

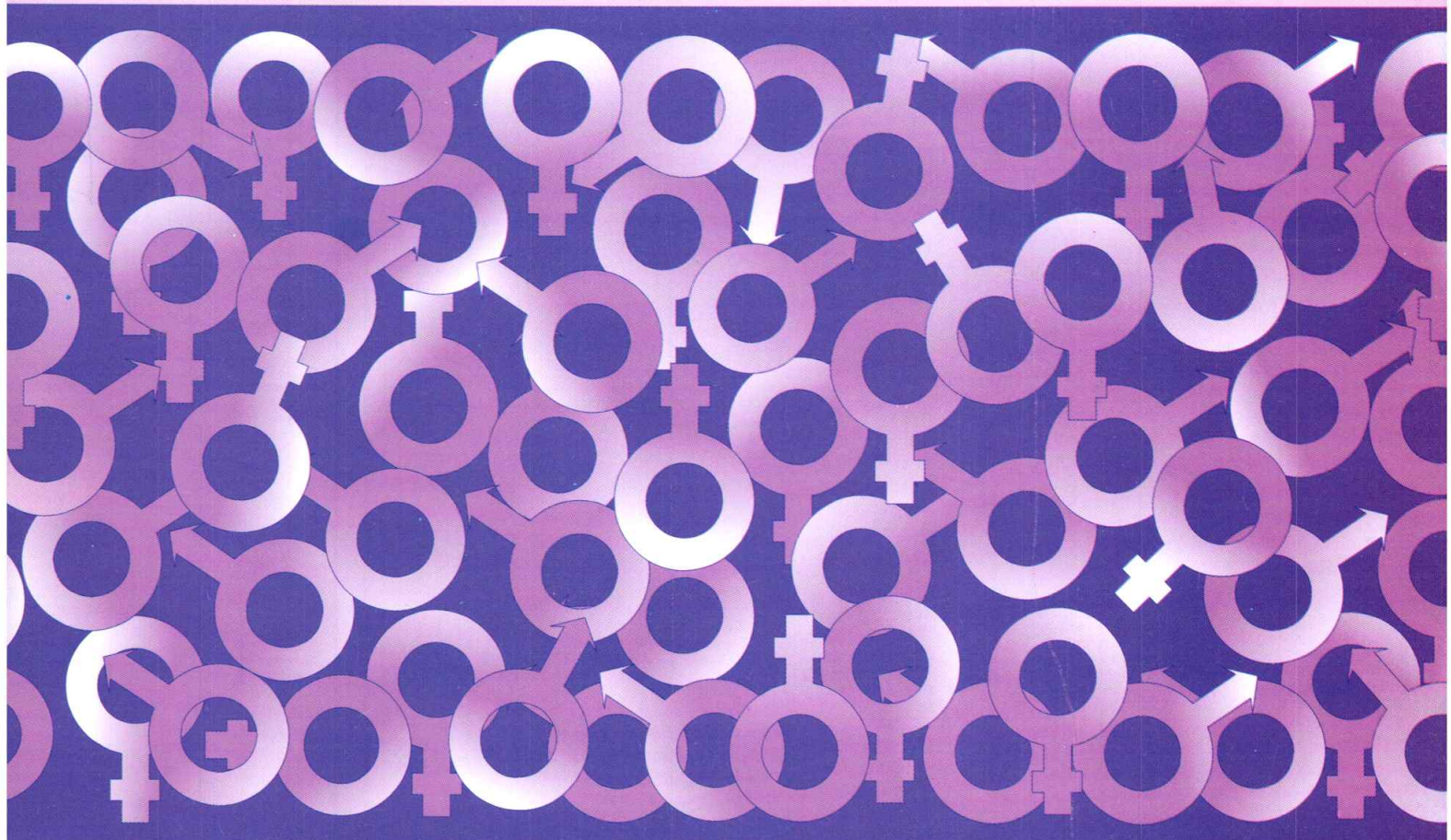
**STUDY GUIDE**

# **WOMEN AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Code No 878**

**3 CR. H**

**Units 1-9**



**DEPARTMENT OF GENDER AND WOMEN STUDIES**  
**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**  
**ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY**  
**ISLAMABAD**





# **STUDY GUIDE**

## **GENDER AND ENVIRONEMT**

**COURSE CODE 878**

**HALF CREDIT**

**(Units 1-9)**



**DEPARTMENT OF GENDER AND WOMEN STUDIES**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**

**ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY**

**ISLAMABAD**

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**In this course questions like women's link with environment, how they are affected, how they can contribute to improve the environment, due to urbanization and industrialization how women are affected by the deteriorating environment, and many other similar topics will be explored from a range of women's perspective. More over, due to the gender construct of the society, women's natural roles and association with the environment makes it essential for them to achieve sustainable development. Thus they should have a vital role in environmental management and development.**

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE**

- **Women's role and link with environment.**
- **Major issues related to environment and impact on women.**
- **Perspectives of Eco-feminists**
- **Women managing environment and political action.**

### **HOW TO STUDY:**

**The study material for this course combines a Study Guide and Allied Study Material. The course outline is spread over various topics in nine units. For each unit, selected articles related to the topics have been included in the Supplementary Allied Material. Each unit requires two week's study. If you spend two hours daily to study course units, you can complete the course in eighteen weeks.**

As you are aware a workshop is arranged to address your difficulties during the study period, help you to prepare for examinations, meet peer groups, listen to the subject experts and exchange views.

Although the Allied Study Material can be referred to as the latest material on the subject but at post graduate level you are encouraged to consult libraries, journals and internet to enhance your knowledge. At the end a list of websites and other books related with the subject is also being provided as recommender reading for the course, if required.

#### **TUTORS GUIDANCE:**

In distance learning system the students have to study on their own. However, if there is a viable group of 10 - 15 students, the university does appoint a part-time tutor. Part-time tutors hold tutorial meetings in study centers established by the university. The students are required to regularly attend these fortnightly meetings. In this course most probably you will be assigned a correspondence tutor who evaluates your assignments. But you are encouraged to be in contact with the tutors for guidance. The Regional Office as well as your tutor will inform you about the appointment.

#### **ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:**

According to the University system your performance in the course will be evaluated through two modes:

**Home Assignments**

**Final Examination**

**You will be required to do two assignments for this course. The assignments are based on course units and according to the schedule provided in your student kit, each assignment is to be submitted to the tutor for evaluation.**

**The main objective for the preparation of assignments is to encourage you to study and deem your performance. The tutor's guidance and assessment can also guide you for the preparation of your assignments.**

**The marks obtained in assignments (40%) are added to the final examination. The papers for final examinations (70%) are based on the complete course. The final examinations are held in specified examination centers. For passing a course you need to pass both the components.**

**Note:**

**In this course some of the sections in unit 3 and 4 have been taken from Course Women and Environment (1581) offered for MSc Environmental Design.**

**Good Luck**

**Dr Riffat Haque  
(Course Development Coordinator)**

## **UNIT 1**

### **INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Dr Riffat Haque**

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## 1.1 Introduction

In Unit one, we will try to appreciate the relation between women and environment.

The role of women was highlighted in the UNEP State of the Environment Report 1988. The issue was brought to the wider audiences when books *Women and Environment in the Third World*, by Irene Dankelman and Joan Davidson (1988) and *Staying Alive*, by Vandana Shiva (1989) were written.

The women and environment issue can be that they are creative and active partners in life and face the challenges of life. This relationship can also be approached through an extension of conventional categories of patriarchy and reductionism. Women and nature are closely related and their supremacy and liberation are linked. The women and ecology movements are therefore on, and are primarily counter trends to a patriarchal mal-development.

## 1.2 Objectives

To recognize the connection of environment with women.

To know various aspects of women as natural resource users.

## 1.3 Women and Environment

Connection between women and environment is most obvious when women grow much of the food and are depicted as hewers of wood, haulers of water. In the society the female and male roles construction depict gender inequality. Though the gender differences exist in all societies and affect everyone's experience of the environment and their impact on it. These differences are due to:

- Social roles which expose women to environmental problems in particular ways;
- Women are more likely to be living in poverty, which exposes them to more environmental problems;

- **Biology makes women more physically vulnerable to toxic exposure at particular times in life;**

It would not be an erroneous statement that women are 'custodians of environment' along with their undervalued triple role of reproduction, production and community work:

### **□ Reading:**

**1.3 a) Why Women and Environment? Women's Environment Network [www.wen.org.uk](http://www.wen.org.uk)**

**1.3 b) Vandana Shiva (1999) "Nature as the Feminine Principle", in L. Duggan, L. Nisonoff & N. Wisgersma (eds) The Women, Gender and Development Reader, Zed Books Ltd. London. pp 62-67.**

**1.3 c) Annabel Rodda (1991) "The Role o Women", in Women and Environment, Zed Books Ltd, London, pp 47 -78.**

### **SAQ"s**

**Q. 1 In your personal capacity write down points how you as a female/male are differently influenced by environment?**

**Q. 2 Women as consumers have special relevance to the environment?**

### **1.4 It is Woman's and Man's World but it remained eclipsed from her**

Although equality is a debate central to feminist movements and the debate has developed and matured. The political debate of nature verses culture, gender division of work in family and public sphere power which is a man's world and private sphere limitations which is a woman's world depict dichotomous.

Subjugation of women is a result of multiple factors, which determine the drift of the whole cultural complexes considered as a part of social realities. There are various theoretical frameworks which are being discussed below.

## **Nature versus culture**

It was mainly in the United States in the early 1970s that the relation of the sexes was discussed in terms of the relation, or rather dichotomy, between 'nature and nurture' or 'nature and culture'. Men and their activities had been seen as culture and of cultural value, whereas women and their activities had been seen as natural, outside of history and society, always the same and therefore not worthy of scholarly, political or theoretical interest and inquiry. Moreover, it was the relations between the sexes, and most particularly their relations of power and subjection, that had been attributed to nature. 'Nature', in this context, most often meant sexuality between men and women, women's bodies and their capacity for pregnancy and motherhood. Fatherhood, however, was usually seen not as natural but as 'social'. Female scholars challenged this traditional dichotomy. They argued that what 'nature' really meant in this discourse was a devaluation of everything that women stood for, that "nature" always has a social meaning, that both 'nature' and 'culture' meant different things at different times, and at different places.

## **Work versus family**

A second theoretical framework for rendering women visible, and for dismantling their identification with the merely natural, unchanging and therefore uninteresting, was the issue of their distinctive patterns of work. The discussion around it had its origins more in the European than in the American context, particularly in Italy, Britain, Germany and France. What had been seen as nature was now seen as work: bearing, rearing and caring for children, looking after the breadwinner-husband and after other family members. To call this activity 'work' meant to challenge the dichotomy 'work and family' (because the family may mean work to women), but also 'work and leisure' (because men's leisure may be women's work), and 'working men and supported wives' (because wives support men through their work). It meant questioning the view that work is only that which is done for pay. Women have always worked, and

unpaid work was and is women's work. Obviously, men's work is valued more highly than women's work.

The sexual division of labour was found to be not just a division, but a hierarchy of labour; and not just one of labour but, primarily, a sexual division of value and rewards. The lower value of women's work continues - through economic and cultural mediation - in employment outside the home.

The apparent dichotomy between 'work and family', between men as workers and women as 'non-workers', turns out to be one between paid and unpaid work, between underpaid and decently paid work, between the superior and inferior value of men's and women's work respectively. The underlying assumption of mutually exclusive superiority and inferiority seems to be another common feature of such gender-linked dichotomies.

### **Public versus private**

A third conceptual framework of women's history has been the relation between the public and the private, or the political and the personal, or the sphere of power and the domestic sphere. Traditional political theory has seen them, again, as a dichotomy of mutually exclusive terms, identified with women's 'sphere' and men's 'world'. Women's studies have profoundly challenged this view, pointing out its inadequacy for understanding politics and society. The slogan 'the personal is political' indicated that the issue of power is not confined to 'high politics', but also appears in sexual relations. Men inhabit, and rule within both spheres, whereas women's proper place was seen to be only in the domestic sphere and in her subjection to father or husband. This means, on the one hand, the dichotomy is not one between two autonomous, symmetrical and equivalent spheres, but rather a complex relation between domination and subordination, between power and powerlessness. On the other hand, women's studies have shown that the public 'world' was essentially based on the domestic 'sphere'. Male workers, male politicians and male scholars perform their tasks only because they are born, reared and cared for by women's labour.

## Reading

1.4 a) Tony Binns (eds) (1998) "Contextualizing gender differences in environmental awareness", in Perspectives in Development. Routledge, Sussex, Pp 112-133.

1.4 b) "UNEP: Gender and Environment", pp 1-2. Source: [www.gdrc.org/gender/a21/undp-gender-environment](http://www.gdrc.org/gender/a21/undp-gender-environment)

## SAQ's

Q. 1 What is meant by cultural and natural value?

Q. 2 Explain the statement "feminization of poverty".

## **Unit 2**

### **Natural Environment Issues and impact on Women**

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Dr. R. S.

## **2.1 Introduction**

The great majority of world's population depends on natural resources for its livelihood, but downward spirals of poverty frequently leads to environmental degradation which induces poor living conditions and provokes shortage of already scarce resources, diseases, shelter etc. The issues addressed in this unit deals with vulnerable situations for women due to gender roles and socialization.

## **2.2 Objectives:**

Student will be able to:

- Understand women's role within overall context of environmental problems.
- Explore the ability of women to organize them to fight against ecological destruction and carry out action to make a significant contribution to local community development.

## **2.3 Environmental Problems and Women**

The relationship between women and living systems that support their lives has changed drastically in response to heavy ecological stress in many areas of world especially in poor developing countries. Today rural women have inherited a situation where their rights and access to cultivable land have decreased and the open forest, woodlands and bush from which they gather such vital necessities as fodder, fuel wood and water have grown scarce or have disappeared.

Through out the developing world, ecological equilibrium has been broken by a number of interacting factors. These changes in land use and distribution have drastically affected the poor, leaving them with not only less access to land, but less fertile land. At the same time population growth continues to increase the number of people who depend on dwindling resources. The impact of scarcity has been particularly hard on women, who

are traditionally responsible for gathering wood and water, making those tasks increasingly arduous and time consuming in a day already burdened by long hours of work.

## 2.4 Gender Relations, Population and the Environment

Rapidly growing population of people is competing for limited resources than ever before as the world's population is topping 6.3 billion. The development plans sometimes fail due to population growth. Human consumption is dependent on the environment, and needs energy, water and many other natural resources and materials. While consumption patterns are different in developing and developed countries, there is an overlap in terms of the elite minority in developing countries and the growing numbers of the poor in industrialized countries.

Women and men usually consume differently. Women preferably address to the needs of the family and men usually spend resources for personal consumption. Women are the largest group of consumers for day to day purchases. But as women are poorer than men in most societies they often do not have the purchasing power.

Although more research is required but there are evidences that women are more environment friendly and they are involved in activities such as recycling and reuse. Gender relations play an important role in population dynamics as they are closely linked with fertility, mortality and spatial distribution.

### Reading:

2.4 a) Gender Relations, Population and the Environment

Source: [www.fao.org/sd/wpdirect](http://www.fao.org/sd/wpdirect)

2.4 b) Maria Mies & Vandana Shiva (1993) "People or Population: Towards a New Ecology of Reproduction" in Maria Mies & Vandana Shiva (ed) Eco-Feminism. Zed books London. Pp 277- 295

## SAQ

Q Gender relation play significant role in population growth,

- Is it correct?

- What is the link between education and overpopulation?

## 2.5 Women and Deforestation

Forests provide employment for both men and women such as herbal and medicinal products, hunting, dyes, wood for fuel, ecotourism etc. Due to deforestation there can be social and ecological effects. Women who find food for family, wood for fire, water, and grazing land for livestock due to deforestation, their life is disrupted and daily work load is increased. After the loss of primary forests the commercial tree plantation do not help women.

### Reading:

2.5 Women and Deforestation

Source: [www.fao.org/sd/wpdirect](http://www.fao.org/sd/wpdirect)

## SAQ's

- What is the value of forest to human?

- Impact of commercial tree plantation on women?

## 2.6 Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the basis of human's well being but human habits threaten to diminish it. It is a balance to be maintained between animals, plants, rocks, rivers, humans etc. The diversity of life styles and patterns of land use make biodiversity a vibrant and living thing. As Ruth Lilongula, said, Biodiversity is the core of our existence within our communities. Its value cannot be measured because it is our culture and our survival (UNEP/IT: 1999)

For many women, biodiversity is the cornerstone of their work and survival. Women's link to biodiversity goes back to women's roles defined since hunter gatherer communities.

Still today women continue to gather fire wood, bush products for food, medicine, animal fodder and house building. Women are the major contributors in agricultural activities such as sowing, weeding, hoeing and binding the stalk. Also home gardens are maintained by women. And now in seed collection and growing of wild medicinal plants also is a speciality of women in many areas.

### Reading:

2.6 Biodiversity

Source: [www.sdnp.delhi.nic.in/nbsap/](http://www.sdnp.delhi.nic.in/nbsap/)

### SAQ's

Q. Which type of biodiversity is more important to us?

Q. What is "feminism of agriculture"?

## **2.7 Women and Disasters.**

This is an important global environmental issue which has been dealt in Unit 6 of this course.

## **2.8 Air and Water Pollution**

Any kind of pollution not only disrupts the ecological balance but also harms the health of the entire community. The development process brings with it practices such as manufacturing, transportation, consumption and stock of waste etc which are contributing to the depletion of the natural environmental system. In other words we are referring to urbanization and industrialization which is contributing unconstructively in resources such as air, water, fisheries, forests, noise pollution etc. On the bigger scale, threats of global warming, acid precipitation and green house effects are the fallouts.

The WHO has assessed the contribution of a range of risk factors to the burden of disease. Indoor air pollution has been declared the eighth most important risk factor and responsible for 2.7 percent of the global burden of disease. Only the indoor air pollution from solid fuel usage is responsible for 1.6 million deaths due to pneumonia, chronic respiratory diseases and lung cancer. In high mortality communities, indoor smoke is responsible for an estimated 3.7 percent of the overall disease, making it the most lethal killer after malnutrition, HIV AIDS and lack of safe drinking water and sanitation.

The result of pollution is that as a consequence of development humans are increasing their social costs or spill over costs. This damage cost is on the output of humans ill-health, loss of ecology, loss of crops output, soil erosion, solid waste and so on. The explanations to so called development are many but indirectly therefore, affecting our health and increasing our spill over costs.

According to a recent report of the Society for the Advancement of Women's Health Research women's health is at risk because little attention has been paid to understanding and preventing the harmful effects of environmental toxins on women. The biomass fuel in air and water pollution can affect lungs, reproduction, eyes, bones, breast tissues, bladder and kidneys of a pregnant woman.

There are also issues of water management in which women can play a central role. There are examples of women voices and actions to contribute in the management of water resources such as; Narmada river in India, Limai in Indonesia, Energy and Water Alliance in Nepal, Irrigation projects in Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Kenya, and Ukraine.

For further reading refer to the following websites and other material.

### Reading:

#### 2.8 Air and Water Pollution

Source: [www.in.gov.in/dear/ch15.pdf](http://www.in.gov.in/dear/ch15.pdf), [www.Genderandwateralliance.org](http://www.Genderandwateralliance.org),  
[www.natramed.com/environment/airpollutioninto.htm](http://www.natramed.com/environment/airpollutioninto.htm) and  
[www.who.int/mediacentre](http://www.who.int/mediacentre)

### SAQ

- Q. What is the most prevalent form of air pollution?
- Q. What are the major sources of water pollution?

## 2.9 Desertification and Gender

Deserts expand through the degradation of land in arid, semi arid and dry sub-humid areas. Desertification is a world wide phenomenon that threatens many ecosystems: it affects about two thirds of countries, including Asian and Mediterranean countries. The health and livelihood of

over 1 billion people i.e., one fifth of the world's population is at risk. Dry-lands are hugely important areas of biodiversity and are home to 2.3 billion people of the world.

For communities living in these regions, natural resource management is the most important factor in livelihood security and they learn to strike a balance in the fragile environment. Due to differing gender roles, land degradation affects both differently. Women end up travelling longer distances to collect fodder, fuel and water. Women serve on the front lines of dry-land management. For example women in Africa invest great energy and dynamism to ensure the day-to day survival of their families and communities. In Thar, Pakistan the story is not different because of common gender productive roles. According to UN Volunteers in Kenya, women are the invisible managers and practitioners in combating desertification. When men embark on seasonal or permanent migration- women's strategize survival tricks and their labour increases. There are many examples of women's combating desertification such as famous Chipko and Green Belt movements but Brazilian 'Widows of Drought', women farmers of China, Ms Niu Yo Kin & Ms Chao Jiniu of planting of willows are also worth mentioning. Brazilian Network for Human Development uses radio programmes to disseminate information on drought and environmental degradation.

### Reading

#### 2:9 Desertification, Land Degradation and Gender

Source: [www.fao.org/wairdocs](http://www.fao.org/wairdocs); [www.undp.org/sced/unso/women](http://www.undp.org/sced/unso/women)  
[www.un.org/popin/fao/certasia](http://www.un.org/popin/fao/certasia)

### SAQ

- 
- Q. What is the role of women in pastoral societies in case of desertification?
- Q. How is the workload of women affected by desertification?

## 2.10 Land Degradation

Women start using animal dung and crop residue. This means dung is not used to provide nutrients to the soil which has a direct impact on agricultural production and other plants. The impact of this on women is that they are using low quality fire fuel which takes longer to burn and emits hazardous fumes due to which eye and respiratory diseases ensue. This shortage of fuel and water also means no hot meals, less water used for cleaning purposes etc which ultimately affects the whole family.

Due to land degradation water shortage also starts. Women have to bring water from long distances, which costs time, energy and health.

### Reading

2.10 Land Degradation and Gender

Source: [www.un.org/popin/lao/centasia](http://www.un.org/popin/lao/centasia)

### SAQ

Q. Is there any link among land degradation on, water resources and women?

Q. What is "Environmental refuges"?

## 2.11 Floods

Due to floods, the normal life is affected in an enormous way. The havoc created by floods causes economic devastation, livelihood shortage, emotional strains, death, disease, lack of medical facilities and above all, increase in poverty.

Like in other emergency situations here also men are involved who are not gender sensitive and are gender biased. Women's involvement in the management committees is important.

### Reading

#### 2.11 Floods

Source: Maliha H. Hussein and Tariq Husain. Considering Gender Issues in Flood Mitigation: Integrated Water Resources Management—Implications for Mozambique

### SAQ

- Q. What kind of devastation is faced by women in flood situation?
- Q. How does flood effect the division of work?

## **Unit 3**

# **Impact of Urbanization on Women**

**Dr Riffat Haque**

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### 3.1 Introduction

In this unit you will study about relationship of women with built environment. The rapid increase of world's urban population coupled with slowing growth of the rural population has led to a major redistribution of the population. There are many difficulties faced by the human beings particularly by women/children (as they are most sensitive to even minor changes) due to this rapid urbanization and industrialization. Since very less data is available which is directly related to women's urbanization issues, thus these issues will be discussed generally. Demography/Population is an issue of urbanization but is being discussed in a separate unit.

In the first section, impacts of urbanization on women will be discussed, along with economic, political, social, environmental and technological aspects. Lastly settlement will be discussed. It encompasses both traditional and modern settlements in the context of developing and developed countries.

Urbanization, in conventional terms, refers to the process through which society is transformed from one that is predominantly rural, in economy, culture and life style, to one that is predominantly urban. It is also a process of territorial reorganization in that it shifts the locations, as well as the characteristics of population and production activities. Typically, urbanization is defined by the simple proportion of a nation's population residing in areas that are classified, by national census authorities, as urban places. Since definitions of what is or is not urban differ from one country to another, so do interpretations of what the designation urban implies (United Nations 1996).

Urbanization, however defined, is much more than a simple matter of population or production accounting (Knox 1994). It reflects, for a start, a complex set of processes involving a series of linked transformations, not only in where people live and what they produce, but in how they live; in terms of economic well-being, political organization and the distribution of power, demographic structure (e.g. fertility), and social (and family) relations.

### **3.2 Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Understand the link between urbanization and women and how it influences women's lives.
- Focus on built environment in context of women and covering factors like economic, demographic, pollution and technolog.

### **3.3 Causes and Consequences of Urbanization and its Impact on Women**

Humanity is involved in an unprecedented experiment. We are turning ourselves into urban species. The first great demographic benchmark of the 21st century is 2007, as most of the world's people have become urban dwellers. Most people have always lived in rural areas and have been largely occupied with agriculture. But urban populations are now growing three times as fast as rural populations

The rapid increase of the world's urban population, coupled with the slowing growth of the rural population has led to a major redistribution of the population. The world's urban population will double in 38 years.

Virtually all the population growth expected during 2000-2030 will be concentrated in the urban areas of the world. During that period the urban population is expected to increase by 2 billion persons, the same number that will be added to the whole population of the world.

There has never been a city of more than a million people that did not run on fossil fuels (Contemporary London, with 7 million people, uses around 20 million tonnes of oil equivalent per year). Managing urban population has become one of the world's most important challenges and it is aggravating day by day.

There will be growing interaction between urbanization and globalization. World cities are important in their own right in a world order in which national boundaries fail to stop cross-border flows of capital, people and ideas. Sub regional economic entities have emerged. While globalization has brought new opportunities and wealth to some cities, it has marginalized others. The marginalized city can be found anywhere in the world.

There are marked differences in the level and pace of urbanization among the major areas constituting the less developed regions. Latin America and the Caribbean is highly urbanized.

with 75 per cent of its population living in cities in 2000. Asia and Africa are considerably less urbanized, with 37 per cent and 38 per cent, respectively, of their populations living in urban areas.

Being less urbanized, Africa and Asia are expected to experience rapid rates of urbanization during 2000-2030. Consequently, by 2030, 55 per cent and 53 percent, respectively, of their inhabitants will live in urban areas.

Yet urbanization in least developed countries today differs from the early 20th-century trends in Europe and the United States in at least five key respects: It is taking place at lower levels of economic development; it is more dependent on changes in the international economy; it is based on lower mortality and higher fertility; it involves many more people; and governments have intervened to modify it.

The number of cities with 5 million inhabitants or more will go up from 41 in 2000 to 59 in 2015. Among those cities, the number of "mega-cities" (those with 10 million inhabitants or more) will increase from 19 in 2000 to 23 in 2015. Cities, as they are today, are highly dependent systems with tentacles stretching across the planet. Modern cities have a global hinterland, partly due to abundant supplies of energy. Cities depend on a multitude of supplies from elsewhere, including land-based resources, such as foodstuffs and timber, and subterranean resources such as metals and fossil fuels.

As discussed in Unit 2, environmental problems, especially air, water and noise pollution is growing. The critical question, as humanity moves to full urbanization, is whether living standards in our cities can be maintained with their environmental impacts curbed. The nature of urban poverty is more than an income or employment issue, and is also characterized by squalid living conditions; risks to life and health from poor sanitation, air pollution, crime and violence, traffic accidents and natural disasters; and the breakdown of traditional familial and communal safety nets. Urban environmental degradation has the most immediate effects on poor urban residents but also has serious national and global impacts

In the near future it is plausible that most of the world's poor people will live in urban areas. In the more developed world, poverty is already concentrated in urban areas, despite higher median incomes in urban than rural locales.

Some of the most severe environmental degradation is occurring in cities of the developing world, with the poorest citizens being the most severely affected. This is where the most concerted action for urban environmental improvement is needed. To know the impact of urbanization in detail examine the following reading;

### Reading

3.3 a) Causes and Consequences of Urbanization and its impact on women.  
3.3 . b) Social Impact of Urbanization.  
[www.familyrank.org/pages/1732/Urbanization](http://www.familyrank.org/pages/1732/Urbanization)

**3.3 c) Charter for Women's Rights to the City. [www.barcelona2004.org/esp](http://www.barcelona2004.org/esp)**  
(Note: It does point out some common issues which women face in cities.)



### SAQ

- What are the main issues in your city?
- How can rural living be promoted so that urbanization can be checked?

## 3.4 Population Growth

Humanity is involved in an unprecedented experiment! We are turning ourselves into an urban species. The rapid increase of the world's urban population coupled with the slowing growth of the rural population has led to a major redistribution of the population. Virtually all the population growth expected during 2000-2030 will be concentrated in the urban areas of the world. During that period the urban population is expected to increase by 2 billion persons.

Cities depend on a multitude of supplies from elsewhere, including land-based resources, such as foodstuffs and timber, and subterranean resources such as metals and fossil fuels. The way these resources are used, (via processing, combustion, and disposal) it has profound effects on the living earth. Cities are centre-stage in the global environmental drama of pollution, land degradation and loss of species diversity. The concentration of intense economic processes and the high levels of consumption in cities both increase their resource demands. Women can play an important role in control of population but that is only possible if they are provided with family planning facilities and if there is awareness about its benefits for the families and communities at large.



### Reading

**3.4 Population Growth and Cities**

## 3.5 Economic Costs of Urbanization

Large cities attract migrants, despite all their problems because they provide for more economic opportunities than the miserable conditions in the countryside. In cities high levels of urban inequality, poverty, unemployment and underemployment are inefficient in terms of social welfare but they are very capable to meet the needs of both local and transnational industrialists seeking relatively cheap labour. Thus, dependent urbanization appears as having a positive capitalist economic function- and that function is mainly performed by the so-called urban 'informal' sector or 'marginalized labor force'.

In addition to their toll on human health and natural resources, urban environmental problems extract economic costs as well: some direct, some indirect. Environmental problems that affect human health, for instance, are often measured in terms of lost worker productivity. But economic losses encompass more than losses in productivity or output as conventionally measured. A loss of a working day due to pollution-caused health problems is an economic cost, but so is ill health unrelated to work loss, as well as the loss of an amenity such as the pleasure of a natural area, or lost leisure time spent in traffic jams. Valuing health symptoms and risks of mortality in economic terms is especially controversial because it rests on assumptions about the value of a human life.

One notable example of infrastructure failure is congestion. Congested city streets slow the movement of goods and services and generally increase the price of doing business in cities. Not only does traffic congestion allocate time to unproductive waiting, but it also results in inefficient fuel use and worsening air pollution. Indirectly, congestion also reduces productivity by adding to workers' stress and aggravation.

Rural urban migration has two main components: the push factor and the pull factor. The push factor is driven by the rural population becoming landless and inability to make a living in the rural areas, while the pull factor is driven by poverty in the rural areas and the hope that in the cities there is some better way of survival.

### Reading

**3.5 Economic Costs of Urban Environment Degradation**  
Source: [www.wri.org/wri/wr-96-97/ud](http://www.wri.org/wri/wr-96-97/ud)



### SAQ

Q. What is the simplest economic cost of urbanization paid by women?

## 3.6 Political Aspects

Urban bias and urbanization are tied to concentration of wealth and power. Urban elites (which are, most of the time/ also rural elites) have an interest in maintaining cities as centers of conspicuous consumption and islands of material wealth. Evidence on many developing societies points toward the formation of developing societies elites within a triple alliance which relates local business to political leaders and international capital.

Viewed in the above context, policies affecting urban concentration and growth are likely to reflect strategies for facilitating and subsidizing the profit making activities (as well as the consumption patterns) of the political elites and their partners, the transnational corporations. The state is likely to actively promote patterns of urbanization, migration, and structured inequality for this powerful alliance and to maintain peripheral capitalism.

## Reading

### 3.6 Political Aspects

Source: [www.rrojasdatabank.org/urban1.htm](http://www.rrojasdatabank.org/urban1.htm)

- R. Rojas. 1975 "The Murder of Allende, and the end of the Chilean way to socialism". Harper Row, New York.

## 3.7 Environmental problems

As centers of population and human activities, cities consume natural resources from both near and distant sources. They also generate waste that is disposed of both inside and outside the city. In the process, urban areas generate environmental problems over a range of spatial scales: the household and workplace, the neighborhood, the city, the wider region, and the globe.

Urban environmental problems also create a range of social impacts. They may impair human health, cause economic and other welfare losses, or damage the ecosystems on which both urban and rural areas depend. Most urban environmental problems entail all three of these impacts, either directly or indirectly. For example, urban air pollution has a direct impact on human health, increasing the incidence of respiratory disease. Its impact on the economy is mainly indirect, arising largely from productivity losses due to ill health. Environmental problems vary from city to city and region to region and are influenced by such variables as a city's size and rate of growth, income, local geography, climate, and institutional capabilities. Especially where local governments are weak or under-financed, rapid economic or population growth can exacerbate these problems.

The ambient environment of high-income cities may actually be more benign in terms of the health impacts of pollution; these cities exert a far greater toll on the regional and global environment. The resources consumed and greenhouse gases emitted to support even the cleanest cities in developed countries are, on a per capita basis, far greater than those associated with the poorer cities of developing regions. Indeed, the largest per capita urban contributors to global environmental problems are the wealthy, living preponderantly in the urban areas of the developed world.

In its broad outlines, the transition summarized above suggests an association among a city's wealth, its environment, and the health of its citizens. Generally, the poor create environmental problems for themselves and their neighbors, while the wealthy create problems for a wider public.

Although most of the world's population will soon be living in developing world cities, the environmental problems most prominent in these cities have often been conspicuously absent from the global environmental agenda. Indeed, over the past two decades the global agenda has

shifted away from local and regional problems such as air pollution and inadequate water supplies toward vast global concerns such as ozone depletion, climatic change, and the loss of biological diversity. Aware of this disconnection between the "green" agenda and the problems confronting cities, a number of researchers, international donor agencies, and nongovernmental organizations over the past few years have advocated a renewed focus on the "brown" agenda-- that is, the problems of pollution, poverty, and environmental hazards in cities.

Poor sanitation also poses health hazards through several routes-- including direct exposure to feces near homes, contaminated drinking water, ingestion of fish from polluted waters, and ingestion of produce that has been fertilized by wastewater. Inadequate access to water and sanitation facilities is the main cause for the intestinal diseases, transmitted by feces that are so prevalent in developing countries. In the developing world, it is estimated that more than 90 percent of sewage is discharged directly into rivers, lakes, and coastal waters without treatment of any kind.

Indoor air pollution from burning of low-quality fuels, such as charcoal or animal dung, has been largely considered a rural problem. Yet many urban residents of the developing world rely on biomass fuels for cooking and heating. In many smaller urban centers in Asia and Africa, between 50 and 90 percent of domestic energy supplies come from these materials. Exposure tends to be highest for women and young children, who often spend many hours indoors and cooking over open fires; indeed, they face greater exposure to pollutants from indoor than outdoor air.

Exposures can be severe in the case of industrial accidents or dumping as what happened in Bhopal, India. The health effects of hazardous wastes remain controversial, yet are generally believed to pose a far smaller threat than those associated with biological pathogens in the urban environment. In the developed world, where exposures to hazardous wastes have largely been remedied, concern is mounting about exposures to even minute levels of toxic wastes. Follow the suggested reading which elaborates all above issues.

### Reading

#### 3.7 Determinants of Environmental problems

## **Unit 4**

# **Land, Housing Ownership by Women**

**Dr Riffat Haque**

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## 4.1 Introduction

In this unit another aspect of human settlement i.e., housing and women is being examined. The house as an environment may be partially attributable to the extreme segregation of public and private realms with our culture; with the subsequent devaluation of house is an important economic or societal sphere. This unit illustrates the way in which a combination of factors like land and ownership; public and private spaces and low income interact to pose problems for women within the house environment and particularly for special targeted women.

Land and ownership is one of the leading issues of gender inequality in most of developing countries. There are number of constraints faced by women to have access to the land. These are legal conditions, transaction costs, credit savings, and location, income and land prices.

Secondly you will observe the relationship of gender with two different spheres (i.e. public and private). This section is again divided into five subsections that include:

- Public space
- In to labyrinth
- Excerpts from modernity and the spaces of femininity
- Shopping centers
- Everyday and other spaces

In the first subsection the historical struggle of women to transform urban environments as anything of cultural significance or to re-evaluate the enduring influence of traditional female enclaves originated in the pre-modern city will be discussed. Secondly you will examine space of movements and discontinuities in the context of past and recent periods or we can say all those disorders of urban life that disturbs women, like sexuality and politics, will be covered. Then the focus will be on difference between modernity and spaces of femininity. Fourthly, shopping center as a changing public place will be discussed. It indicates that the shopping center is the sign of change from the past and its consequences (planning restrictions, post-boom economic conditions, and new forms of competitions) should not be discouraged but should change their practices accordingly. Women have a spiritual and emotional attachment with the house and in the third section this relationship will discuss in context of low income groups.

Social and poverty environments have created special targeted groups of women with their unique problems. The situation of these groups is briefly presented in the last section of this unit in context of situations of our own country. These groups include elderly, destitute, battered, abducted women and the migrant and prostitute.

## 4.2 Objectives

You will be able to:

- Explore the relationship between sex roles within home environment.
- Understand boundaries of public and private spaces.
- Understand issues of special target groups.

### **4.3 Land and Ownership**

The need to link agricultural and population policies has increasingly been recognized in recent years. Major agricultural development goals, such as improvements in land productivity, the establishment of secure cultivation rights and the redistribution of land are believed to be influenced by demographic conditions. Similarly, demographic behaviour and demographic trends are shaped by the rural environment, including land/tenure arrangements and conditions.

An important element in the land-fertility/mortality interface is gender. Institutional arrangements and socio-economic and socio-cultural norms can contribute differently to the experiences of men and women in relation to land and fertility. Whilst the issue concerns all rural households, it is also important to recognize some of the specific constraints that affect female-headed households.

#### **1. Access to land**

Differing household demographic conditions demand differing land arrangements. Land arrangements can be divided up between physical and rights-based characteristics. The former concerns the size and degree of fragmentation, location and quality of a land holding. The latter refers to the rights, security, conditionality and legal status that is conferred on an individual (or collective) piece of land. One of the most important factors determining the relationship between households and land is a household's ability to acquire access to land. An analysis of fertility and mortality trends should, therefore, include a study of the constraints affecting the ability of different types of household to acquire access to land in order to make appropriate responses to demographic change. A series of typical general constraints inhibiting access to land can be identified:

- legal conditions
- transaction costs
- credit/savings
- location
- income
- land prices

Each of these generic constraints assume a particular form and relevance according to specific conditions in different regions, also influenced by social, cultural, economic contexts and conditions of individual households. It is, therefore, not possible to make generalizations regarding the precise content and impact of these constraints apart from providing broad guidelines. Furthermore, as land access issues throughout most developing regions are characterized by high levels of gender inequality, additional emphasis will be placed on this issue.

#### **Legal conditions: rules, regulations and customs.**

Every household decision to acquire additional land is governed by a set of rules and regulations. These may consist of national and/or local laws, customs or policy conditions. Each of these, however, imposes a distinct conditionality on the capacity of a household to gain access to land. It is essential, therefore, that the full range of legal, customary and policy conditions that affect access to land are analysed in order

to determine the differential levels of access afforded to different types of rural households, also broken down by gender. It is important to bear in mind that both modern and traditional laws tend to be interpreted in favour of male ownership and control and that in some cases, laws may bar women from acquiring or disposing of land without their husbands' consent. The impact on female-headed households can be severe: in the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, widows may be forced to abandon the land altogether and return to their parents' village.

**Transaction costs.** Institutional procedures of acquiring land often involve transaction costs (i.e. registration fees) which may be prohibitively high for resource-poor farm households. Moreover, as women tend to have lower incomes than men, they may be less likely to afford the cost of transaction fees.

**Credit/savings.** Many farm households do not have access to credit, as they do not have the collateral - usually land title or cattle - required for agricultural loans. The resulting vicious circle (without land farmers cannot get credit and without credit they cannot acquire land) often means that high fertility may be among the few alternatives available for these households to improve their tenure status. Socio-cultural constraints and stereotypes of non-creditworthiness tend to preclude women from obtaining access to many formal sources of credit, like banks, cooperatives and credit unions. An analysis of credit schemes in Kenya, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe found that, by and large, women had received less than 10% of the credit directed to smallholders and 1% of the total credit to agriculture.

**Location.** Poor farmers often have fragmented plots of dispersed or remote land. As a result, their labour productivity is reduced while their workload is increased (they often require more time to transport tools, inputs and harvested produce from one plot to another and may spend more time commuting). These conditions increase the need for additional labour and may therefore encourage men and women to have more children. Women tend to have even more marginal and remote land than men, and in many cases, their land is less fertile.

**Income.** A household's ability to acquire land is largely dependent on the combined income of its members (on- and off-farm income and remittances). Many farm households often do not have the income required to purchase land without credit. A large number of children is often perceived as one means with which to increase source of income within a family and thus be in a better position to acquire land. Women tend to have substantially lower income than men, as they engage in unpaid on-farm and domestic labour or informal sector activities which yield meager earnings.

#### **Land prices**

The price of land is often prohibitively expensive for many rural household, and particularly for female-headed households, which are often also denied credit. The response of resource-poor families may well be to opt for a large family in the hope that may increase family income and therefore improve the ability of the household to acquire land.

### **Gender disparities in access to land**

Disparities in male/female access to land are virtually universal. In Latin America, men and women do not have equal access to land even in those countries where legislation has removed gender barriers to land ownership. In this region, as well as in the Caribbean, women's access to land and to other property generally takes place through a male relative.

In most of (patrilineal) Africa, the usufruct right to land prevails and customary land use practices often determine access to land in terms of use rights or ownership. Women are essentially temporary custodians of land passing from father to male heir, even though they may be de facto heads of household. As unpaid labourers on their husbands' land, while also cultivating separate plots in their own right, African women usually lose the rights to land following the death of their spouse. Widows and divorced women have virtually no tenure or inheritance rights with which to ensure food security for themselves or their children (it is only through their male children, or male relatives from their husband's lineage that women have land tenure rights).

Socio-economic and socio-cultural norms and institutional arrangements accentuate women's inequality of access to land, thereby indirectly encouraging high fertility. For instance, the fact that land title and land tenure tend to be vested in men may be a legal condition, but it also reflects socio-cultural tradition. In India, daughters usually waive their land rights in favour of their brothers, to avoid being denounced as "selfish," and risk being alienated from their natal families. This often results in social pressure for women to bear as many sons as possible, as this can be their only means of security of access to land. In the Middle East, women rarely own land, and when they do, the land is often controlled or managed by male relatives until marriage after which the titles are transferred directly to their sons.

Even when women have user rights, they have limited rights over the fructus of their labour. As a result, their restricted bargaining power over the use of the fructus is not likely to be reflected in decisions regarding the education of girl children, known to delay age at marriage and childbearing, thereby reducing fertility and mortality.

### **2. Security of tenure**

Another important factor determining the relationship between rural households and land is security of tenure, or the ability of men and women to maintain the rights and conditions that permit secure use of the land. Security of tenure is to a large extent a social contract through which the community bestows to an individual or household the right to cultivate land. It is a critical socio-economic and psychological right granted to individual men and women or to groups under different forms of land tenure. Security of tenure allows individuals or groups to reap the benefits of their labour and ensures that their children have future control over the land.

An analysis of fertility and mortality trends should, therefore, include a review of the constraints (including gender) that affect the ability of different types of households to maintain use rights in order to make appropriate responses to demographic change. Security of tenure is especially important to women, given their lower socio-economic status and limited access to productive resources and services, as it affects both their

productive and reproductive lives. Constraints to security of tenure are linked to a variety of factors, including land ownership, use, regularization (including demarcation and adjudication), among others.

### **Ownership**

Demographers have focused primarily on one aspect of security of tenure - land ownership - and its interface with fertility, and have established a negative relationship between ownership and family size. It has been argued that ownership tends to reduce fertility by providing an alternative means of security in old age, thus substituting for children's support. According to demographers, research in the Philippines and India has shown that land owners have smaller families than tenants. A 1978 FAO study on Population and Socio-Economic Change in 18th and 19th century Hungary found that agricultural producers who did not own land had nothing to lose by having a large number of children; while farmers who owned land and who therefore had much to lose from subdividing the land for their children had lower rates of fertility. It has also been argued that the total effect of land ownership is to reduce fertility through its influence on female education and village-level traditionalism. However, ownership of land is only one element of security of tenure and does not necessarily guarantee use rights.

### **Land use**

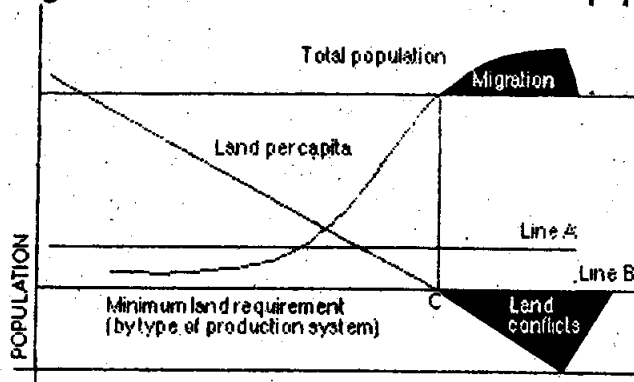
In many developing countries, security of tenure is guaranteed by the utilization of land. As long as a farmer cultivates the land, he/she enjoys security of tenure. However, under external pressures (population growth, competition for resources for instance on land that has the potential for irrigation), use rights can be eroded. Women tend to be among the first to lose use rights. Polygamy and high fertility (i.e. in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa), besides factors related to labour requirements, are among the demographic mechanisms that have been devised by some societies to ensure land use rights.

**Land regularization** (including demarcation of parcels and adjudication) Demarcation of parcels refers to the physical identification and recording of specific plots that facilitates the resolution of ownership and/or border disputes. It is also a vital precondition for the development of land cadastres and record systems. The demarcation of parcels is a critical element of tenure security, without which, under certain conditions, land titling may become meaningless. While demarcation of parcels is prevalent in many parts of Asia and Latin America, this is not yet the case in Africa, except for urban peripheries where the value of the land increases as a result of its investment potential. However, the demarcation of parcels is gradually becoming a priority in Africa because of land shortage due to degradation, increasing population pressure, etc.

It has been argued that insecurity of tenure does not stem from indigenous systems themselves, but from external factors or pressures which do not take into account the structure and operation of existing tenure systems and their socio-economic impact. Traditional land tenure systems are often unable to absorb outside pressures such as population pressure on land, war and civil conflict, drought, famine, environmental degradation, environmental- and conflict-induced refugees, the introduction of new technologies and cash crop, and government intervention. In such cases, insecurity of tenure and land tenure conflicts may result. In Kenya, public intervention led to

increased tenure insecurity: the land titling programme failed to achieve its goals and security of tenure was further eroded because the formal registration system did not replace the indigenous one, as it was attempted without popular participation and therefore without due consideration of local traditions and norms.

Figure 1 - The interface between land and population



The implications of security of tenure turn out to be particularly relevant when external pressures menace this security. As seen in Figure 1, security of tenure is threatened when the population/arable land equation reaches a certain level, or threshold, beyond which it may lead to land conflicts. A single threshold would apply for a certain type of production system as the minimum surface required to ensure the survival of a family. When the population increases at a rate that exceeds the capacity of the production system to adjust in order to increase its productivity - passing from line A to B - the surface per capita will fall below this line or threshold. From that point - or point C - it can be argued that there emerges a problem of security of tenure as a result of population pressure on land affecting the existing system

#### Gender disparities in security of tenure

Even when women have access to land, their security of tenure is often precarious. Under customary law, men and women usually have clearly defined rights to land, trees and water as well as usufruct rights, bestowed on them by the community elders. Women thus retain control over the land they use and its products. Traditional communal rights are in many regions being replaced by land tenure systems based on exclusive use, ownership and titling which tend to erode the rights of vulnerable groups: including women and minority, ethnic or nomadic groups. For instance, in Jamaica, in 1954, 56% of farms were owned by men, but by 1961 the figure had increased to 76%. Women's inequality of access to land was a result of the increase in purchase of legal titles, in line with the British legal tradition, that linked the use of land with individual property. It also stemmed from the fact that land settlement schemes granted resources mainly to male heads of household, who were perceived to be the ones responsible for the sustenance of their family. Ignoring the fact that in many parts of the world the women farmers are largely responsible for food production and security.

Agricultural transformation is another factor contributing to the erosion of women's security of tenure. For instance, in the case of the Nair community in Kerala, India, the commercialization of agriculture and the subsequent demand for land eroded women's traditional land rights. Another generic example is the substitution of food

crops with cash crops. Before the introduction of cash crops, women, who usually produce the bulk of food crops, are traditionally entitled to land. Once cash crops are introduced, however, the same right to land with high potential is claimed by the men who grow them. As cash crops are perceived to be more profitable than food crops, competition for land use rights results between men and women, which can lead to a progressive marginalization of women farmers' formerly cultivating fertile land. Thus, combining factors like agricultural transformation with population growth can change the interface between gender land and population (see Figure 1 above).

When security of tenure is menaced, women tend to be among the first groups to lose use rights. This may contribute to high fertility; families may perceive having a large number of children (with preference for sons) as a rational strategy through which to improve food and tenure security and ensure old-age support. The same strategy has been noted where women will strive for a large family to overcome the labour constraints induced by disabled husbands. However, it should be noted that this often takes place at the expense of sustainability and of future generations. To assess your understanding of the above topic, answer these questions.



### Reading:

4.3 a) Bina Agarwal, (1998) "Land Rights for women: making the case", in A Field of One's Own. University of Cambridge Press, Cambridge, pp 1 - 45.

4.3 b) Bina Agarwal, (1998) "Contemporary Laws and Landed Property" in A Field of One's Own. University of Cambridge Press, Cambridge, pp 227 - 248.

### SAQs

Briefly answer the following questions.

1. Enlist all those general constraints inhibiting women's access to land?
2. Do you think gender roles determines right to land?
3. How religion safe guard women's rights to property?

## 4.4 Public and Private Space

As according to Rendell (2000) "space is socially produced, but that space is also a condition of social production or we may say that space is materially and culturally produced, it is not innate and inert, measured geometrically but as integral and changing part of daily life and intimately bound up in social and personal rituals and

activities and when think critically we may know the way in which space and places are gendered. We can then recognize the fact that gender is fundamental to the ways in which people use, access perceive the spaces around them'

The man made environments which surround us reinforce conventional patriarchal definitions of women's role in society and spatially imprint those sexist messages on our siblings. This is political nature of the environmental oppression. This has conditioned us to an environmental myopia which limits our self-concepts, our choices and visions for ways of living and working. It limits us by not providing the environments we need to support our autonomy or by barring our access to them. The below mentioned readings will help in clarifying the gender and space angle and in reading 4.4 d) not only social, political, economic and cultural variables are discussed but some diagnosis is also given which we can sometimes relate with our social context and further reflect on our state of affairs.

#### Readings:

4.4 a) Virginia Woolf, (2000). "A Room Of One's Own", Gender Space Architecture, Routledge, London. pp 25-28.

4.4. b) Jane Rendell, (2000) "Introduction: Gender and Space" pp 101-109

4.4.c) Susana Torre, (2000) "Claiming the Public Space", pp 140-145

4.4 d) Centro de Intercambio y Servicios Cono Sur, (ed) (2006) "Intervention in Urban Space", (Module V) in Tools for the Promotion of Safe Cities from the Gender Perspective , UNIFEM & AECI, Argentina. Pp 52- 80

#### SAQs

Q. How "the Mothers" negotiated their space?

Q. What is first step taken by the women in the "the mothers of plaza

c. "vo"

## 4.5 Low Income Housing

Meeting the housing requirements of low-income women is one specific aspect of the human settlement, particularly in the substandard environment in the urban and rural areas

Planning strategies for housing are required to provide for the needs of women and children. Most of the women of low-income working groups prefer working in the home or close by as they can combine the work of subsistence production, childcare and housework. Provision of workshops or work centers is required near the homes.

Similarly all planning schemes must cater for recreational facilities for women and children. All developmental schemes must earmark areas within the localities for women and children activities and child care facilities.

The quality of housing is directly related to the quality of life of the communities - it not only changes the physically built environment but also has a deep and everlasting effect in shaping the human personality. Shelter design needs to be considered by reviewing the appropriateness of apartment block for low income groups and the need of women and children. House design needs to incorporate workplace for women within the house for income generation; better design of kitchen is required to prevent accidents and health hazards as it is women and children who spend most of their time in the house.

The blind following of the west in adopting apartment blocks, as the solution to the housing problem must be halted. They carry a heavy social cost, as there are no spaces for children to play in or the women to perform their chores comfortably. In time because of defective construction and ill maintenance they turn into vertical slums creating far worse environmental conditions than the squatter settlements.

For low income groups it is important that single dwelling, incremental housing be encouraged where the initial cost is low and allows families to build as their earning or paying capacity improves. This also allows simple skills and indigenous techniques to

be used. In such a situation women can play a major part in assisting building of houses.

In using simple techniques for building, building with adobe or mud must be encouraged. In one experiment of construction in Multan in a mud designed building where the roof was built in vaults and domes or mud brick, cost almost 50% of the normal cost and was built in a short time of 3 months. The sun dried brick techniques allows construction and repair easily as all the materials are locally available.

Women who have traditionally built in mud houses in the rural areas can be taught enhanced techniques for building, which will allow them to improve their living conditions. Of course simultaneously there is a requirement to provide them with funding which will be on much smaller scale than what is required in conventional housing, as mud building still remains the most effective and economical solution to housing problem. The mud houses are comfortable as they are cool in summer and warm in winter.

#### SAQ's

- Do you have any example of low housing schemes?
- In Pakistani society how can we improve the work environment for male and female staff?
- If you are working in an office what issues you can identify in context of women and space?

## 4.6 Home for Special Target Groups

### Elderly Women

Although the overall percentage of elderly women is found to be only 23% most of them are widows: 43.4% further due to changing circumstances of the life such as

urbanization, lack of housing, migration, acute poverty or not having any immediate relative, a number of old women live neglected lives.

### **Destitute Women**

The exact number of destitute women at national level is not known but it is found in a study conducted on a national sample of 160 women that 90 percent of the women belong to the lower income class and 10% are transitory destitute waiting for a service / court decision on their custody. There are approximately 10 Darul Amans (homes for the destitute) which provide shelter to the women who are maladjusted, kidnapped or deserted by husbands, widowed or runaway from homes, also the women under trial by the courts and having no place to go. In addition to medical education, vocational education, social education economic rehabilitation is arranged to restore them to their relatives or parents, arrange marriages and provide jobs followed by home visits to ensure that women discharged are comfortably rehabilitated. For instance at three such homes during 1974-75 most women (377) were discharged or were restored to their husbands or relatives (1386).

### **Battered wives**

The battered wives as revealed in one study are uneducated and poor. Beating of wives is found to depend on the moods of husbands mostly caused by stress due to poor economic conditions frustrations outside the homes, unemployment and influence of drugs.

### **Prostitutes**

Prostitution is legally banned in Pakistan yet it is practiced and like other abused women most are found to be uneducated and poor.

## Abducted women

The abducted women as found in one national study are poor and represent more appropriately a case of running away or elopement. A majority of women leave home on their own choice due to strict parents or in-laws, disappointment in love and inability to marry.

## The migrant women

Most female migration is taking place in the form of family migration and further more the women accompany the family as daughters, wives, sisters or mothers of the household heads (who are male in 99% of the cases). Some exceptions to this pattern are represented by the older single women and educated divorced women.

Three patterns of migration seem to typify the inter-district movement of Pakistani women age 10 and above. In the first place the pre dominant pattern is that of married women moving to another district with her family. Some 29% of all married women in the country had at least moved once during their lifetime, 5% were recent migrants. The second pattern is that of a higher propensity to move among older single women, particularly those aged 45 and above. The higher propensity towards migration among single women positively with their labor force participation particularly in the case of educated women. The third pattern of migration related to divorced women particularly those who have received some education

### SAQ

- |  |
|--|
| <p>Q. Recall points related with circumstances responsible for problems in special targeted group of women.</p> <p>Q. Recollect patterns of migrant women.</p> |
|--|

**UNIT 5**

**WOMEN ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT**

**Dr Riffat Haque**

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## **5.1 Introduction**

In this unit we will try to understand the concept of sustainable environmental development. Various agendas of United Nations and conventions and how they emphasize and integrate the concept of women, environment and development have been explained. Gender mainstreaming environmental policies are also discussed to facilitate proactive agenda.

## **5.2 Objectives**

- To define sustainable development.
- To examine women, environment and development.
- To know how to inainstream gender in environment.

## **5.3 Sustainable Development**

According to Bruntland Commission's (1987) definition Sustainable development can be defined as:

"Sustainable Development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs".

It can also be defined as;

" The successful management of resources for various development processes to satisfy changing human needs while maintaining or enhancing quality of the environment and conserving natural resources".

So it is a development process which is ecologically sound, economically viable, socially just, humane and adaptable. In other words it is dignified, secure and adaptable for all with equal rights on the entire system.

#### **5.4 UN Agenda for Integration: Women in Environmental Development**

For sustainable environmental development women's role along with men now has been emphasized for a few decades. In 1985 the UN Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi reviewed the achievements of the UN Decade for women. In the forward looking strategies, women's role in environmental conservation and management was recognized. UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) organized a special event on women and environment. Special workshops were held on women, environment and development. In 1991 at Miami, the World Women in Environment and Development (WIDE) AND Global assembly reviewed the success stories. The Earth Summit: UN Conference on Environment and Development produced the Rio Declaration and Women Action Agenda 21. They also produced two Conventions on Biological diversity and Desertification.

The International Conference on Population and Development (1994) and World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen (1995) called for eradication of poverty and promotion of social justice and women rights. Same year in Beijing the Forum emphasized 12 key areas for gender equality. One of the key areas was women and environment, which asserted that, "women have an essential role to play in the development of sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns and approaches to natural resource management". In 2000 in Millennium Summit at New York with eight development goals was committed for ensuring environmental sustainability was again reiterated targeting for 2015. At Johannesburg in World Summit on Sustainable Development the Plan of Action emphasizes gender analysis, gender specific data and gender mainstreaming in all sustainable development efforts.

UNEP and WEDO commits to making a cross-cutting priority to empower women in environmental decision-making, active participation, technical assistance, development of education and training material, workshops and gender balance in meetings. The above detail shows UN's affirmation to women's rights in environment and development. For further details consult [www.un.org/esa/susdev](http://www.un.org/esa/susdev), [www.un.org/womenwatch/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/), [www.wedo.org/sus\\_dev/](http://www.wedo.org/sus_dev/) and [www.womenenvironment.org/](http://www.womenenvironment.org/).

### Reading:

5.4. a) Rachel Musika & Susan Joekes. (1997) Environmentally Sustainable Development and Poverty: A Gender Analysis Report No. 52. BRIDGE, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.  
5.4 b) Towards gender mainstreaming in environmental policies. www.undp.org/PDF/Women/Chapter Six pp 84-100



### SAQ

Q What are the salient features of Rio Summit Agenda 21?

## 5.5 Women, Environment and Sustainable Development

In spite of UN, public and private agencies emphasising on gender equality still there is a wide gap. Gender equality and equity is not only imperative for fundamental human rights but are also instrumental for environmental conservation and sustainable development. The shape of Indian women's Chipko movement and Green Belt movement in Kenya (details in Unit 8), proves the effective contribution in health and sustainable environment. Yet there is limited recognition of women's potential and their contribution. This is also due to discriminatory social structures, attitudes at personal, community and institutional

levels. There are several critical determinants for a baseline analysis such as: knowledge, division of labour, access to and control of resources, status and power, culture and traditions, participation and decision-making. Though there are many examples, in the world where gender analysis in environmental projects have been integrated such as "Gender Nature of Ginger Production and commercialization in Sikkim, West Bengal".

Women's relationship to the environment incorporates factors for example: provisioning services (food, fuel & water), supporting services (pure water and air, mitigation of droughts, floods) and cultural services (comprising spiritual and aesthetic values, education and science). For an effective approach to incorporate women in environment, a participatory appraisal is necessary by involving stakeholders, women and their organizations. For appropriate action it is imperative to distinguish women's practical needs (access to land, water, food security, health, education) and their strategic needs (political participation, decision-making, environment related jobs). To understand the gender mainstreaming of environmental policies read the following:

 **Reading:**

- 5.5 a) R. Braidotti, E. Charkiewicz & S. Wieringa. (1999) "Women, The Environment and Sustainable Development" in L. Duggan, I. Nisonoff & N. Wiegiersma (eds) The Women, Gender and Development Reader, Zed Books LTD. London. pp 54-61
- 5.5 b) Chanda Gurung & N. Gurung (2006) "The Social and Gendered Nature of Ginger Production and Commercialization: a case study of Rai, Lepcha and Brahmin-Chhetri in Sikkim, West Bengal, India", in Ronnie Vernooy (ed) Social and Gender Analysis in Natural Resource Management, Sage Publicatins., pp 1-18



## SAQ

**Q Changing gender division of labour can help in gender mainstreaming. Illustrate how?**

**Q What advantages did the Samoa project give to the villagers?**

## **UNIT 6**

# **WOMEN AND NATURAL DISASTERS**

**Dr Riffat Haque**

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## **6.1 Introduction**

In recent years, approximately 311 million persons were affected or killed by natural disasters, seven times as many as those hurt or killed in armed conflict. As many as 100,000 people die each year due to natural disaster. In most disasters, where sex specific data are available, more women than men lose their lives.

Gender inequalities play an important role in the level of vulnerability to natural disasters and their consequences. Women are more vulnerable because; they have less access to resources, are victims of gendered division of labour, and they are the primary care givers to children and disables.

In this unit an attempt is being made to cover some aspects regarding natural disasters, women's vulnerability in natural disasters, mitigation and management strategies.

## **6.2 Objectives**

- To know what are natural disasters.
- How gender is influenced differently by natural disasters.
- To understand link between women empowerment and sustainable development in calamity situations.

## **6.3 Natural Disasters**

A natural disaster is the result of the impact of a natural hazard on a socio-economic system with a given level of vulnerability, which prevents the affected society from coping adequately with this impact. Natural hazards themselves do not necessarily lead to disasters. It is only their interaction with people and their environment that generates impacts, which may reach disastrous proportions. A disaster is usually defined as a serious disruption of the functioning of society, causing widespread human, material or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using only its own resources. While we cannot do away with natural hazards, we can eliminate those that we cause, minimize those we exacerbate and reduce our vulnerability to most. Doing this requires healthy and resilient communities and ecosystems.

Environmental or natural disasters can be meteorological, such as forest fires, windstorms, landslides, droughts or extreme temperature events. They can also be based on geophysical processes like earthquake and volcanic eruption. While environmental or natural disasters are set into motion by naturally occurring environmental hazards, they are also social processes grounded in the social

organization of people. The hazards people have always faced (meteorological or weather-related, or geophysical, involving earth movement) as well as new ones (for example, global warming, toxic contamination) are often accepted as inevitable aspects of everyday life.

By disaster, people may refer to genocide, epidemics, economic depressions, explosions and accidents, complex emergencies combining armed conflict and environmental stress—or simply the routine social conditions making everyday life a disaster. Disaster is always relative: it is a function of people's relative exposure to physical or natural hazards (such as earthquakes) and people's social vulnerability to the effects of the hazard (people with strong houses are less vulnerable to earthquake).

#### **6.4 Impact of Natural Disasters on Women and Men**

As we know the gender-based inequalities and disadvantages are often multiplied by factors such as race, class, ethnicity or age, which lead to immense differences in women's experiences in disasters. While gender roles vary culturally and historically, they often make risky living conditions for women, both in "normal" and severe periods. Women who are poor or economically insecure are less resilient to disasters. Earning an income and providing for their families puts women on the front lines of hazardous work on a daily basis. Because their lives are so often confined to the home, girls and women are correspondingly more exposed than men to death and injury when buildings collapse:

Other factors, caring for family (children & old) such as malnutrition and chronic illness, low levels of literacy, lack of information and training, inadequate transportation, physical and mental health, violence, access to relief, cultural limitations on mobility and decision-making in mitigation initiatives can also reduce women's flexibility to disaster.

Degraded forests, polluted waters, eroded soils and other symptoms of environmental stress impact on girls' and women's time. Forests degradation for example force women or girls to walk long distances to gather just enough fuel wood for one spare meal a day, preventing them from engaging in income-generating or educational activities.

Gender-based inequalities can put women and girls at high risk and make them particularly vulnerable during natural disasters. The deterioration of natural resources displaces communities, especially women, from income-generating activities, while greatly adding to unremunerated work. In both urban and rural areas, environmental degradation results in negative effects on the health, well-being and quality of life. There are many casualties among women in disasters, for example, if they do not receive timely warnings or other information about hazards and risks or if their mobility is restricted or otherwise affected due to cultural or social constraints. The direct and indirect impact of disasters on women's lives and

livelihoods extend to their aftermath. Gender-based attitudes and stereotypes can complicate and extend women's recovery.

### Reading

6.4 a) Ariyabandu M.M. & Wickramasinghe M. (2005) Gender Dimensions in Disaster Management '3. Impact of disaster on women and men' Raj Press India. pp 55 -74

6.4. b) Enarson, Elaine. (2000) Gender Issues in Natural Disasters: Talking points and research needs. ILO Infocus Programme on Crisis Response & Reconstruction Workshop



### SAQ

Q. Why women and men are differently affected by disasters?

Q. What issues women face after a disaster?

## 6.5 Gender Roles and Women's Vulnerability in Disasters

Social vulnerabilities are based on differences and inequalities among people. These include physical differences (consider, for example, the mobility barriers of the very young and very old), but especially reflect differences in social power structures (for example, based on sex, race or ethnicity, social class or age). These inequalities put people in places, jobs, houses and situations, which either increase or reduce their ability to anticipate, prepare for, survive, cope with and recover from the effects of natural disasters. It is important to note that vulnerability is not inherent in persons (for example, the disabled, women, the elderly), but follows from systems and structures of inequality, which convert differences to inequalities (for example, lack of attention in disaster contexts to the capacities or needs of people with disabilities, or constraints due to old age). Nor are vulnerable people helpless people, though women in particular are often seen only as needing "special" assistance. In other words, vulnerability to hazards is not given but created. "Vulnerability is consequent not on hazard but on particular social, economic and political processes."

### Reading

6.5 a) \_\_\_\_\_ (2005) "Tackling the Tides and Tremors", South Asian Disaster Report RDPI & Practical Action. pp 32-41.

6.5 b) Ariyabandu M.M. & Wickramasinghe M. (2005) Gender Dimensions in Disaster Management '1.3 Understanding Vulnerability to Disaster. Raj Press India. pp 22-24.

6.5 c) \_\_\_\_\_ (2004) Women 2000 and Beyond: Making Risky Environments Safer, UN Division of Advancement of Women pp 6-8.

### SAQ

Q. In a situation of flood how vulnerable situations can be avoided.  
Q. The 2005 earthquake in Pakistan exposed female's vulnerability, look into some reports and its statistics?

## 6.6 Women's work and Disaster Management

Natural disasters—particularly erosion and other forms of typhoon, earthquakes, soil degradation, pollution of freshwaters, flooding, loss of wetlands, drought and desertification—impact directly on women in their roles as providers of food, water and fuel. Food security and family well-being are threatened when the resource-base on which women rely to carry out their critical roles and obtain complementary incomes is under-mined. Climate change, war, conflict, migration, can also impact on women's productive roles and can jeopardize sustainable livelihood strategies.

Effective risk assessment and management require the active involvement of local communities and civil society groups to ensure decreased occurrence of disasters and reduced losses and costs when they do occur. The knowledge, contributions and potentials of both women and men need to be identified and utilized. It is important to stress that gender equality in disaster reduction requires, above all, empowering women to have an increasing role in leadership, management and decision-making positions.

### Reading

6.6 Ariyabandu M.M. & Wickramasinghe M. (2005) Gender Dimensions in Disaster Management Raj Press India. pp 77-92

### SAQ

Q. Identify a few NGOs which are working in the area of any kind of disaster management.

## 6.7 Women mitigation environmental Hazards

Mitigation and preparedness need to be complemented by vulnerability reduction. The risk of disaster can be reduced by identifying hazards, taking precautions and preventing evident harm, but disasters cannot be prevented without identifying and addressing the root causes of people's socially constructed vulnerability to natural hazards. Despite significant advances in emergency preparedness and response in many parts of the world, people continue to be at very great risk of harm from the

effects of natural disasters. As providers and producers, women are often able to help make their households, neighbourhoods and communities less vulnerable to the effects of natural hazards and disasters. Strategies range from collaborative action to activism at the grass-roots level.

Women's collaborative action, women's skills and knowledge about local conditions can form the basis for better preparedness for environmental stress. Women's technological innovations can bring solutions to environmental problems. Since women earn their living from plants and materials, they have become active players in a multi-stakeholder forum researching sustainability problems.

Mitigation of risky environmental conditions and events involves actions taken to reduce risk and make people more secure, for example, when deforested hillsides are terraced and rain waters harvested in drought-prone areas. Some forms of structural mitigation, such as levees and dams, can reduce flooding but may have negative effects downstream or on people's cultural and economic survival. Practising emergency evacuation plans in homes and institutions, preparing and storing reserves of food and water, and educating children about the need to be prepared are only the most obvious examples. Mitigation and preparedness are not ad hoc activities before and after disaster occurrences but ongoing activities of daily life in communities constructed around ecologically sound use of resources, sustainable economic growth, human development and social justice.

### Reading

- 6.7 a) ----- (2004) *Women Mitigate environmental hazards*. Women 2000 and Beyond: Making Risky Environments Safer, UN Division of Advancement of Women April 2004. pp 9-13
- 6.7 b) Ariyabandu M.M. & Wickramasinghe M. (2005) Gender Dimensions in Disaster Management "Section 5. The absence of gender sensitivity in disaster management". Raj Press India. pp 85-92

## 6.8 Mainstreaming Gender in Disaster Management

As destructive as they are, natural disasters clearly offer many opportunities for social change. Too often, however, opportunities to address gender inequalities are overlooked in the rush to return to "normal" life, including "normal" gender norms, values and stereotypes. Focusing on women's skills, knowledge and abilities in key emergency management areas, such as education, skill training, health, can facilitate women's participation. In recent earthquake in Pakistan such initiatives have been taken by government as well as NGO sector to involve local community in management. The initiatives taken by Pattan, a non-governmental organization, in

response to flooding in Pakistan in the early 1990s is another example where social inequalities were addressed directly in the aftermath of a disaster. Pattan workers ensured that women as well as men were represented on village committees that advised on flood relief projects.

- **Reading**

6.8 a) ----- (2004) "Natural Disaster: Opportunity for linking Women's empowerment in Sustainable Development". Women 2000 and Beyond: Making Risky Environments Safer, UN Division of Advancement of Women April 2004. pp 14-20

6.8 b) Schwoebel, M. H. & Menon, Geeta. (2004) "Tools for mainstreaming Gender in Disasters Annex D" Mainstreaming Gender in Disaster Management Support Project. CEDRA & Chemonics International Inc.

- **SAQ**

Q. What are gender mainstreaming tools for disaster management?

Q. Right to decision-making for women in situations of vulnerability is an empowerment tool? Examine.

## UNIT 7

### ENVIRONMENT AND FEMINIST DIALOGUE

*For centuries women's' daily activities through out the world have been related with production of food for their families, water use et. and has been related with creating sustainable environment. So for centuries they have been eco-feminist, only the name has been coined now.*

**Dr Riffat Haque**

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## 7.1 Introduction

Feminists got concerned by the devastation of the earth by corporate warriors, military warriors in other words-masculinity mentality. Eco-feminists connect ecological destruction by patriarch and patriarchal violence against women. And thus they understand the war against nature, against women and future generations.

## 7.2 Objectives

After reading this unit students will be able to:

- Know the link between environment and women's movement.
- Understand the concept of eco-feminism.
- Critique on eco-feminism.

## 7.3 Eco-feminism

Eco-feminism is joining of environment and feminism. Eco-feminism is a relatively new part of the feminist movement, evolving out of political activism and recently considered as an academic pursuit. Peace marches, anti-nuclear protests, environmental and animal liberation movements, and world hunger activism have raised the consciousness of many. A range of theoretical positions has emerged from this movement, resting on the assumption that there are critical connections between the domination of nature and women. As the environmental crisis mounted so did the environmental movements and women began to see a parallel between the devaluation of earth and that of women as well. Eco-feminists link the violation of earth and women as part of the same drama of male control.

Eco-feminism grew in 70's and 80's out of various social movements such as the feminist, peace and the ecology movements. The term eco-feminism was coined by French feminists in 1974 who also founded Ecology-Feminism Center. The first conference on eco-feminism was held in America in 1980's- 'Women and Life on Earth'. It is about connectedness and wholeness of theory and practice.

Eco-feminists also address the dualism approach in which Western societies have a superior edge. They seek to move beyond dualistic worldview and restructure our notion of power; life-affirming, consensual relationships are to replace 'power-over' relationships. The eco-feminists' want to create an interconnected community, void of hierarchies, where all beings-human, non-human, and members of the organic world have their own central value and are part of the same living organism, the earth.

## Reading:

- 7.3 a) Victoria Davion, (1994) 'Is Ecofeminism Feminist', in K. J. Warren (ed by) Ecological Feminism. Routledge, London. pp 8-28
- 7.3 b) Maria Mies & Vandana Shiva (1993) "Introduction" in Ecofeminism Fernwood Publications, Halifax.
- 7.3 c) Bina Agarwal (1999) "The Gender and Environment Debate: Lessons from India" in L. Duggan, L. Nisonoff & N. Wieggersma (eds) The Women, Gender and Development Reader, Zed Books LTD. London. pp 68-75.

## SAQ

- Q. 1. Do you think eco-feminists standpoint is genuine?
- Q. 2. All of us are linked to nature so we are also eco-feminist? Do you agree?

## 7.4 Eco-feminist Philosophy and various positions

Theoretical debates and approaches on women and nature examine various perspectives. The first wave feminists acknowledge a special connection of women and nature but they also hypothesize women and men as separate and related to nature and culture respectively. Second wave feminists began to examine the hierarchical dichotomous-critically.

Radical feminists' argument was philosophical and they argued that the exploitation and commoditisation of women is similar to the way humans treat nature. European thinkers in 1970's vied and presented the patriarchal character of oppression of women and nature.

Since 80's Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies approach has become dominant. For example Shiva looks at a deeper spiritual connection between women and nature than men have. But Mies' materialistic approach sees the privileged bond of women with nature as the product of an historical development that devalued the ability of procreation. Eco-feminists also point out the linguistic representation of nature and women depicting oppression of women and land such as: mother nature women as wild, untamed, reap nature's bounty.

There are theoretical differences among eco-feminists frameworks on the basis of spiritual thinking, psychological and materialistic arguments. But all stress in one way or the other about women's privileged bond with nature.

Constructed and critique on feminist theories is an on going process. This does not mean that any standpoint is not valid; in fact the debate takes it to precision. For the perfection of knowledge the discourse analysis is imperative.

**Reading:**

7.4 a) Irmgard Schultz (2006) '*The Natural World and the Nature of Gender*', Kathy Davis, M. Evans & J. Lorber (eds.) in Handbook of Gender and Women's Studies SAGE. London. Pp 376- 393.

7.4 b) Gwyn Kirk & Margo Okazawa- Rey (1998) '*Women and the Environment*' Women's Lives: Multicultural Perspectives. Mayfield Publishing Company, U.S. pp 406-411.

7.4 c) Warwick Fox. (2005) "*The Deep Ecology Eco-feminism Date and its Parallels*", J. Baird Callicott and Clare Palmer (ed by) Environmental Philosophy: Critical Concepts in the Environment (Vol. ii) Routelage. New York.

7.4 d) Ariel Kay Salleh (2005) "*Deeper than Deep Ecology: The Eco-feminist Connection*" J. Baird Callicott and Clare Palmer (ed by) Environmental Philosophy: Critical Concepts in the Environment (Vol. ii) Routelage. New York. Pp 135-139

**SAQ**

Q. 1. Whether it is materialistic or spiritual eco-feminism saving natural resources is important for our future generations.

Q. 2. Do you believe in the philosophy of conserving water, electricity, food etc in your house?

## **Unit 8**

# **Proactive Women Environmental movements in the World**

**Dr Riffat Haque**

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## **8.1 Introduction**

**Through out the world, ecological equilibrium has been broken by a number of interrelated factors. The changes in land use and distribution have drastically affected the poor, leaving them with limited resources. At the same time population growth continues to increase the number of people who depend on limited resources. The impact of scarcity has been particularly hard on women, and their traditional responsibilities made arduous and time consuming.**

**In the countries/regions, where the conditions of women were already miserable, the impact of environmental degradation worsened their life due to their engagement to collect water, fuel, wood etc. They are often forced into unsustainable patterns of ecosystem management where on the name of development the environmental balance is being damaged, by cutting trees, buildings are being constructed, factories and industries throwing hazardous material in the air etc. Because of the life long relationship with their environment, women have a distinct perspective on the issue of environmental degradation and methods of solution.**

**In poor peasant households women have a closer relationship with their natural environment as they depend on the ecosystem for food, fodder, fuel, water and livelihood. The environmental crisis-deforestation, depletion and saltation of water resources, land degradation and environmental pollution - have provoked many peasant women's groups to protest against existing policies of resource management.**

**Though women have limited power, often they struggle to find ways to raise their voices through grass-root movements or NGO's. Through out the world there are hundreds of voluntary groups working at micro-level to tackle with environmental problems such as deforestation, afforestation, to prevent dam constructions, water pollution such as Green Belt Movement in Kenya, Pak Moon and Dong Mafia Movements in Thailand, Chipko and SEWA Movements in India and Africa etc. In such initiatives local communities are in charge of**

their environment because they are concerned about civil rights, rural development, tribal welfare and science demystification. In this unit a few famous grass root movements are being mentioned which have played a major role in environment saving locally as well have encouraged world wide action and momentum.

## **8.2 Objectives**

- To learn about some of the worlds' known grass root level movements which brought environmental issues to the fore front?
- To examine a few environment related movements such as Progressive women's reform movement, Chipko movement and Green Belt movement.

## **8.3 Progressive Women's Reform Movement**

In the 1890s American women emerged as a major force for social reform. Millions joined civic organizations and, under the banner of "municipal housekeeping," extended their roles from domestic duties to concern about their communities and environments. Their contributions were vital in civilizing and improving the horrific conditions created by the industrial revolution and the philosophies of social darwinism and unregulated capitalism. One of the first was Ellen Swallow Richards, whose work in the decades after the Civil War set the stage for the women's Progressive movement. Richards was the first woman admitted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the first scientist to conduct stream by stream water surveys in the United States.

The movement was involved in factory and food inspection laws; the first in the nation. Involvement of women and the whole community working in a partnership with local government to maintain cleanliness of the city and development of sanitary sewer treatment systems was initiated.

Women's clubs and civic improvement groups of the Progressive era contributed immense energy to the cause of conservation, with long-lasting effects. As late as 1948, a New York Times editorial page, in an endorsement of an anti-smoke

rally, would "urge housewives and others to take this opportunity." Like Richards, many women also contributed to the sanitary movement and the reform of awful conditions in urban slums. These and many more were the proactive initiatives of American women which culminated into their fight for suffrage movement through which they got right to vote. To have a better knowledge of the concept of "home ecology" introduced first time in this movement study the following reading.

### Reading

#### **8.3 Progressive Women's Reform Movement**

Source: [www.zunaid.com/wkcsj/kewhist/richards.html](http://www.zunaid.com/wkcsj/kewhist/richards.html)  
[www.nmwn.org/Progressiveera/legacy.html](http://www.nmwn.org/Progressiveera/legacy.html)

### SAQ

**Q. What were the reasons, which got attention of Progressive Women's attention to ecological issues?**

#### **8.4 Chipko Movement in India**

The concept of saving trees from felling by embracing them is old in Indian culture. Chipko movement of India's Himalayan foothills has gained enormous fame throughout the world's environmental circles for its successful efforts against deforestation. Literally Chipko, means "to embrace", has spread to many other parts of India and has drawn world-wide attention for its ingenious methods of civil disobedience including clinging to trees. Environmental degradation and out migration of hill men in search of employment contributed in alteration of Himalayan society pushing women into new roles by undermining the social and ecological structure that once ordered their lives. The combination of societal pressures and Gandhian philosophy inspired such women to assert their rights and challenge the destruction happening around them.

The Chipko movement is the contemporary expression of a continuing heritage of peaceful resistance by the people of Uttarakhand. While the fight against alcohol consumption provided the platform for the organisation of women, the

increasing conflict over forest produce between the local and non-local industries provided the rallying point for popular protest during the sixties.

The movement in the sixties was organised around four major issues:

1. The organisation of women.
2. Fight against alcohol consumption.
3. Fight for forest rights.
4. The establishment of local, forest based small industries.

#### **Reading:**

8.4 Routledge, P. (1993). *The Chipko Movement. Terrains of Resistance: Nonviolent Social Movements and Contestation of Place in India.* Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

### **8.5 Kenya Green Belt Movement**

The Green Belt Movement aims to create an understanding of the relationship between the environment and other issues such as food production and health. The seedlings are sold to the organizations and then redistributed at no charge. Self-sufficiency for communities in terms of wood fuel also reduces the daily burden on Kenyan women. Often the ravages of deforestation require women to search hours and miles for wood. The activity also encourages individuals to remain in the communities, rather than migrate to the urban areas in search of jobs or charity. For children the exposure to the projects of movement plays a critical role, small farmers learn to appreciate the connections between forestry, soil conservation and their own needs of wood. The interested party or people who want to benefit from the movements activities they have to prepare the land as per specifications and before planting the seedlings they have to commit for high survival rate of the trees. Such activities also provide the National Council of Women, Kenya, with an opportunity to meet community leaders and establish critical ties between the women's group and other organizations. The goals of the movement are:

**Goal 1: To strengthen and expand the Green Belt Movement in Kenya**

Goal 2: To share Green Belt Movement's program with other countries in Africa, empower women, especially women and girls, and nurture their and entrepreneurial skills

Goal 4: Advocate internationally for the environment, good governance, equity and cultures of peace

So the Green Belt Movement not only is a means to reforest the land but it involves the whole community responding to a multitude of needs. The movement has highlighted the strength and power of women making them leaders which was not expected or accepted earlier on. Women have communicated and involved the whole families in the ethics of environment perceptions and in the practical management of natural resources, energy and waste. 2004 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Wangari Maathai in London, December 2004 said in an interview that;

"The Green Belt Movement eventually became an organization that engaged in educating communities, educating citizens on the need to protect their own environment but also on the need to ensure that governments manage their resources, manage their environment, responsibly and accountably. And to be able to do that, they needed education and they needed to empower themselves to overcome fear, to overcome lethargy, and to become active participants in the way their resources were being managed. And that essentially translated into a pro-democracy movement, advocacy, demanding better management of resources, trying to hold governments accountable, and exposing these governments, especially with respect to human rights, women's rights, and environmental rights".

## Reading

**8.5 The Green Belt Movement** <http://greenbeltmovement.org/>

### SAQ

**Q. The Chipko and Green belt movements are very important what support they got from their respective governments?**

## 8.6 The SEWA Movement in India

The Self-Employed Women's Association (or SEWA as it is known universally) is the outstanding success story of the contemporary women's labour movement in India. Essentially a union with more than 46,000 members, it focuses on the poorest and most vulnerable segments of Indian society - women who are self-employed or who work in the informal sector. Today, barely 20 years after having come into existence, SEWA is a major source of inspiration for all those throughout the world who are grappling with economic and development issues as they relate to women.

The mass mobilization strengthens the SEWA movement and at the same time highlights their own pressing and clearly identified issue. The issue is identified by the women and local leaders as one which affects large numbers of people. The main campaigns are as follows:

- Vendors Campaign
- The Water Campaign.
- Home-based Worker's Campaign
- The Food Security Campaign
- Clean Ahmedabad Campaign
- Campaign for Forest Workers
- Campaign for Recognition of Dais (Traditional Birth Attendants)
- Campaign for Child Care and
- Earthquake relief, recovery and rehabilitation work

Relevant to this course context could be many issues but the most pertinent are water management strategies and reforestation, tree nurseries, gum collection and salt farming which are being included in the reading.

### Reading

8.6 a) Daniel W. Crowell. 2003. "Water shed Development" and "Forestry and Minor Forest Products" in The SEWA Movement and Rural Development. Sage Publication . London. pp 25- 40

8.6 b) Daniel W. Crowell. 2003. "Forestry and Minor Forest Products" in The SEWA Movement and Rural Development. Sage Publication . London. pp 41-66

Source: [www.sewa.org/Annual\\_Report](http://www.sewa.org/Annual_Report)

### SAQ

**Q. The strategies of reforestation of SEWA Movement are quite similar to that of Green Belt Movement in Kenya, what is your argument?**

**Unit 9**

**Pakistan Government Policies: Environment and Gender**

**Dr Riffat Haque**

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## **9.1 Introduction**

Since 1980's government and development agencies became aware of the need of gender issues in environment. The government of Pakistan immediately took measures to maintain quality standards and adopted an Ordinance for the protection of environment at different levels. To solve environmental problems for an under developing country is an intimidating task because of limited finances, technical and administrative capacity. But with the help of foreign financial assistance many policies have been initiated both at government and NGO level. The gender analysis has not served as a tool for policy makers and planners in the environment schemes. Lately, some beginning has been made by NGO sector in studying the gender factor.

## **9.2 Objectives**

The unit aims to have an understanding of:

- Pakistan government's initiatives regarding environment.
- Integration of gender perspective in the environmental programmes.

### **9.3 Colonization and the conflict over natural resources**

The first radical change in resource control and the emergence of major conflicts over natural resources induced by non-local factors was associated with colonial domination of this part of the world. Colonial domination systematically transformed the common vital resources into commodities for generating profits and growth of revenues. The first industrial revolution was to a large extent supported by this transformation of commons into commodities which permitted European industries access to the resources of South Asia.

With the collapse of the international colonial structure and the establishment of sovereign countries in the region, this international conflict over natural resources was expected to be reduced and replaced by resource policies guided by comprehensive national interests. However, resource use policies continued along the colonial pattern and, in the recent past, a second drastic change in resource use has been initiated to meet the international requirements and the demands of the elites in the Third World, leading to yet another acute conflict among the diverse interests. The most seriously threatened interest in this conflict, appears to be that of the politically weak and socially disorganised group whose resource requirements are minimal and whose survival is primarily dependent directly on the products of nature outside the market system. Recent changes in resource utilisation have almost wholly by-passed the survival needs of these groups. These changes are primarily guided by the requirements of the countries of the North and of the elites of the South.

Pakistan, with its economy dependent on natural resources, faces the daunting challenge of the growing imbalance between an increasing population and the availability of natural resources to meet the basic needs of the people. Limited financial, technical and administrative capacity of the country in solving environmental problems is a major constraint in tackling this basic issue. Similarly, exponential growth of urban population coupled with growing number of vehicles burning fossil fuels, and rapid growth of industries in local pockets is also posing serious threats to the surrounding environment. As a result, it is estimated that approximately 3-4% of GDP is lost annually due to environmental degradation. This environmental degradation, along with other factors has resulted in an increase in poverty, which is now at an all time high of 33% of the population.

The country's environmental problems are grouped into two broad categories with varying degree of impacts. The first, arising primarily from a combination of poverty and population growth, leading to the over-exploitation of natural resource capital, and the second, emanating from the largely unplanned increase in industrialization and urbanization, leading to the pollution of water, air and land.

#### **9.4 Government of Pakistan Initiatives regarding environment**

The government of Pakistan realize that in order to balance economic growth and environmental preservation, it is important to promote sustainable development initiatives and to create and enhance awareness among individuals and organisations alike on their roles and responsibilities in this regard.

The government recognize its responsibility for regulating and tackling multi-dimensional environmental problems which need to tackle the unchecked use of hazardous chemicals, plastics and other toxic materials that has polluted land, water and air. The planners also realize to halt environmental degradation through effective laws and regulatory provisions.

To address the environmental challenges, the Government of Pakistan took various steps starting with the enactment of the Pakistan Environmental Protection Ordinance in 1983. To check the abuse of environmental resources, the Government of Pakistan has laid down National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS) for municipal and liquid industrial effluent and industrial gaseous emissions, motor vehicle exhaust and noise. The NEQS in respect of municipal waste, industrial units and vehicular emissions were notified on and enforced from August 24, 1993. With regard to new industrial units, the NEQS have been enforced from July 1, 1996. The Pakistan Environmental Protection Act 1997 and other regulatory rules and regulations clearly demonstrate the progress that has been made in the environmental arena, as well as defining investment opportunities in this critical area. Based on the mid-term review of the NCS and other lessons learnt in implementing the Social Action Programme (SAP) and various other development programmes, the Ministry of Environment, Local Government & Rural

**Development of the Government of Pakistan developed the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) in 2001.**

**The four core areas of NEAP are: clean air; clean water; solid waste management; and eco-system management. An integrated approach with involvement of provincial and local government has been adopted to implement the plan. In this context, the Government of Pakistan and UNDP have jointly initiated an umbrella support programme titled the NEAP Support Programme, providing the flexibility of responding to emerging national priorities through project interventions, with focus on the poverty-environment nexus.**

**With the increase in industries, traffic and population, pollution is gradually on the rise and demands evolving of concrete and long term strategy to tackle the existing and emerging pollution problems. In pursuance of NEAP, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has taken measures for installing pollution control devices in the steel industries. The representatives of these organizations have urged academia to work on indigenous manufacturing of pollution control devices, efficient in working and competitive in prices to encourage industries for its installation. The government of Pakistan, under the Clean Drinking Water Initiative (CDWI), with the help of US Aid's safe drinking water and hygiene promotion project will install 6,000 water filter plants nationwide to ensure clean drinking water in every union council. The project targets approximately 30 million people for provision of clean water with a national hygiene and sanitation promotion campaign.**

**Towards the goal of "Environmentally Sustainable Development to Reduce Human Poverty" UNDP has developed Strategic Results Framework (SRF), with two corresponding sub goals which are:**

- 1. Sustainable environmental management and energy development to improve the livelihoods and security of the poor.**
- 2. Regional and global instruments for environmentally sustainable development that benefit the poor: National capacity to implement projects for the conservation of**

environment, financed by global environment funds can only be achieved through effective implementation of the interventions.

## Reading

9.4 a) Government of Pakistan (2005) National Environmental Policy pp7-21.

9.4 b) Government of Pakistan (2006-07) Pakistan Economic Survey 2006-07

9.4 c) Environmental Challenges in Pakistan  
[www.un.org.pk/undp/energy/](http://www.un.org.pk/undp/energy/)



## SAQ

Q. Identify environmental issues which you consider need immediate attention of the government?

Q. What are our civic duties to maintain our environment?

Q. What role media is playing to highlight the environment issues?

## 9.5 Government of Pakistan: Emphasis on Gender and Environment

Ministry of Women Development, Government of Pakistan has prepared a National Plan of Action to implement its commitments to institutionalise gender equity under the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. With the technical assistance of Asian Development Bank a Gender Reform Program to improve the framework of gender policies and to develop institutional mechanisms dealing with gender issues has been developed. The Gender Reform Action Plan (GRAPs) is an agenda for reform focusing on defined political and administrative components. The Ministry has been arranging series of trainings for government personnel's, NGOs and CBOs in order raise their understanding of this issue. Some of the national and international organizations whose agenda covers gender and environment in Pakistan are:

Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development (APWLD)

[www.apeld.org](http://www.apeld.org)

Women Empowerment Literacy and Development Organization (WEI.DO)

Sustainable Agriculture: an example at Panhwar Fruit Farm: Farzana Panhwar, Latifabad, Hyderabad.

Simi Kamal. (2005) "Women and Water Issues of Entitlements, Access and Equity". Global Water Partnership.

All efforts in the direction of gender sensitization are inadequate and integration of gender perspective in policy, planning and implementation is considered as a problem not as a tool or a lens to look at the true dimension for the purpose of a fruitful light. Referring to the Pakistan governments National Environment Policy section 4.3 mentions gender and environment which states that the government may compile gender disaggregated data, address the environmental issues which affect women, to ensure women's participation in environment projects and to include the issue in curricula. It is difficult to find any such initiative at government level not even a walk arranged for the purpose what to talk of any tangible measures.

### Reading

9.5 a) Environmental Policy and Gender Issues. [www.gdrc.org/gender](http://www.gdrc.org/gender) (6/5/07)  
pp1-3

9.5 b) Government of Pakistan (2005) National Environmental Policy section  
4.3 p 16



SAQ

Q. What are the gender dimensions of keeping our environment clean? Write in two columns one for male and other for female?

Q. Women as pressure group can influence the government policies. How?

Q. Identify an NGO in Pakistan, which is working on gender and environment issues?

**Recommended Readings, websites and movements on  
Gender/Women and Environment:**

- Maria Mies and V. Shiva (1993) EcoFeminism Fernwood Publications, Zed Books, London.
- Ramachandra Guha (ed.) (1998) Social Ecology Oxford University Press, Delhi.
- Janet Henshall Momsen (2004) Gender and Development Routledge, London.
- J. Baird Callicott and Clare Palmer (ed) (2005) Environmental Philosophy : Critical Concepts in the Environment Vol. II. Routledge, New York.
- Centre for Women's Development Studies (ed) (2000) Shifting Sands: Women's Lives and Globalization Mandira Sen , Kolkata.
- Karen J. Warren (1994) Ecological Feminism Routledge, London.
- G. K Ghosh (1995) Environment and Women Development Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (2005) Tackling the Tides and Tremors: South Asia Disaster Report 2005 Duryong Nivaran, Practical Action and RDPI. Islamabad.
- Annabel Rodda (1991) "The Role o Women", in Women and Environment, Zed Books Ltd, London.

Khawar Mumtaz. (1993) Women, Environment and Development. Environment and Urban Affairs Division, Government of Pakistan & IUCN. Karachi.

Daniel W. Crowell. (2003) The SEWA Movement and Rural Development. SAGE, Publications, New Delhi.

\_\_\_\_\_ "Hamara Mahol" Compilation: of Newspaper on Environment 1993-1997. Shirkat Gah. Karachi. (Urdu).

Bina Agarwal (1998) A Field of One's Own: Gender and land Rights in South Asia Cambridge University Press. Canbridge.

Almas Salim (translator) (2006) "Afat ka Intazami Lahia-i-amal aur Sanafi jahetai". Practical Action, UNDP and RDPI, Islamabad.

Ghosh G. K. (1995) Environment and Women Development Ashish Publishing House. New Delhi.

[www.un.org/esa/susdev](http://www.un.org/esa/susdev),

[www.womenenvironment.org/](http://www.womenenvironment.org/).

[www.un.org/womenwatch/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/),

[www.wedo.org/sus\\_dev/](http://www.wedo.org/sus_dev/)





