data and regular updates entered into a computerized system. It is possible that a participatory approach, including trained local people, could become the "barefoot" data collectors and data enterers.

Ongoing large-scale surveys must include select, key gender questions in order to avoid generating more gender-blind data. Gender-blind data, including household data that does not include basic information on family members by gender and age, do not allow for analysis of differential impacts of various development interventions on women/ men and boys/girls and obscures assessment of wider social change over time.

The move to randomized trial studies offers possibilities for new insights, but they are not the only method available for documenting the effects of including women in development. Multiple approaches are valid and need to be considered. Social science researchers need to be involved in developing new ways to measure social factors such as community mobilization -- again, in a gendered way.
Update from Secretary Clinton on the EDGE Initiative

Secretary Clinton has called on the UN, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the World Bank to improve data collection on women…specifically…better statistics on women’s access to education, employment, and entrepreneurship. She…announced the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality, or EDGE, initiative at the Special Session on Gender at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, November 30, 2011.

This international initiative will collect sex-disaggregated data that is comparable across countries, to identify what resources women and men both have access to and what remains to be addressed. Better data leads to better results. EDGE will harmonize economic data, responding to the growing demand of countries for financial and technical support to improve gender statistics.


In Conclusion

Thirty or more years after the Percy Amendment which mandated the inclusion of women in all United States development activities, the need continues to demonstrate the importance of gender/women's issues as central to successful development policies, programs, and projects. The presentations at the April 14 event, described in this report, document how gender-focused approaches to development make a positive difference to overall human welfare and security. Let us hope for the day when better quantitative data can be paired with abundant contextualized local studies to provide robust evidence that gender equality works.
Glossary

CEDAW: The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an international convention adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, described as an international bill of rights for women.

Gender: the socially constructed roles, behavior, activities and attributes that a particular society considers appropriate for women/men and girls/boys as well as other genders that may be defined in a society.

Gender analysis: a type of socio-economic analysis which, in the context of development assistance, is intended to illuminate the links between the existing gender relations in a particular society and development problems being addressed. Gender analysis asks: how will gender relations affect the achievement of sustainable results; and how will proposed results affect the relative status of men and women. Gender analysis identifies how men and women have different access to and control over resources, carry out different social roles, and face different constraints and receive different benefits. Once highlighted, they can be addressed by appropriately designed policies, programs, and projects.

Gender approach: examining the social system that shapes gender roles, responsibilities, access to and control of resources, and participation in decision-making.

Gender balance: the equal representation of women and men at all levels of employment, public political participation, and social life.

Gender-disaggregated data (or sex-disaggregated data): data that provide separate information for women/men and girls/boys.

Gender equality: equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Gender equality is a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and an indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.

Gender mainstreaming: the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

Gender relations: the distribution of assets, power, and social roles between women and men and boys and girls.

Gender sensitivity: paying attention to how gender permeates all aspects of development policies, programs, and projects and seeking to promote gender equality based on that awareness.

Gender system: patterned relationships between women/men and girls/boys in a society and across societies and institutions. Gender systems are embedded in political and economic structures, legislation, education, and traditions.

Monitoring and evaluation (M & E): for a helpful review, go to http://apps.develebridge.net/amap/index.php/Monitoring_and_Evaluation
**Percy Amendment:** The United States Agency for International Development's commitment to the full inclusion of women in development dates to 1973, when the United States Congress passed the Percy Amendment which requires that particular attention be given to integrating women into national economies to improve their status and to assist the overall development effort.

**Sex:** the biological characteristics of males and females related to hormones, chromosomes and genitals; these characteristics are limited to physiological reproductive functions; see gender.

**The Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR):** is a study by the United States Department of State, first started in 2009 and intended to be done every four years, that analyzes the short-, medium-, and long-term blueprint for the United States' diplomatic and development efforts abroad. It is a precursor to core institutional reforms and corrective changes.

**Women in development: Women in Development (WID):** is an approach to development policies, programs, and projects that emerged in the 1970s, calling for treatment of women's issues in development projects. Later, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach proposed more emphasis on gender relations rather than seeing women's issues in isolation.

**Women's empowerment strategy:** ways of addressing discrimination against women by devising program and strategies that increase women's skills, capacities, rights, and opportunities; development cooperation initiatives that create the conditions whereby women can become the agents of their own development and empowerment; emphasizes the transformational potential of development initiatives - in terms of sustainability as well as ensuring that women feel that they have been the agents of the transformation, that they have won this new space for action themselves.
References, Further Readings, and Resources


- classic study establishing the importance of women's assets/property rights


- discusses the Percy Amendment


- examines the Lesotho Highlands Water Project; provides critique of how international masculinities are privileged over local masculinities and women are largely excluded


- examines evidence available on the distribution of assets by gender around the world as well as factors that limit women's ability to accumulate assets including marital and inheritance regimes


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Fonkoze.org. [http://www.fonkoze.org/]

- main website of Fonkoze and its annual report


Mathematica. [http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/]

Millennium Challenge Corporation. [http://www.mcc.gov/]


- synthesizes and analyzes three decades of policies affecting women in developing countries and impact of current economic and political crises on women with attention to how women are organizing to develop appropriate and effective development strategies


- argues that women are the key to a global economic recovery
- after China and India, women are the world's largest "emerging market"


Swasti. [http://www.swasti.org/main/]


The Global Gender Program (GGP) of the Elliott School of International Affairs hosts an events series, the Global Gender Forum, and undertakes policy-relevant research about global women and girls especially as related to the HERS agenda (health, education, rights, and security).

The GGP research team seeks to increase knowledge about why it matters to include a gender perspective in all aspects of securing and maintaining peace, protecting women and girls during and after conflict, ensuring gender equality in development and leadership.

Barbara Miller directs the Global Gender Program. Professor Andrea Bertone, former Associate Director of the GGP (summer 2011), had a leading role in the April 14, 2011 event described in this report as did Professor Jim Sherry, chair of the Department of Global Health at GW. The GGP program assistant, Erica Buckingham, helped organize the event and also ensured that this report came to fruition.

For more information on the GGP, go to elliott.gwu.edu/global-gender