NAVIGATING GENDERED TERRAIN: GENDER INEQUALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS (ENGOs)

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of Graduate Studies

of

The University of Guelph

by

REBECCA TIESSEN

In partial fulfilment of requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August, 1999

ABSTRACT

NAVIGATING GENDER TERRAIN: GENDER INEQUALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (ENGOS)

Rebecca Tiessen
University of Guelph, 1999

Advisor:
Professor B. Leach

This thesis is an investigation of gender inequality in the context of sustainable development. The research explored the nature and extent to which environmental non-government organizations (ENGOs) have been addressing issues of gender inequality at the organizational, programme, policy and project levels. Three questions guided the research for this thesis: Are ENGOs committed to addressing gender inequality? Do ENGO staff perceive gender and environment as separate and unrelated themes? Do ENGO staff have the knowledge and skills necessary to address gender issues in their projects? Gender inequality at the organizational level was investigated using three feminist frameworks of analysis that have emerged as prominent themes in feminist literature, including the public/private, subject/object and patriarchy frameworks of analysis.

The research on ENGOs in Malawi exposed the dichotomous divisions that reinforce gender inequality at the organizational level and result in the creation of gendered terrain. However, the research also demonstrated how individuals and groups negotiate and navigate this gendered terrain in complex, diverse and multifaceted ways.

This thesis contributed to a critique of the feminization of sustainable development and pointed to the need for multi-layered, multifaceted and a more nuanced approach to studying the structures and discourse of gender inequality. This investigation into the practice of gender and sustainable development in ENGOs provided important information about the constraints to and opportunities for addressing gender issues at the organizational level.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For many years Bill Graf gave me support and encouragement as my advisor. Bill's enthusiasm for my research interests and his help with both academic and administrative issues was greatly appreciated. His untimely death makes this note of gratitude that much more difficult. Bill was my mentor and an excellent role model. I hope to pass on to others what I was able to learn from him.

Belinda Leach, to whom I am extremely grateful, has also been central to the completion of this thesis. I would like to thank her for the many hours of reading, re-reading, discussing and critiquing that she provided. All of my committee members were extremely supportive and I want to thank Belinda as well as Nora Cebotarev, Jim Shute, and Robert Brown for their time and interest in my research and their assistance throughout the writing and re-writing stages. Thanks also to Susan Arai who let me think out loud in her presence and with whom I share many great memories.

Since a great deal of time was spent conducting research in Malawi, I am incredibly grateful to my friends and co-workers in Malawi that helped me learn and cope in a cross-cultural environment. I am indebted to WUSC for their support while in Malawi and for creating the opportunities to develop friendships with the wonderful development workers and staff who were working there. In particular, I want to thank Rachel, Geri, Suzanne, Celeste, Jen, Marney, Kevin, Christopher and Christine.

A very special thanks goes to Linga Mihowa, my friend and colleague who shared a passion for this research, shared her home, and who entertained me with a few too many scrabble games and greens. All my friends at CURE deserve recognition for their kindness and generosity. I appreciated their many ways of welcoming me into their lives. The informants and participants in my research also need to be mentioned. The non-governmental (NGO) staff and community members that were interviewed during the research were extremely considerate and helpful. I hope this research is useful to these organizations, the organization's staff and the beneficiaries.

There is no one I appreciate more than my partner and closest friend Philip Weetman. Philip and the rest of my family provided ongoing support, encouragement and the motivation to finish what I had started.

The financial support provided by the University of Guelph Graduate Scholarship Program, the Ontario Graduate Scholarship Program (OGS), the International Development Research Council (IDRC) and the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) made the research and this thesis possible. To these organizations, I am sincerely grateful. The administrative assistance from the staff in Graduate Studies, the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the Department of Political Science is greatly appreciated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Tables

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

Gender and Sustainable Development

During a Sustainable Human Development Stakeholders meeting, held in October 1997, representatives from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Government of Malawi and the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector met to discuss strategies for sustainable development in Malawi. The Sustainable Human Development approach being adopted in Malawi is concerned with poverty eradication, sustainable livelihoods, gender equity, protection and regeneration of the environment, and good governance (UNDP, 1999). Representatives from the co-ordinating environmental NGO and the various departments under Malawi's Ministry of Environment presented progress reports of their work over the previous year and made recommendations for the specific activities that needed to be carried out to ensure appropriate sustainable development and environmental management in Malawi.

In only one presentation – that of the environmental NGO – was gender equality mentioned as an important variable in achieving sustainable development. The other seven presentations -- those from the Ministry of Environment -- made no mention of gender issues. Later during this meeting, the representatives formed smaller groups to discuss strategies for implementing the sustainable human development approach in Malawi. During these group discussions I brought up gender as a variable that should be discussed in our sustainable development action plans. In response, a young Malawian woman working for the Ministry of Environment commented:

"If a woman has to walk ten kilometres to collect firewood, it's not a gender issue, it's a fuelwood issue!" (Ministry of the Environment staff member).

The outright rejection of gender equity as an issue worth considering in environmental management and sustainable human development was particularly surprising in this example since it was voiced by a young, well-educated woman. Her reaction suggested that any discussion of gender equity posed a threat to her and to her credibility as an educated, young woman working as a professional in the environmental sector. This example further revealed the perception of environment and gender as separate and unrelated themes in development work. The comment raised by the young Malawian woman working for the Ministry of the Environment appeared to be confirmed by the rest of the group thus halting any further discussion of gender in our group action plans. The rest of the group members were men and seemed relieved that gender would not be discussed any further. Since I had only been in Malawi for a short time and since I wanted to be mindful of potentially sensitive cultural issues, I did not pursue this topic any further with my group. It did not get discussed again that day despite the very clear commitment that this Sustainable Human Development Programme has made to address gender equality in their environmental activities.

It was unclear to me whether gender equality and environmental rehabilitation were really considered interrelated and interdependent themes in the sustainable development approach. I began to wonder if gender was being discussed at all in Malawi's environmental and sustainable development programmes. The government ministries dealing with environment and natural resources did not seem to have a commitment to

addressing gender in their specific environmental activities since there was no mention of gender issues in their progress reports and strategic plans. While an investigation into the nature and extent to which the Government of Malawi and the ministries in the environmental sector are addressing gender equity warrants further examination, I became increasingly interested in examining the nature and extent to which NGOs working specifically in the environmental sector (ENGOs) are addressing gender issues; the extent to which gender is considered a priority in their organizational structures and the nature of their environment and sustainable development initiatives.

The Research Problem

ENGOs appeared to be adopting gender-related activities in their programmes, policies and projects. However, the extent to which these activities were dealing with gender inequality was not clear. There was insufficient information available to determine if the specific gender-related activities being addressed in some ENGOs were being dealt with in most or all ENGOs. It was also unclear why ENGOs were addressing gender issues, who was responsible for dealing with gender-related issues, how these issues were reported, and whether resources were being allocated to these activities.

The purpose of this study was to explore the nature and extent to which ENGOs were addressing gender inequality. As an exploratory study, this thesis provided general information about gender issues in ENGOs in Malawi. The research conducted for this thesis offered background information about development organizations which can be used to guide future research. As such, this thesis did not provide detailed life history examination or in-depth discourse analysis. This thesis is limited to the extent that it

concentrated on issues surrounding the contextual, structural and the institutional gender issues faced by ENGOs. Future research will benefit from more detailed analysis of discourse and practice within these organizations and how discourse and practice shape gender relations.

In providing the structural, contextual and institutional dynamics of gender issues, this thesis uncovered whether ENGOs considered gender and environment to be separate and unrelated issues in development work, whether organizations were committed to addressing gender equality and whether ENGO staff had the knowledge, skills and capacity to address gender issues in their work. The study drew on a broad base of information and informants in the context of institutional and organizational activities. As such, it did not go into the detail that life-histories would have provided.

The research was conducted in Malawi over a period of 13 months. The field study involved three methods of data collection including participant observation, semi-structured interviews and document review. The findings were summarized into 10 areas of investigation, elucidating information related to staffing issues, the capacity of staff to address gender issues, presence of gender personnel and programmes, presence of gender policies, gender considered a foreign concept, reporting on gender, budgeting for gender, gender and natural resource management (NRM) as separate themes, gender awareness at the project level and staff perceptions of the opportunities and constraints to gender equality.

The study examined whether dichotomous divisions such as public/private and masculine/feminine were reinforced through organizational practices and structures. These

dualisms, however, did not adequately explain the practice of gender at the organizational level since individuals navigated and negotiated the gendered terrain of ENGOs in complex and diverse ways. Drawing on socialist feminism and postmodern feminism, this study identified a more nuanced approach to analysing the practice of gender within development organizations, highlighting the importance of agency, discourse, plurality and difference.

The Context in which Gender and Environment is Being Addressed

The context in which ENGOs were addressing gender issues had been influenced by two factors that had brought gender issues to the attention of organizational staff. The first of these was a growing body of literature, case studies and reports that pointed to the gender issues in environmental management at the micro-level. The second factor was a growing awareness at the international or macro-level that had resulted in gender-sensitive policies in sustainable development projects and funding for gender-related activities. Both of these factors have had an impact on ENGOs. These levels of analysis were, for the most part, interdependent. Micro-level studies have revealed the extent to which macro-policies and economic reforms have affected rural communities and households. Information related to the impacts of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), for example, highlighted the challenge women farmers face in producing additional cash crops to acquire a cash income to pay for the rising costs of goods and services. The rising cost of goods and services is a result of decreased government social spending. Decreased government spending and increased agricultural production are two major policy objectives of structural adjustment (see Elson, 1991; Lele, 1991; Meena, 1995; Tiessen,

1995).

Gender- and sex-disaggregated data obtained from micro-level studies influenced macro-level policies and strategies developed by international organizations such as the United Nations, World Bank, and donor agencies. Sustainable development policies and strategy documents have increasingly highlighted the nature of gender relations in environmental activities and recognized the need to adopt a gender-sensitive approach in sustainable development initiatives.

Micro-level Analysis of Gender Issues: The Relevance of Gender Relations to Natural Resource Management

Micro-level analyses of gender relations in natural resource management have relied on gender- and sex-disaggregated data to reveal women's and men's socialized roles and responsibilities in environmental management; the impact of environmental degradation on women and men; and the effects of external environmental projects and economic policies on community members.

A number of authors have documented women's roles and activities in natural resource management (Davidson, 1993; Dankelman and Davidson, 1988; Elliot, 1994, Harcourt, 1994). These authors demonstrated the integral role women play in managing resources for family and community use. The nature of women's socialised roles suggests that women are primarily responsible for the provision of goods and services to meet the immediate needs of the family, particularly in terms of ensuring that food is available (i.e., subsistence agriculture); that this food is cooked (i.e., collecting firewood to make the fire) and that there is water (i.e., collecting water) available for washing, cooking, and preparation of food.

A diminishing supply of trees for fuelwood, lack of access to clean and safe drinking water, and soil erosion are examples of the environmental impacts experienced at the community level. The increasing stress of poverty and environmental degradation has meant that rural African women often resort to unsustainable environmental activities such as deforestation for fuelwood supplies (Mehra, 1993).

Environmental degradation can be understood as a gendered experience because natural resources degradation has a disproportionate effect on women (Venkateswaran, 1995). Furthermore, as Rathgeber noted, "as women are forced to spend longer periods of time searching for firewood, they have less time for agriculture. This in turn leads to lower crop yields and a reduced level of food for family consumption" (Rathgeber, 1990:500). More important, NRM is a gendered experience because access to and control of resources is determined by the balance of power between men and women and the culturally reinforced notions of men as the decision-makers within the household.

Despite a growing awareness of women's involvement in NRM activities, women continue too often to be bypassed in environmental projects and according to Venkateswaran (1995), are excluded from participation in environmental management. Venkateswaran argued that, in fact, " the policies and programmes adopted have often affected them adversely, in terms of their workload, social status or both" (Venkateswaran, 1995:223). Referring to female-headed agricultural households in Kenya, Aboud, Sofranko and Ndiaye suggested that the adoption of conservation practices is complicated by the "nature of the allocation of resources and the extent to which women have control over land improvements, one of which is soil erosion control" (Aboud,

Sofranko and Ndiaye, 1996:451). In Geisler's study of Southern African agricultural development, she argued that development approaches fail to "adequately address women's fundamental lack of control over not only incomes but also food and cash crop production...[and]...help to entrench the very mechanisms of women's subordination within the household and the economy" (Geisler, 1993:1973).

While the roles women play in environmental management are central to their livelihoods and to sustainable development initiatives, women are frequently hindered from participating fully in natural resource management projects carried out by NGOs (Meena, 1994; Rodda, 1993). When women are involved in community development projects, they are more frequently involved in the implementation phase than in the decision-making phases. To ensure project success, women must be involved at all stages of the development project (planning, implementation and evaluation). With regard to environmental degradation, sustainable development and wise use of natural resources, "it is crucial to ensure that women, as key actors, can support the activities and will be motivated for implementation and long-term sustainability" (Rodda, 1993:150). The role that women play "in utilizing and planting trees were long ignored by foresters, whose training focused on commercial timber; today women's knowledge of local species makes them a vital part of the new efforts at social forestry" (Tinker, 1990:40-41).

Awareness of the specific and changing gender roles and responsibilities in environmental management at the community level provides some necessary background information about women's and men's environmental activities. The next section turns to macro-level analysis to reveal how institutions have utilized the valuable micro-level

information to shape their programmes and activities.

Macro Level Analysis of Gender Issues: International Recognition of Gender Equality and Environmental Issues

The importance of addressing gender issues in environmental activities is increasingly being recognized by international bodies such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The context in which gender and environment are being addressed at the international level is primarily within sustainable development initiatives.

Sustainable Development

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (1987) defined sustainable development in terms of meeting the needs of the people today without jeopardizing the needs of future generations (WCED, 1987). Sustainable development is premised on a long-term view of development and of environmental integrity. The World Commission on Environment and Development stressed the active participation of various actors (e.g., governments, NGOs, community members, etc.) in ensuring sustainable development but payed specific attention to the need for economically viable solutions and management of natural resources in environmentally sound ways (WCED, 1987). This report stressed the need to involve women in agricultural programmes since "women farmers, though they play a critical role in food production, are often ignored by programmes meant to improve production. In...most of sub-Saharan Africa, food is grown by women yet almost all agriculture programmes tend to neglect the special needs of women farmers" (WCED, 1987:125).

International Commitments to Gender Equality

An example of an international commitment to addressing gender inequality can be found in Chapter 24 of Agenda 21, the policy document arising from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). This chapter is dedicated to "global action for women towards sustainable and equitable development" (UNIFEM, 1999). The objective is to increase the proportion of women decision-makers, planners, managers and extension workers in the field of environment and development (24.2b). The chapter highlighted the specific activities and recommendations for governments to adopt in order to achieve gender equality in environmental projects. Of particular interest to this thesis is the commitment stated in Agenda 21 section 24.3(f), "...to support and strengthen equal employment opportunities and equitable remuneration for women in formal and informal sectors with adequate economic, political, and social support systems and services..." (24.3f). The objectives of women's involvement are reiterated in section 24.7 of this document, stating that women should be fully involved in decision-making and implementation of sustainable development activities (UNIFEM, 1999).

A second example of an international commitment to address gender and sustainable development can be found in the UNDP's programmes. The UNDP embarked on a sustainable livelihoods initiative in collaboration with some of the least developed countries. UNDP's programmes "support a broad range of activities on gender equality and the advancement of women" (UNDP, 1999). Some of the programmes included the mainstreaming of gender analysis into all programmes; and the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (UNDP, 1999).

International research institutions addressing environmental issues have also demonstrated their commitment to investigating issues of gender equity. The research that was carried out in this thesis was funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). All of the research that IDRC funds must monitor the "differential impact that change will have on the lives of men and women. To ensure that all IDRC projects promote sustainable and equitable development, the Gender and Sustainable Development unit supports gender mainstreaming and analysis in all the Centre's programming" (IDRC, 1999). Increased recognition at the international level of women's fundamental roles in natural resource management (NRM) has resulted in increased donor funding for gender-sensitive policies and projects channelled through NGOs.

Meso-Level Analysis: The Role of NGOs and ENGOs

Today many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have developed projects that claim to encourage the participation of women and men through participatory methods such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA). Some NGOs have adopted gender policies, trained staff about gender issues and created gender departments. However, there is insufficient information available to determine the nature and extent to which the adoption of these gender programmes and gender-related activities has resulted in more gender-sensitive strategies for environmental planning. Many long-term development goals of forest conservation and social forestry do not point to improved gender equity but rather to increased productivity (Oxfam, 1994). Furthermore, there is insufficient literature available to determine whether development organizations such as NGOs are addressing

gender relations and the constraints that organizational staff face in addressing gender issues.

NGOs are an important instrument of development since they address issues of inequality, poverty, and social justice. NGOs often have small bureaucracies, adopt a participatory approach, and attempt to reach the poorest of the poor (Nelson and Wright, 1995). Their largely participatory approach enhances their capacity to engage the poor in a dialogue and in the development projects in an active, participatory manner. NGOs "act as a counter-weight to state power – protecting human rights, opening up channels of communication and participation, providing training grounds for activists and promoting pluralism" (Edwards and Hulme, 1996:4).

NGOs adopt a variety of names including councils, groupings or associations. NGOs can be indigenous or national (developed locally and only represented within a nation), regional (having branches or offices in neighbouring or nearby countries) or international (having international affiliation and often having a head office located in North America or Europe). As Lane noted, NGO is often used as an umbrella term to identify the wide range of activities that are concerned with service delivery outside of government activities (Lane, 1995).

Environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) are dedicated to delivering programmes that specifically address issues of sustainable development, the environment and natural resource management. Other NGOs address various issues (i.e., human rights, education, environment, health, youth, micro-enterprise and credit).

Environment and Natural Resource Management

There are three major environmental concepts that emerge in a study of ENGOs. These concepts include environmental conservation, environmental management, and natural resource management (NRM). Environmental conservation is a concept used to explain the protection of national parks and conservation areas from human activities. Environmental management, on the other hand, stresses the interaction of humans with the environment and the potential for people to manage the environment in sustainable ways.

Natural resource management is the use of natural resources like water, trees, soil, and plants for consumption in combination with conservation practices to reduce the impact or potential for environmental degradation. NRM is primarily concerned with human stewardship of environmental resources and training for community members to strike an ecologically sound balance between use and preservation of resources. Like sustainable development, NRM often involves a long-term commitment to environmental actions such as planting trees for the benefit of future generations.

The institutional response to natural resource management and environmental degradation has, for the most part, focused on forest and soil conservation, water harvesting and distribution. These activities often share the long-term goal of increased productivity of forest products and agricultural goods (Oxfam, 1994). In addressing women's concerns in community participation in natural resource management activities in India, Agarwal noted that women's concerns may not automatically translate into environmental activities. Instead, she argued that a gender progressive NGO can provide an important channel for these women to effect change (Agarwal, 1997:37). NGOs

working with environmental and NRM (ENGOs) tend to work with rural communities to provide sustainable development solutions.

Sustainable Rural Communities

Rural communities refer to those communities whose members live outside of the cities. More specifically, rural communities are defined as those communities that rely on their surrounding natural resources and agricultural production for their survival. For example, rural households rely predominantly on firewood for fuel to cook; and they rely primarily on locally grown crops such as maize and various vegetables as their sources of food. The rural locations identified in this study are discussed in further detail in the Case Study.

An Introduction to the Key Debates On Gender and Sustainable Development

Three specific debates pertaining to gender and sustainable development are introduced here. These debates highlight some of the major feminist contributions to gender and development. However, as debates, they consist of unresolved issues and concerns for the future of gender equality in environmental projects and environmental organizations. This section is only an introduction to the debates and will be discussed in greater detail throughout the thesis.

Elaborating the Concept of Gender and Binary Frameworks of Analysis

The first debate involves the term "gender" and how it has been used to explain the dichotomous divisions between men and women and their symbolic association with masculine/feminine, public/private, dominant/subordinate, and subject/object. A great deal of feminist literature is devoted to discussing these dichotomies as well as transcending

these binary frameworks to reveal the complex and multifaceted nature of inter-relationships between dualisms.

As a core concept in feminist literature, gender has been used to describe the social and cultural roles that are attributed to males and females. These roles tend to be classified as masculine or feminine and are most often learned through the process of socialisation. Gender issues are those issues that arise from the investigation of power relations between men and women and inequality between the social hierarchy of masculine and feminine.

Gender analysis, as a conceptual framework, gained popularity in the 1970s when feminists began to distinguish between masculine and feminine socially constructed roles and the status and power accorded to each term. This distinction rejected the biological determinism previously attached to male and female roles in society (Malson, O'Barr, Wesphal-Wihl and Wyer, 1989). The rejection of biological determinism meant that women were disadvantaged not because they are biologically pre-disposed to care for the family but because women's role in the private sector as mother, and bearer of children was socially undervalued. Kabeer extended the argument of socially defined roles of masculinity and femininity to account for locally-defined attributes of males and females in specific social categories (Kabeer, 1994). Meena noted that masculine and feminine roles are not merely attributable to men and women but are "constructed by society" (Meena, 1992:1). These roles are thus re-enforced through customs and institutional norms. Goetz pointed to a 'gendering' process whereby resources and values (i.e., social, political and economic) are either granted or withheld from one group to the advantage or disadvantage of the other group (Goetz, 1992).

In general, women are disadvantaged in relation to men. As such, women lack decision-making power, access to and control over resources. Gender issues are contextually specific and discernable at the micro- (individual, household or community) level. However, national laws, policies, norms and structures create a picture of gender that can be analysed at the macro- or national level. At the macro-level, gender inequality is reinforced through institutional mechanisms that shape relationships between men and women. These institutional mechanisms are a manifestation of cultural practices at the community level as well as the symbolic association of men and women with attitudes about appropriate behaviour. Feminist literature documenting the nature of gender relations has also highlighted the importance of attitudes, beliefs, cultural norms, ideologies, discourse, and patriarchy in shaping relations of inequality between men and women.

According to Flax (1989) gender is a relation of domination. Gender inequality often reveals information about the disadvantaged position of women in relation to men. However, as Mbilinyi argues, gender relations are not universal and applicable in all situations at all times. "They are therefore historical, changeable, subject to abolition and transformation through everyday happenings as well as periodic moments of crisis and transformation" (Mbilinyi, 1992:49).

Concern for the disadvantaged position of women must also account for other variables that contribute to their disadvantaged position. These additional variables include age, status, race, educational level, and other characteristics that foster inequality and intersect with gender in what Rocheleau, Thomas-Slayter and Wangari (1996) called a

system of multiple axes. Gender is therefore just one axis in a complex system of overlapping and cross-cutting issues. The study of gender inequality is therefore one axis in the examination of social change and development which requires steps to overcome oppression and injustice (Eade and Williams, 1995). Addressing gender inequality requires a "reduction in power imbalances and appreciation of how the relationship is structured attitudinally, socially, institutionally, politically, and economically" (NDI, 1995).

In this study the categorization of masculine and feminine roles and responsibilities was examined in relation to their symbolic associations with men and women and the public and private spheres. Women, for example, are symbolically associated with the feminine and the private sphere and men are symbolically associated with the masculine and the public sphere. An examination of gender must therefore reveal the nature of these dichotomous classifications but also their interrelationship and the layered and multifaceted nature of subordination of the feminine/private sphere in relation to the masculine/public sphere.

The Feminization of Sustainable Development

The second debate concerns the extent to which gender and environment are understood as separate and unrelated areas of investigation. This section reveals the nature of the gender approach in sustainable development projects as an approach that targets women as objects of environmental policy attention rather than considering environmental and natural resource management as a gendered activity. This section refers to the feminization of sustainable development.

For the most part, sustainable community development approaches that claim to

address gender issues only address the roles of women and the high representation of women in rural communities. This instrumental approach to sustainable development points to women as objects of sustainable development policies.

Development practitioners frequently fail to make a connection between gender and environment as interrelated issues. Environmental degradation continues to be perceived by many development practitioners as a problem to be solved through top-down, gender-neutral, and expert scientific intervention by outside agencies. This approach frequently targets women to conduct environment projects because there is a high representation of women living in environmentally depleted areas.

Increasing women's participation in environmental programmes and projects tends to support the women, environment and development (WED) approach (Jackson, 1996). The WED approach is an extension of liberal and neo-liberal approaches to addressing women's roles in development projects known as the women in development (WID) approach. The WID approach accepts existing social structures and focuses instead on "how women could better be integrated into ongoing development initiatives" (Rathgeber, 1990:491). In keeping with the WID integrationist approach, the WED approach seeks to better integrate women into the existing sustainable development initiatives, particularly those initiatives pertaining to environmental management. This approach emphasises the high representation of women in rural communities and their numerous environmental activities.

The WED approach points to women's environmental activities as an extension of women's reproductive activities insofar as they sustain the household. The WED approach

can raise awareness about environmental activities carried out by men and women as an extension of their traditional and cultural roles within the community. However, the WED approach tends to obscure the nature of the relationship between individuals and the extent to which these relationships reinforce inequality in access to and control over resources. The feminization of sustainable development has come to mean that environmental projects need to target women as objects of policy attention because the representation of women in rural areas is high and because those most directly impacted by environmental degradation tend to be women. This argument is based on earlier arguments pointing to the feminization of poverty. As Jackson (1996) argued, there is confusion in the use of this terminology since poverty has come to mean that the poor tend to be women. Jackson's argument called into question the use of this important concept to explain the disproportionate representation of women in poor households (many of which are headed by women). Development institutions use the feminization of poverty to justify projects designed to assist women. However, the approach does not recognise the nature of poverty in terms of it being a gendered experience in which access, control and power are key factors in determining who benefits from resources.

This argument is extended here to explain the feminization of sustainable development, resulting from the disproportionate representation of women living in environmentally impacted areas rather than understanding environmental degradation as a gendered experience. A more nuanced understanding of the feminization of sustainable development is needed to demonstrate the complex, multi-layered and interrelated nature of gender and NRM and the social construction of masculinity and femininity.

Getting Institutions and Organizations Right for Gender and Sustainable Development

The third debate introduces the opportunities and constraints faced by development organizations in addressing gender equality at the institutional and organizational level. This debate notes a lack of organizational commitment to gender equality.

In a recent collection of articles addressing gender and institutions, several authors suggested that despite the efforts of governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), there remains a failure to "get institutions right for women in development" (See Goetz, 1997; Kardam, 1997; and Leach, Joekes, and Green, 1997 in Goetz (ed), 1997). Failure to meet the needs of half the world's population has resulted in systemic gender inequality in general and has marginalised and disadvantaged women in particular. Development institutions are, however, attempting to take up this challenge in an effort to redress the negative impact that development projects have had on women.

In order to gauge the extent to which development institutions have been addressing gender inequality, it is useful to determine how gender activities are allocated, whether the organization has a gender policy or policies in place to address gender issues, whether there is sufficient staff to deal with gender responsibilities, and whether there are sufficient resources and time for those gender personnel to conduct their activities (Jackson, 1996b). Most important, a researcher of gender and development institutions "... also needs to examine the content of how development institutions understand gender issues" (Jackson, 1996:489). Jackson explored one aspect of the assimilation process and the "perception of gender issues in development as a variant of poverty problems"

(Jackson, 1996:489). Building on this, my study addressed gender inequality in the context of environmental projects, uncovering information about how gender is practised within ENGOs and the feminization of sustainable development.

The origins of feminist institutional analyses can be traced to feminist organizational analyses, feminist critiques of bureaucracy and public administration and more recently, feminist investigations of development organizations. These organizational analyses are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of the research was to better understand gender issues in the context of sustainable development initiatives. The research was expected to contribute to an informed understanding of the practice of gender-related activities in environmental organizations (ENGOs). This study hoped to provide information that could be used by researchers to analyse gender issues at the organizational level and by ENGOs to address gender inequality in their environmental programmes, policies and structures. The first objective was to conduct a field study in a cross-cultural environment using a variety of data gathering techniques. The second objective was to answer the following three questions: Are ENGOs committed to addressing gender inequality? Do ENGO staff see gender and environment as separate and unrelated themes? Do the ENGO staff have the capacity to address gender issues? The final objective was to develop a set of recommendations that could be used to guide gender and sustainable development initiatives within ENGOs.

Research Assumptions

This research began with the assumption that addressing gender equality is central to the success and sustainability of environmental projects and that most environment and development projects have not been addressing gender issues at the community level. A second assumption refers to an important link between gender accountability at the organizational level and gender accountability at the project level. In other words, the activities carried out at the organizational level are likely to be mirrored in projects at the community level.

The third research assumption addressed the ways in which women are treated as objects of sustainable development policy attention. Policy makers set the general parameters of gender participation. However the implementation of these policies is carried out by development practitioners, planners or extension agents who bring their own perspectives to the project thus influencing the degree of commitment to gender issues. This assumption noted the important role that individual agents play in shaping policies and initiating action. An additional research assumption was related to the role that structures and institutions play in shaping gender relations and how these structures and institutions establish the gendered terrain in which individuals operate.

Significance of the Study

This study should contribute to a growing body of scholarly research related to gender issues and the practice of gender-related activities in environmental organizations. It has also generated a set of recommendations that can be used by ENGOs to improve their gender-related activities. By addressing the practice of gender within ENGOs, the

research provided the foundation for potential actions that can be adopted by ENGOs in an effort to improve the quality of life for men and women who are faced with environmental hardship and poverty. Since feminist theories are inherently interdisciplinary, the application of feminist theories in this study has contributed to the field of interdisciplinary studies. The interdisciplinary nature of this study should further contribute to our understanding of sustainable rural communities by revealing information about organizations that work closely with rural communities, organizations that design projects that have an impact on communities

Organization of the Thesis

The next chapter (Chapter Two) summarizes the literature that was reviewed for this thesis. The literature review begins with a summary of development theories and is followed by feminist reflections and contributions to development theories. Three major themes within feminist theory were discussed in detail - the public/private, subject/object and patriarchy frameworks of analysis. These binary frameworks of analysis provided a useful starting point to understand how organizations shape gender inequality in dichotomous divisions.

Chapter Three (Methodology) describes field study that was conducted in Malawi. The methods employed in this field study included participant observation, semi-structured interviews and document review. This chapter concludes with a discussion of how the data and information were analysed.

Chapter Four provides the socio-cultural background for the research in Malawi. Research findings are summarized in Chapter Five in relation to ten major areas of

investigation including staff issues, capacity of staff to address gender issues, presence of gender personnel, gender policies, gender as a foreign concept, reporting on gender, budgeting for gender, linking gender with NRM, gender awareness at the project level, and staff perceptions of the opportunities and constraints of a gender approach.

Chapter Six (Discussion and Conclusions) returns to the three major research questions identified at the beginning of the study and couches the ten areas of investigation within these three research questions. In discussing these three research questions, the findings are summarized in relation to the public/private, patriarchy and subject/object dichotomies highlighted in the literature review. This final chapter draws conclusions on both the strengths and constraints of the methods employed, offers recommendations for additional research and proposes some specific measures ENGOs can take to integrate gender into their environmental programmes, projects and policies.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter begins with a summary of international development theories which have influenced feminist thought. The feminist theories described in this chapter are primarily concerned with organizations, bureaucracies and development NGOs and how they address gender issues. Three major themes in feminist literature are reviewed in this chapter, namely the public/private, patriarchy and subject/object frameworks of analysis. Feminist theorists have attempted to explain, resolve and transcend the dichotomous divisions in these frameworks of analysis. These frameworks of analysis reveal the gendered patterns of inequality at the organizational level and have specific applications in environmental organizations. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how feminist theorists have problematized these frameworks of analysis and establishes the need for an alternative feminist analytical framework. An alternative feminist framework of analysis extends socialist feminist and postmodern feminist critiques of gender and development to account for gender inequality within environmental organizations.

A Summary of Development Theories and Feminist Insights

Development theories are characterized by the dichotomous divisions of colonizer/colonized, modern/traditional, and developed/underdeveloped. Many of the feminist critiques of development theory have extended these binary frameworks to account for gender inequality in development. This section highlights some of the major

contributions to development theory and critiques of development theory from the theoretical approaches of Marxism, Critical Theory and Postmodernism. This section is followed by a discussion of how feminist theorists have borrowed several of the analytical tools used in these three major theoretical approaches to account for gender inequality within development.

International Development Theories

Modernization theory, which gained popularity in the 1950s, established a linear approach to development whereby countries would progress through various stages of development. This theoretical approach is shaped by dichotomies of culture/nature, reason/emotion, subject/object, and order/anarchy (Scott, 1995). In each of the dichotomies, the first term reflects the characteristics of the modern, developed countries while the second term describes the developing countries. Modernization theorists not only described the perceived differences between developed and developing countries, but also placed value on the first term in relation to the second term.

Dependency theorists challenged modernization theory, pointing to the relationship of dependence that had characterized international politics resulting from a complex international political economy of natural resource extraction and industrialization. Dependency theory highlighted inequality between the poor, traditional and precapitalist countries and the rich, modern-capitalist countries. Dependency theory was influenced by Marxism.

Marxism gained popularity as a theoretical construct that could explain inequality through class analysis. Marxist analysts argued that the industrialization process was a

mode of organizing labour that in turn shapes how individuals will live. Marx used the division of labour to demonstrate how work was divided, exchanged, valued and how this division manifested in class associations. For Marx, society was split into "antagonistic classes, defined in their relation to the means of production and hence by their objectively shared conditions and interests" (Kabeer, 1994:43). This very split in the types of work and their relation to the means of production began at the level of the household in the division of responsibilities between men and women.

Family sociologists in the 1940s and 1950s began using the Marxist concepts of use and exchange value to explain the distinctions between men and women such as the roles carried out by men and women through the sexual division of labour. Family sociologists argued that there was a natural sexual division of labour between men and women which could be explained by biological differences and that biology was destiny. Development policies began to target men and women for specific work which was perceived to be a natural extension of their biological capabilities as men or women.

Feminists began to criticize this approach by drawing attention to the process of socialization in which roles and responsibilities are learned from others through the gender division of labour. Pointing to the socialization process, feminists noted the impact of institutions such as marriage in reinforcing the gender division of labour. Some feminist approaches pointed to patriarchal institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender inequality in society. Furthermore, "feminists using a Marxist perspective have shared a common starting point in its analysis of capital accumulation as the driving force behind unequal development and social conflict" (Kabeer, 1994:46). Modernist, Marxist, and

dependency theories are characteristic of Enlightenment thinking which stresses scientific reasoning in the pursuit of knowledge.

In an attempt to break away from the traditional Enlightenment approach to development theories, Critical Theorists believed that there was a radical difference between methods used in the social sciences and those used in the natural sciences. The difference had to do, primarily, with the belief that social theory could do more than explain practice. Social theory was believed to effect social changes, a force in itself that could shape and determine actions (Smelser and Warner, 1976).

Feminist literature has also been influenced by Critical Theory. Critical Theory has influenced feminist epistemology and pointed to the nature of inquiry and the methodological approach to addressing differences between subject and object. The subject/object dichotomy and the relevance of the subjectivity/objectivity debate is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. Critical Theory has also influenced feminist theories as a result of its focus on social change.

Critical Theorists have challenged the concept of knowledge and broadened it to include the discourse of every day life. Some of the feminist literature has adopted elements of Critical Theory and applied them to an analysis of gendered knowledge and gendered discourse. Like Critical Theorists, feminists have pursued "an alternative path for social development" (Held, 1980:14) and highlight history as central to understanding societies and institutions, particularly how gender relations have developed and changed throughout history.

Postmodernism and Postmodern Feminism

Postmodernist theories have increasingly challenged the development theories and the dichotomies that have been generated to describe and explain reality. These dichotomous divisions are apparent in the modern/traditional theoretical framework of modernization theorists (Brohman, 1996; Rostow, 1960) and the developed/ underdeveloped framework of dependency theorists (Frank, 1981; Ruccio and Simon, 1988). These theories reflect "colonizing dualistic divisions" (Mies, 1986:211) in development theory and practice.

Postmodernism has challenged the traditional, Enlightenment approach characterized by modernism and the use of binary frameworks to explain reality. Postmodernism emerged as a theoretical construct in the social sciences as an extension of post-industrialism (Schuurman, 1993). Postmodern development theories have used postmodern theory to reflect on the historical, spatial and cultural context of Third World development. Development, according to postmodern theorists, was manufactured in the West, corresponds to Western cultural values and history and has been transferred to the Third World. Postmodern theorists have applied the method of deconstruction to examine the discourse of development and its intrinsic value in Western science, truth and modernity (Wright, 1997).

The postmodern critique involved the deconstruction of development discourse and the use of binary frameworks which were borne out by capitalism and modernization theory. The deconstruction of development theory revealed the asymmetric dichotomization of the world as developed/ underdeveloped, modern/traditional and

progressive/backward. Postmodernist theories critiqued both the liberal and Marxist perspectives which they argued were rooted in Enlightenment thought. According to postmodernist theorists, these theoretical frameworks viewed development through a lens of linear progress in which Third World countries passed through stages of development, beginning as underdeveloped (traditional/backward/irrational) and becoming developed (capitalist, progressive, modern, industrialized and rational) (Parpart and Marchand, 1995; Wright, 1997).

Thus a central facet of the postmodern critique is the rejection of Western philosophy which relies on the use of binary opposites such as truth/falsity or man/woman. In these dichotomous categories, there is an implied dependency of the second term on the first term whereby the second category is engaged in a struggle for power that is held by the first category (Parpart and Marchand, 1995). Postmodernism further rejects the universalism that is reflected in this binary dualism and calls for analyses that are local, specific and historically informed. Studies that celebrate difference, culture and diversity and create space for previously silenced voices are valued in postmodern theory (Parpart and Marchand, 1995).

Some feminists have adopted elements of postmodernism to explain how gender inequality is categorized in binary frameworks whereby masculinity, science, dominance and objectivity are valued over femininity, traditional knowledge, nature and subjectivity. Postmodernism and feminism challenge the "modernist episteme" (Parpart and Marchand, 1995:4). Parpart and Marchand (1995) provided a summary of important thematic areas that postmodern and feminist theorists share. These themes are at the heart of a

postmodern feminist approach and emphasize differences, subjugated knowledges, experience, language, discourse, overlooked voices, and resistances. A postmodern feminist approach addresses "historical, spatial and cultural specificity", "multiple oppressions", women as the subject of analysis, experience and critical thinking, and the body as the "locus of social control" (Parpart and Marchand, 1995). As these authors pointed out, "few feminists argue for the wholesale adoption of postmodernist thought.... [however]... feminists of various persuasions are increasingly convinced that at least some aspects of postmodernist thinking are relevant to feminist theories and praxis" (Parpart and Marchand, 1995:8).

Feminist literature consists of three prevalent themes that constitute gender inequality in dualistic terms. These three frameworks for analysing gender inequality include the public/private, subject/object and patriarchy (male power/female subordination). A gender analysis builds on the notion of inequality which Schuurman (1993) argued is central to studying development theory (Schuurman, 1993).

Feminist Theories

Feminist literature has been concerned directly or indirectly with the disadvantaged position of women in relation to men. Feminism, according to Martin (1990) is the "recognition that women, compared to men, are an oppressed group and that women's problems are a result of discrimination" (Martin, 1990:184). Sexual egalitarianism is therefore a central theme and goal for most feminists.

Feminist contributions to environment and development have further contributed to development studies, lending support to sustainable development initiatives. However,

they tend to focus on the community level and the relationship between men and women within the environment. Feminist political ecology (Rocheleau, Thomas-Slayter, and Wangari, 1996), ecofeminism (Shiva, 1989), and feminist environmentalism (Agarwal, 1997) all address the gendered nature of environmental relations at the community level. However, there is insufficient information about how environmental organizations deal with gender, environment and development issues. The following section summarizes feminists contributions to organizational analysis.

Feminist Contributions to Organizational Analysis

Feminist contributions to organizational analysis are summarized here as three major bodies of literature that have influenced how we understand the gender division of labour and the gender dynamics within organizations and institutions. The first section notes some of the earliest feminist contributions to organizational analysis pointing to the assumed gender neutrality of organizations because they operate in the public sphere. The second body of literature has informed feminist organizational analysis by revealing the gender dynamics within government structures and public administration. Both of these bodies of literature (early feminist organizational analyses and feminist reflections on the state) have informed the third body of literature which is concerned with development organizations.

Early Contributions To Feminist Organizational Analysis

One of the earliest contributions of feminist literature to women and work within organizations was by Boserup (1970). Boserup noted that "[i]n developing countries, we never find women in the majority in clerical jobs" (Boserup, 1970:130). Preference was

generally given to men in all fields outside of nursing and teaching. This occupational segregation was accepted in principle at the InterAfrican Conference held in Lusaka in 1957 (Boserup, 1970). In the mid-1970s Kanter pointed to differences between men and women in managerial styles and women's lack of promotions as matters of their disadvantaged position in society as a minority status and also their lack of representation in decision-making positions within organizational hierarchies. Kanter argued that management tends to be a socially homogeneous and masculine space whereby "managers choose others that can be 'trusted'. And thus they reproduce themselves in kind" (Kanter, 1979:29). Kanter also pointed out that "women are occasionally included in the inner circle when they are part of an organization's ruling family, but more usually this system leaves women out, along with a range of other people with discrepant social characteristics" (Kanter, 1979:29). The feminist contribution to organizational analysis provided by Kanter, Goetz argued, revealed more than the sex differences between men and women and pointed to the nature of power relations between men and women in fostering gender inequality (Goetz, 1992).

The feminist organizational analysis was one of the first efforts noting that "gender differences in organizational behavior are due to structure rather than to characteristics of women and men as individuals" (Kanter, 1977, in Acker 1990). According to Acker, gendered organizations means "that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine" (Acker, 1990:146).

Kanter and Acker argued that organizational behavior is not gender neutral. They

claimed that Marxist and Weberian theoretical explanations of organizational behavior assumed gender neutrality. As Goetz later commented, administration was expected to operate on meritorious principles regardless of gender, class, race (Goetz, 1992). Acker, for example, argued that organizations need to account for gender inequality since organizations themselves are "gendered processes in which both gender and sexuality have been obscured through a gender-neutral, asexual discourse" (Acker, 1990:140). The activities carried out by organizations contribute to public administration, which, according to Goetz (1992), is itself a gendered and gendering process whereby "its outcomes, internal organization and culture reflect and promote the interests of men" (Goetz, 1992:6). However, "[w]hile organizations were being defined as sex-neutral machines, masculine principles were dominating their authority structures" (Kanter, 1977:46). Men working in organizations perceived their own behaviour to represent the interests of all staff members. As a result, the structures and processes of organizations tended to be theorized as gender neutral (Acker, 1990).

The assumption of gender-neutrality at the organizational level led to gender-blind policy formation (Moser, 1993). Moser identified two problems that arise from gender-blind policies. The first she described as a misinformed understanding of women's role in development activities and therefore, a non-inclusive approach to women in development. The second problem was the inability of these policies to address gender issues even though they may recognise the disadvantaged position of women in society.

Gender Analysis of Bureaucracy and the State

Feminist contributions to organizational analysis have been complemented by feminist theories of the state and bureaucratization. A feminist analysis of bureaucracies, according to Ferguson, involved an understanding of "patterns of dominance and subordinance that exist between men and women" (Ferguson, 1984:5). Ferguson argued that both feminism and bureaucratization can be understood as "consequences of massive shifts in the division of labor in society; women's lives changed as their roles as wives and mothers were redefined in the family, and women's and men's lives changed as their roles as workers were re-defined in the factory and in the office" (Ferguson, 1984:4). Ferguson argued that the public/private division was manifested in a new division of labour that shaped new roles and responsibilities for men and women.

Staudt's work on gender politics in bureaucracies noted that institutionalized male privilege is deeply embedded in the state (Staudt, 1990). These bureaucratic structures of the state reflect Western organizational structures and have spread throughout the world, reinforcing patriarchal norms and masculine dominance (Goetz, 1992).

The public/private and patriarchy frameworks have been adopted by some feminists to explain how these organizations reinforce gender inequality. Acker (1990) argued that "gender segregation is an amazingly persistent pattern and that the gender identity of jobs and occupations is repeatedly reproduced, often in new forms" (Acker, 1990). These frameworks demonstrate how women have been marginalized within organizations but also how gender is marginalized within organizations. Gender and development units operating within state bureaucracies tend to be marginalized from other

facets of the organization and located on the edge of the organization "often out on a limb" (Staudt and Timothy, 1997:338).

Gender Analysis of Development Organizations

The contributions of Kanter to management organizations and of Staudt and Ferguson to state and bureaucratic organizations have lent support to gender analyses of development organizations, particularly non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Examining development organizations from a gender perspective is a recent phenomenon since gender and development literature has only recently begun to address gender relations within organizations (Jackson, 1996a).

All institutions, according to Kabeer, are comprised of rules, norms, practices and procedures – factors of institutions that were ignored prior to intensive gendered analyses (Kabeer, 1994). Kabeer characterized the decisions made by policy-makers as those decisions that address women's concerns without tackling women's strategic interests (Kabeer, 1994). Furthermore, as Afshar (1987) pointed out, policy makers have not only failed to provide adequate opportunities for women, they have also created legislation that is aimed at controlling women, "controlling their sexuality and fertility, and endorsing their subordination" (Afshar, 1987:1).

The challenge for a development organization that strives to address gender issues and women's empowerment, according to Kabeer, is that "it tends to be accountable upwards to governments and/or donors" (Kabeer, 1994:292). Kabeer noted the importance of an organizational commitment to gender equality which she argued is necessary if women are to be able to participate in development and to have access to

resources (Kabeer, 1994).

Development organizations such as NGOs need to be accountable to the people they ostensibly serve. Gender accountability, as Kardam (1997) defined it, refers to the organization's ability to respond to women's interests and to incorporate these interests into gender-sensitive activities (policy formation, programmes and projects) (Kardam, 1997). In her view, "accountability has to do with the organizational characteristics (goals, procedures, staffing, incentive systems) of all agencies involved, as well as with the political context, that is, the political commitment of the stakeholders to a project" (Kardam, 1997:45). The starting point for organizational analyses thus adopts an approach that views NGOs as political organs that reflect and reconstitute wider values of society. NGOs thus contribute to the institutionalization of values and norms. According to Goetz, "bureaucratic rules and practices actively reconstitute gender hierarchy" (Goetz, 1992:9) and women are therefore under-represented in decision-making positions (Goetz, 1992).

As Fowler noted, there is a gender dimension in nongovernmental development organizations; roles and power are "divided along gender lines" (Fowler, 1997:76). Second, Fowler pointed to the "degree to which male and female principles are reflected and valued in organizational culture" (Fowler, 1997:76). A third point that Fowler raised concerned the link between gender relations at the organizational level and their impact at the project level and thus how NGOs "ultimately perform in development" (Fowler, 1997:76). As Fowler found in his gender assessment of NGOs, NGOs are not gender neutral. For the most part, NGOs "reflect rather than contradict wider society with its stereotypical views of women; here, women act as servers of men; seldom function as

decision- or policy- makers; and are seen as women first and workers second" (Fowler, 1997:78). He commented that "norms of behaviour, rules, physical structures, organizational divisions of power and tasks, and functional categories naturally tend to reflect and favour men rather than women. And, importantly, informal communication, decision-making and negotiation take place in male preserves" (Fowler, 1997:78).

Development organizations have been influenced by the organizational structures and norms of other bureaucratic structures. Both the state and NGOs tend to be "deeply influenced in structure and practice by both Western colonial administration, and in the context of aid dependency, by donor agencies" (Goetz, 1992:6). Bureaucracies have been further influenced by the dominant economic development paradigms and as a result information generated by development bureaucracies tends to "measure people as aggregates of 'problems'" (Goetz, 1994:31).

Men/Inside and Women/Outside: Feminist Reflections on Binary Frameworks

As Bernards argued "it is not enough for women to be outside the door, knocking loudly to come in" (Bernards, 1993:204). Instead, "women want to find ways to be inside, sharing power and the responsibility that comes with it" (Bernards, 1993:204). Some of the feminist literature is rooted in the binary divisions that reflect the inside/outside framework of analysis. This section demonstrates how binary frameworks of analysis can be used to explain gender inequality and gender-related activities within ENGOs. These binary frameworks of analysis are summarized as public/private, patriarchy (dominant man/subordinate woman) and subject/object.

The Public/Private Framework of Analysis

An analysis of dualism conducted by Hartsock highlighted "the dominance of one side of the dichotomy over the other, [which] marks phallocentric society and social theory" (Hartsock, 1987:169). These dichotomies are structured on experience of the two worlds that Hartsock identifies as the female world of the household and the masculine world of public life. At the heart of these dualisms, Hartsock argued, is the belief in one as valuable and the other as useless and demeaning and gives the following examples of "abstract/concrete, mind/body, culture/nature, ideal/real, status/change" (Hartsock, 1987:169). These dualisms are further "overlaid by gender: only the first of each pair is associated with the male" (Hartsock, 1987:169).

The public/private framework of analysis distinguishes between the different types of work carried out as a result of the gender division of labour. Feminist literature has noted both the gendered roles characterized by the gender division of labour but also the symbolism and value that is attached to these roles. This section explores the gender division of labour at the household level and extends this argument to the organizational level to reveal how work is divided between men and women within organizations and how this division of labour translates into gender roles.

Ferguson (1984) identified characteristics of the private and public spheres. According to Ferguson, the private sphere is "the set of discursive and institutional practices of domestic life, the realm of personal intimacy, household labor, and reproduction within families, kin relations, or friendship networks" (Ferguson, 1984:8). The public sphere, on the other hand, "refers to the outside world of paid labor, of

government, and of those institutions of communication, transportation, leisure, culture, and so forth, that are rooted outside the home, in the larger world of strangers" (Ferguson, 1984:8).

The structuring of society into categorical classifications of public and private was explained by Eisenstein as a gendered experience since "...women share their position of oppression because of the very sexual politics of the society. The structuring of society through the sexual division limits the activities, work, desires, and aspirations of women" (Eisenstein, 1979:18). As Pateman argued, the personal and political life are integrally connected and are manifested in women's paid worklife through sexual harassment, discrimination, and a workplace that is structured by a sexual division of labour that segregates women into specific occupational categories (Pateman, 1989).

The division between the public and private spheres reveals the nature of societal gender divisions of labour. The model of the gender division of labour helps to explain how women's socialised roles in the household are transferred into the public sphere. The history of the gender division of labour can be traced to European religious movements and have their historical roots in western economies (Leach, 1993). The notions of public and private work were transferred to the less developed countries during colonialism. The division of public and private was founded on the use of family "as a powerful ideological underpinning of what was appropriate work for women" (Leach, 1993:66). The traditional gender division of labour contextualizes women's position in relationship to men as an extension of the public and private spheres and has been criticized for its reasoning that "women's rightful place [is] in the home" (Leach, 1993:66) or "women's natural place is a

private one, as wife and mother in the home" (Pateman, 1989:221).

The gender division of labour corresponds with the public and private spheres since the roles that are learned through the process of socialization reinforce the roles that men and women carry out within these spheres. Men and women have socially constructed roles and responsibilities that are culturally determined and that change from culture to culture.

Moser's framework for analysing the gender division of labour at the community level noted the triple roles that men and women carry out and how labour is divided between men and women at the household and community level. This framework distinguishes between productive work, reproductive work and community work. Work that is conducted for the production of goods and services for sale or to trade is defined as productive work. That work involving the care required to meet the daily needs of the family and maintaining the household is termed reproductive work. Work carried out collectively with others in the community which leads to collective engagement and community organization is termed community work (Moser, 1993). Stewart and Taylor contributed to this analysis, noting that culture defines and structures women's and men's roles (Stewart and Taylor, 1995).

Thus, the public/private division is characterised by cultural norms based on the perception of women's and men's traditional roles in different sectors of society. According to Wright (1997), women are confined to the private, domestic sphere because of their primary role as mothers. "Women's capability to carry, bear and nurse children has been inextricably linked to their responsibility as primary caregiver for children" (Wright,

1997:81). The different space that women and men are expected to occupy reflects their different positions and responsibilities within the public/private model. It is these differences in positions and responsibilities, according to Cebotarev (1994), that reinforce gender differences and offer a starting point from which to reflect on the nature of public/private relations.

Kardam argued that the public/private framework is a major guiding concept that can help to "legitimize the unequal relationship between men and women" (Kardam, 1995:18). She explained that men are the dominant group within society who have "defined women's work as housework and child rearing and relegated it to the 'private' sphere, while maintaining control over the 'public' sphere of political power, law, and general public life" (Kardam, 1995:118).

The public/private framework can be adopted at the organizational level to explain the gender division of labour within bureaucratic organizations since "gender relations are constructed within society, and mirrored to a greater or lesser extent within the organization" (Rao and Kelleher, 1995:77). Furthermore, these gender relations "are to men's advantage, the institutional learning process which we are promoting requires men to collaborate in a process aimed at dismantling their privilege" (Rao and Kelleher, 1995:77). The public and private spheres are therefore gendered arenas (Goetz, 1997).

Women are often assigned to specific programmes and activities within organizations to address reproductive functions such as family planning or other public services (Goetz, 1992). As Cebotarev noted, clerical work has been considered suitable work for women since it serves as an extension of women's traditional roles within the

family (Cebotarev, 1994). Rarely are women involved in the "technical cores" (Goetz, 1992) of the organization or bureaucracy where the decisions are made about allocation of resources and funds. Women, who are marginalised in their posts, are further marginalised by their lack of access to the necessary resources and the control over the funds required to acquire resources. Thus, programmes that are set up to address women's concerns are confined to private sphere interests and do not involve decision-making, budgeting and personnel policy formation (Staudt, 1990; Goetz, 1992).

The specific jobs carried out by women within organizations tend to marginalize women and women's interests. Their marginalisation is often a result of being outside the decision-making forums of the organization. Women are often not part of the policy design process and therefore are not involved in the processes by which decisions are made on their behalf. According to Staudt, "[t]hose who make policy, predominantly men, live intimately with the group about whom policy is made, and the individual characteristics of that relationship carry over into work relationships and policy thinking in potentially distorting ways" (Staudt, 1986:7). Additional reasons for women's marginalization within organizations reflects women's lack of qualifications in 'male' specialisations like agriculture (Goetz, 1992).

Applying the Public/Private Framework to Environmental Organizations

Environmental activities, too, can be classified into public and private divisions determined by the gender division of labour at the household or community levels. Those environmental activities that are necessary for maintaining the household are most often carried out by women, relegating these activities to the private sphere. These environment-

related activities may include the collection of fuelwood for cooking, sanitation-related activities, water harvesting, and agricultural practices for subsistence food crops. Rocheleau (1995) characterized sustainable development efforts into three separate domains which divide home, habitat and workplace, "with women at 'home', men in the 'workplace' and protected 'habitats' devoid of humans" (Rocheleau, 1995:9).

The distinction between home and workplace correspond with the private and public spheres discussed earlier. The third category, habitat, however, requires further discussion. The tendency of some environmentalists is to treat the environment as protected habitats devoid of humans, reflecting a further tendency to separate the environment from humans rather than considering human interaction with the environment. Environmental studies tend to ignore the role of individuals in using and managing resources and thus reveal environmental issues in an objective, removed manner that separates the individual from the ecosystem. At the organizational level, "environmental NGOs and conservation groups have traditionally focussed on parks and animals rather than on social issues and participation ... gender has yet to be explicitly acknowledged as a major issue by environmental NGOs" (Siddharth, 1995:34). Environmental organizations, therefore, tend to be single-issue organizations in that they are structured in such a way as to address environment issues outside of human interaction and community participation.

Since the representation of women within organizations and bureaucracies tends not to be in the 'technical cores' (Goetz, 1992), decisions that are made about environmental management by ENGOs tend to be made by men. Thus, the decisions made

by policy-makers within ENGOs tend to reinforce the public/private divisions at the community level. Decisions made about environmental management tend to target women for environmental activities that directly benefit the household. Environmental projects that are geared to generating income frequently tend to target men in the community since men are perceived to belong to the public sphere.

The projects adopted by development bureaucracies are designed to "enhance women's kitchen gardening or homestead based income-generating efforts" (Goetz, 1995:2). These projects reflect the "profound gender division in public policy clientship which reinforces notions that women and children's needs are rightly matters for private, male, provision" (Goetz, 1995:2).

The marginal representation of women "as formal employees encourages gender insensitivity in the planning and development of this sector" (Meena, 1994:41). Meena notes the bias of male extension officers in providing technical advice to male farmers (Meena, 1994). The gender division of labour existing at the organizational level therefore spills over into the projects that these ENGOs conduct.

The division between gender and environment as separate categories is a further extension of the public/private argument. This analogy posits that the concept of gender is relegated to the private sphere while environment is understood in the public sphere. The difficulty in linking public and private is reflected in what Rathgeber argues is a "hesitation to link gender and environment in a systematic way" (Rathgeber 1995b:214). The reductionism of gender to private matters and environment to public matters can be understood by adopting Kabeer's critique of development practices whereby "reductionist

theories within social sciences have given rise to reductionist practices, and are in turn a reflection of reductionist methods" (Kabeer, 1995:ix). The public/private framework of analysis can help to reveal the nature and extent to which bureaucratic organizations, particularly ENGOs construct gender relations and reinforce gender inequality at the organizational level.

The Patriarchy Framework of Analysis

Patriarchy means rule by men and has been used to describe a system that benefits men and disadvantages women. A patriarchal system is one in which men occupy most positions of power. Patriarchy is frequently associated with an inherently hierarchical system (Mies, 1986) and facilitates the process of capitalism (Mies, 1986). Patriarchy refers to a system consisting of specific structural characteristics and practices which are dominated by men and which foster the exploitation and oppression of women (Alvesson and Billing, 1997; Walby, 1990). This dichotomous distinction is about inequality of power which translates into dominant men and subordinate women.

Patriarchy is "a powerful force that keeps women in subordinate positions in society and allows men to wield power over women, whether at home or in the workplace. The result is increasing gender inequalities as development proceeds..." (Lantican, Gladwin and Seale, 1996:243).

Within the patriarchy framework, power is understood in relation to a male bias which Elson (1991) argued "distorts resource allocation by denying women adequate access to productive inputs". Power for men is a result of the "taken for granted asymmetries about what is possible for, and available to, men and women, rather than

solely through the exercise of force or the threat of violence. Power in this analysis "does not inhere in any single aspect of the social system, but in the social relations which enable men to mobilize a greater range of resources – symbols and meanings, authority and recognition, objects and services – in a greater range of institutional domains: political, economic and familial" (Kabeer, 1994:66).

Mies, too, recognized the role of asymmetries. Mies argued that a feminist perspective must start with basic principles that can guide political action. First, feminists must reject and abolish the "principle of colonizing dualistic divisions (between men and women, different peoples and classes, man and nature, spirit and matter) based on exploitation for the sake of ever-expanding commodity production and capital accumulation" (Mies, 1993:211). In order to do this, there is a need for new relationships between people which are not based on exploitation and hierarchy (Mies, 1993).

To some extent the public/private and patriarchal frameworks of analysis merge. These conceptual frameworks converge at a point where both the public and private spheres can be understood in terms of how patriarchy encroaches each sphere. In the public sphere, according to Lantican, Gladwin and Seale (1996), public patriarchy is used by men to segregate them and their jobs from women and also to subordinate women. These authors explained private patriarchy as a system of unequal power relations within the home whereby men are dominant and women, by virtue of the institution of marriage, become a subordinate class of unpaid labourers. Class analysis is used in this example to explain the differential access and control of resources in the home whereby women, as one class, have access to the resources, but men, as another class, control the use and the

decisions surrounding their use. This analysis extends a Marxist analysis of class analysis and the division of labour between the powerful (bourgeoisie) and the powerless (proletariat) to account for inequality of power between men and women.

Since, as noted above, women rarely hold decision-making positions within organizations, they often lack power in the public sphere. This is a result of the manner in which men and women are positioned differently and unequally within organizations. As Goetz (1992) pointed out, few women are located at the top levels of decision-making, and even fewer are able to challenge dominant agency practice (Goetz, 1992). The primary decision-makers are men, a fact which characterises the patriarchal environment of the public sphere. The mere presence of men at the organizational level has an impact on the types of policies that are created. These policies tend to ensure male domination over women (Charlton, Everett, and Staudt, 1989).

The state plays a central role in "constructing the 'ideal' family form and hence domestic and public patriarchy" (Maharaj, 1995:62). The strategies employed by the state to preserve male power tend to accept the assumption of "male authority in the home on which the reproduction of power inequalities rests" (Maharaj, 1995:63). Examples of these strategies that prevent women's empowerment include lack of funding provided for women's educational programmes and laws that favour male property rights (Maharaj, 1995). The structuring of power relations at the household-level can be broadened to account for the structuring of power relations among organizational staff.

Gender inequality in staff relations, for example, is reflected in the structuring of power relations which result in gendered outcomes. These outcomes privilege men and

disadvantage women (Goetz, 1992; Staudt, 1990). The structuring of power relations at the organizational level can be understood through an analysis of the patriarchy framework since the position of women is seen as a product of a far older system of male dominance over women, nature and colonies (Kabeer, 1994). Patriarchy, as a concept, is used here to explain how women are kept in subordinate positions in society vis-a-vis male power and privilege in both the workplace and in the home (Lantican, Gladwin and Seale, 1996).

Gender relations are not confined to the household. Instead, gender relations are constructed by society and mirrored at the household and organizational level. These gender relations tend to reinforce advantages accorded to men (Rao and Kelleher, 1995). Thus, if public power is male power, then state power is male power (Fatton, 1989). Woman's access to power is determined by her linkages with men and takes place through men (Fatton, 1989). These hierarchical relations of domination and subordination within bureaucracies reproduce aspects of male-female relations in all sectors of society (Ferguson, 1984).

Tinkering with procedures and structures, according to Goetz, is not sufficient for challenging power systems (Goetz, 1992). This tinkering and manipulation of organizations does not achieve the overhauling of organizations to ensure that women are active participants in the decision-making, and beneficiaries of the activities (Staudt, 1990). Furthermore, empowering the staff to be active participants is not in the interests of those in upper management positions. For those who have power, according to Staudt, empowerment and equality at the organizational level often means that they must

relinquish power to those who do not have it.

Staudt argued that the redistribution of resources from men to women reflects a political conflict much like policies geared toward class redistribution (Staudt, 1986). This redistribution is considered threatening and empowerment issues become matters of conflict at the organizational level. Just as states are shaped by gender struggle between the public and private spheres, so too are NGOs. However, gender conflict in both arenas may be obscured and masked by policies that promote redistribution but fail to be implemented (Parpart and Staudt, 1989).

Gender relations are not just about how resources are allocated and power is mobilised; they are also about the organization of institutions and how the are continually reconstituted (Kabeer, 1994). Since men from any social class are more likely to mobilise resources from a larger number of organizational bodies and institutional frameworks, gender relations are constituted as power relations (Kabeer, 1994).

Applying the Patriarchy Framework to Environmental Organizations

Feminist political ecologists have argued that environmental science and the international attention to environmental activities/environmentalism "have been largely cast as the domain of men" (Rocheleau, Thomas-Slayter and Wangari, 1996:6). Environmentalism, as a male domain, frequently points to the need for scientific and technical solutions to environmental issues. The perception of science as a male preserve reinforces the connection between environmental science and men's work.

Ecofeminists have explained gender inequality in environmental studies by adopting the patriarchy framework to explain the colonisation of women and the

environment. Ecofeminist and feminist environmentalist literature emphasized the domination of women and nature as interrelated, having "historically emerged together from a common world view, giving women a special interest in ending the domination of nature and, by implication their own subordination" (Agarwal, 1997:36). Shiva, for example, argued that ecofeminism draws attention to the domination of women and nature as an interrelated process of male and capitalist exploitation. Ecofeminism extended the socialist feminist critique of development and modernity to an analysis of rural women who are dependent on natural resources for their survival. The impact of environmental degradation has meant that women have access to fewer resources and may therefore walk further distances to obtain daily resources such as water and fuelwood. Furthermore, as Venkatsewaren pointed out, women have been marginalised from decision-making in environmental management despite their intrinsic role in natural resource management. "In fact, the policies and programmes adopted have often affected them adversely, either in relation to their workload or social status or both" (Venkateswaran, 1995:223).

Shiva (1993) called for "a reversal of the logic which has treated women as subordinate because they create life, and men as superior because they destroy it. All past achievements of patriarchy have been based on alienation from life, and have led to the impoverishment of women, children and the environment" (Shiva, 1993:88). Within the argument of patriarchy and environmental destruction, Mies and Shiva noted that "women are devalued, first because their work co-operates with nature's processes, and second, because work that satisfies needs and ensures sustenance is devalued in general" (Mies and Shiva, 1993:75). The patriarchy framework of analysis therefore has specific applications

to the organizational structures and the specific projects carried out by environmental organizations.

The Subject/Object Framework of Analysis

This framework of analysis refers to the nature of research and development practice that assumes that the researcher or development practitioner is somehow removed from the object of research and can conduct his or her work in an impartial and unbiased manner with the subjects under investigation. Feminist standpoint theorists, in particular, have argued for a new approach to research and practice which recognizes the interaction between researcher and researched and the nature of one's positioning in relation to this subject of research (Harding, 1993; Hayles, 1995).

Development organizations are no exception. Attempts made by NGOs to adopt a gender and development (GAD) approach have often been "applied in a technocratic manner, disconnected from the critical political processes surrounding gender relations" (Levy, 1998:254). The reason for this technocratic approach can be explained by the desire to objectify the unknown for the purpose of investigation. Development practitioners, rather than recognising the complexity of gender relations as "subjected to change and influenced by other aspects of differentiation" (Harrison, 1995:40), need to address gender relations in a "kind of conceptual shorthand" (Harrison, 1995:40) which allows for simple principles and methodological tools (Harrison, 1995).

As Charlton (1989) has noted, women may be the direct object of state policies. These state policies frequently categorize women as objects into sex-typed services which target women's reproductive functions (i.e., family planning, social and community

activities) (Goetz, 1992).

The way that field staff engage in dialogue with the community members can, as Mayoux argued, reinforce a subject/object relationship in which women are seen as targets of development assistance (Mayoux, 1995). She further argued that participatory development is "merely a guise for shifting the costs of development and service provision onto women participants" (Mayoux, 1995:253).

Applying the Subject/Object Framework to Environmental Organizations

Many ENGOs have adopted a Women, Environment and Development (WED) approach. The WED approach, according to Leach, Joekes and Green, links WID approaches with recent environmental issues (Leach, Joekes and Green, 1995). The WED approach therefore attempts to more fully integrate women into the development process by targeting women as the sole implementers and beneficiaries of environmental projects.

The high representation of women and their environmental tasks within the gender division of labour has resulted in women being the target of natural resource management projects. Rather than understanding women's experience in relation to natural resource depletion and management, environmental degradation has been understood as a problem to be solved through top-down expert intervention. Those who have knowledge are expected to be detached, neutral spectators, while the objects are passive beneficiaries in the process of observation and analysis (Code, 1993). The impact of environmental degradation on women is obscured by this approach to NRM.

Braidotti questioned the subject/object framework used by ENGO staff. Environmental projects are considered scientific projects based in biology and related

scientific disciplines. NGOs involved in the implementation of environmental projects strive for empirical inputs and outcomes that can be measured quantifiably. This "scientific approach is embedded in a world view that values 'truth' and 'science', 'evidence' and 'proof'. In so doing, 'pure' science attempts to explain *a* reality while ignoring multiple realities determined by the researcher's interpretation of that reality" (Braidotti, 1994:30).

The subject/object approach to development has been described as an instrumentalist approach. Jackson pointed to the instrumental approach that major development agencies such as the World Bank have employed. This instrumental approach, according to Jackson (1996b) views gender as a means to reaching other development objectives. For the World Bank, gender equality in development can be achieved by increasing the participation of women in development projects (Jackson, 1996b).

The Inside/Outside Debate Turned Inside-out

The binary frameworks of analysis expose how institutions reinforce the divisions between men/women, masculine/feminine, public/private, subject/object and dominant/subordinate at the organizational level. Some additional feminist contributions have expanded these binary frameworks of analysis to account for the interaction, overlap and complex interdependence of public/private spheres. This section summarizes some of the feminist contributions to this more nuanced representation of the inside/outside debate.

Kabeer pointed out that the reductive approach used in binary frameworks "implies that the complexities of nature and society can be broken down into their constituent components, and the separate parts studied in isolation from each other. In her critique of

reductionism, she argues that reductionism "neglects complex interactions between units, the interactions between the unit and the whole" (Kabeer, 1994:73). In Kabeer's view, methodological reductionism is "the isolated and piecemeal analysis of problems and solutions, resulting in the frequent confusion of surface appearance with underlying reality, symptoms with causes" (Kabeer, 1994:73). Kabeer elaborated on this discussion, noting that the fragmentation of reality is "mirrored in the compartmentalization of the social sciences into a number of separate and apparently self-contained disciplines, each concerning itself with one aspect of the whole" (Kabeer, 1994:73). Feminists have added to this analysis the symbolic association of masculinity/femininity and public/private as units of analysis. All of these units of analysis have potential to distort reality, highlighting very basic and simplistic reflections of difference. Reducing the units of analysis to these simplistic terms or binary frameworks tends to obscure the complex interactions that occur at the interface of public/private relations.

Louise Lamphere (1993) addressed the complexity and precariousness of twin concepts and dichotomies such as public/private, productive/reproductive and argued that anthropological studies conducted in cross-cultural environments throughout the world challenge the utility of these dichotomies to explain reality. In her view, this interest in categorical divisions in binary frameworks "has been replaced by an emphasis on relationships and an analysis that focuses on the ways in which inequality gets reproduced through marriage transactions, claims on the labor of others, and giving and receiving of gifts" (Lamphere, 1993:73). She pointed to the relationship of dominance and subordination as a "much more layered, contextualized phenomenon – more interesting

than the simple assertion that women are universally subordinated. The processes through which women's inequality (and that of young men) is constructed are laid bare, rather than flatly asserted" (Lamphere, 1993:73).

In her analysis of anthropological studies, Lamphere uncovered the complexity of interaction and segregation of men and women in different spheres, pointing to the public and private spheres as shared domains in which both women and men are part. She summarized these examples by noting that the dichotomy between public and private is an important component in understanding women's roles in cross-cultural perspective. Lamphere's approach also provided the foundation for further and more nuanced analyses of social life, allowing for more detailed studies of women's lives. These more detailed studies "have gone beyond the use of dichotomies to produce analyses of the complex and layered structure of women's lives" (Lamphere, 1993:75).

In the *Sexuality of Organization*, the authors drew the reader's attention to sexuality as an important aspect of organizational life which shapes relationships and creates patterns of organizational behaviour. In specific reference to the public/private dichotomy, Burrell and Hearn (1992) pointed to the interconnectedness of public and private life whereby "...sexuality brings private experiences, which do not necessarily involve explicit or visible behaviours in the organization, into the public domain" (Burrell and Hearn, 1992:22). In another chapter, Parkin (1992) referred to the exercise of gender power in the public and private spheres and recognized that "these powers are underpinned by the male sexual narrative, and the further dimension of the ambiguousness of the organizational setting as neither public nor private but both at the same time"

(Parkin, 1992:123). She argued that "[e]xploitation of sexuality is a public issue within organizations which straddle the public and the private, which are neither public nor private yet which incorporate elements of both, so that power may be exerted through either the public or the private mode, or through moving between the two, or through both modes together"(Parkin, 1992:124). Parkin's analysis of residential care providers revealed the nature and extent to which organizational staff in the traditional public realm interact with the clients or recipients in the conventional private realm. In this example, public and private clearly converge at the interface of staff/client relations. Her example revealed how public organizational staff entered the private domain of their clients upon entering their private homes.

Parkin's analysis explained the "blurred, ambiguous, intermediate zone of organizational life where the public domain incorporates and scrutinizes private and personal experiences, which thus cease to be private" (Parkin, 1992:122). Her analysis brought to light the nature of male domination in both the public and private spheres and the implications of male domination for male organizational staff entering the homes or private spheres of their clients. This is a useful analysis of the complexity and overlap of public and private realms, particularly for an analysis of development organizations that ultimately intrude on the private lives of their clients by entering their communities and homes in order to facilitate project implementation. The public and private differentiation is therefore obscured as organizational staff enter into both realms and impact on the lives of their clients in both indirect and direct ways. The question of sexuality raises further questions worth considering that highlight the sex of the organizational staff member, the

impact of his or her sex when entering the private realms of clients and the nature of the power relations that will develop as a result of the sex of the individuals.

Some feminist theorists have identified patterns of segregation. Walby (1988) for example, expressed the need to move beyond the conventional approach to analysing men's and women's roles in the organization as an extension of their position in the family. Walby identified patterns of segregation which are both horizontal and vertical. "Women both do jobs which are simply different from those that men do (horizontal segregation) and also work at lower levels in the occupational hierarchy (vertical segregation)" (Walby, 1988:2-3). Walby suggested, however, that segregation in employment is by "ethnicity as well as by gender, with complex patterns as these intersect" (Walby, 1988:3). Here Walby called for attention to additional layers that need to be considered in an examination of the segregation of work within organizations. Mohanty also addressed the multidimensional aspects of organizational inequality. Mohanty argued, "gender discrimination is neither the sole nor perhaps the primary locus of the oppression of Third World women" (Mohanty, 1991:315). Mohanty identified a broader base on which feminisms can agree which involves a recognition of the role that racism and economic exploitation play in the oppression of women around the world (Mohanty, 1991). Ecofeminists and feminist environmentalists have added environmental degradation to the list of factors that contribute to women's oppression.

An explanation of the inside/outside dichotomy has been further explained by the ideologies, symbolisms and values accorded to each sphere. Catherine MacKinnon provided an elaborate discussion of the nature of public/private interaction and the nature

of this dichotomy as a component of ideology. She noted that "to see the personal as political is to see the private as public" (MacKinnon, 1987:148). MacKinnon argued that "the separation between public and private collapses as anything other than potent ideology" (MacKinnon, 1987:148-149). Her feminist analysis of the public and private spheres revealed the extent of male intervention and control in the private sphere. The private sphere, she said, is a "sphere of battery, marital rape, and women's labour, of the central social institutions whereby women are deprived of (as men are granted) identity, autonomy, control, and self-determination..." (MacKinnon, 1987:149).

Acker's contributions to the theory of gendered organizations highlighted the interacting processes that define organizations as gendered whereby gendered refers to "advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, [which] are patterned throughout and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine" (Acker, 1990:146). Acker's analysis addressed the discourse and sub-text of gender symbols, language, ideology, interactions, and organizational logic. "In organizational logic, both jobs and hierarchies are abstract categories that have no occupants, no human bodies, no gender...The concept of a job assumes a particular gendered organization of domestic life and social production" (Acker, 1990:146).

The process of dichotomizing public and private has been explained by Wright (1997) as historically rooted in development theory. Development, she argued, "prioritizes men's farming and men's industrial work and denigrates women's work, regardless of where it is performed....women's value came to be determined by their *symbolic*

association with the private sphere" (Wright, 1997:81, italics original author). Women's symbolic association with the private sphere refers to the perception of women's work as inferior, not due to the kind of work itself, but because women are doing it. Thus work is valued when it is carried out by men regardless of the type of activities it entails (Wright, 1997).

Wright stated that how women are living a "contradictory reality" since they are defined in the context of the private sphere because of their roles as wives and mothers. However, they also participate in the public sphere, producing goods for the market (Wright, 1997). This contradiction, she indicated, "is the key to the public/private distinction in development: women may labour outside the domestic sphere in a practical sense, but their labour outside the domestic sphere is marginalized and devalued as much as their domestic labour" (Wright, 1997:82).

According to Wright, the distinctions between public and private may exist; however, they are blurred (Wright, 1997:82). Further investigation of the public/private dualism is essential to a more critical examination of development issues such as gender inequality in the workplace since the "public/private discourse remains relevant, and crucial, precisely because Western theories retain their public/private distinctions even as societies undergo changes that blur the original distinctions" (Wright, 1997:82).

Alternative Feminist Frameworks of Analysis

Alternative feminist frameworks of analysis are needed to provide a more nuanced understanding of gender inequality that both explains and transcends the dichotomous divisions addressed throughout feminist and development literature. This section points to

the complex nature of gender inequality that is shaped in relation to other differences such as age, educational level, marital status, and wealth. For the most part, feminist theories that address how gender intersects with these other categories of difference have been limited to explaining gender relations at the community level. This study explored the potential for extending these arguments to the organizational or meso-level to explain the reality of complex gender relations within ENGOs and in so doing reveal the tension between the public/private dichotomy.

Various bodies of feminist inquiry such as postmodern feminism and socialist feminism have questioned the appropriateness of binary divisions in describing gender relations and in explaining gender inequality. Postmodern feminism, feminist political ecology and socialist feminist literature have pointed to the complex nature of gender relations and diversity (i.e., age, wealth, status) at the community or micro level. However, the research conducted for this thesis considered whether a complex feminist analytical framework can be adopted to understand gender inequality and the politics of difference at the organizational level.

As Sacks pointed out, we "cannot presume that differences always imply dominance and subordination; it must provide room to explore the question. It must also be multidimensional so that it can distinguish different areas of social life and assess women's position relative to men's in each of them" (Sacks, 1979:102). Postmodern feminism has recently emerged to address the complexity and interdependence of dichotomous relationships. Some important postmodern feminist contributions to the area of gender and development have underscored the need to deconstruct the development

expert calling for an approach that "fosters open, consultative dialogue" (Parpart and Marchand, 1995:19). This approach "can empower women in the South to articulate their own needs and agendas" (Parpart and Marchand, 1995:19).

In the deconstruction of development discourse, postmodern feminists also pointed to the need for context-specific research and the need to "situate women's voices/experiences in the specific historical, spatial and social contexts within which women live and work" (Parpart and Marchand, 1995:18).

While more recent feminist contributors have called for an approach to analysing development from the perspective of women as subjects rather than objects of development, the terrain upon which the development discourse has been cultivated, remains intact (Graf, 1997). Therefore, plurality and diversity of women's voices are relevant to an analysis of gender and organizations; however, it is not sufficient to reveal the structures within which women must negotiate and navigate gendered terrain. While dichotomies remain significant features of development discourse, postmodern feminist contributions have elaborated the debates addressed above pointing to the complex, interdependent and dynamic nature of gender relations at the interface of public and private spheres.

Feminist contributors to bureaucratic organizational analysis have revealed the extent to which organizations themselves use the Western development discourse which is couched in dichotomous divisions. In so doing, these organizations constitute gendered terrain that reinforces patterned gender inequality in their activities and structural arrangements. However, this is a partial perspective and not an adequate account of the

nature of relationships and interaction that exist between binary concepts and at the interface of two seemingly opposite terms. Furthermore, the use of dichotomous divisions between public and private does not reveal how individuals and groups navigate this gendered terrain in diverse, complex and multi-layered ways. A more complete analysis of organizational activities is, however, expected to benefit from an alternative feminist approach that more clearly depicts the practice of gender and development.

CHAPTER THREE:

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter begins with a discussion of the nature of feminist inquiry, its implications for epistemology, methodology and research. Particular emphasis is placed on the nature of cross-cultural research and the implications of conducting feminist research in a cross-cultural framework. The chapter then turns to the application of feminist methodology and epistemology in gender analysis research. The gender analysis and feminist field study approach influenced the types of methods used to gather information. These methods include participant observation, semi-structured interviews and document review. The final section in this chapter describes how the information was analysed using coding, journal notes, and documenting observations.

The Parameters of Feminist Epistemology and Methodology

Prior to establishing the methods that would be used to conduct the research for this thesis, I began by considering what it means to do feminist research. Feminist epistemology has borrowed two important concepts from Critical Theory including positioning and participation. These two important concepts are rooted in Critical Theory but have been adopted by feminist epistemologists and feminist standpoint theorists to account for gender inequality and gender issues. One feminist epistemologist in particular, Sandra Harding, has contributed to our understanding that science is understood as a social activity (Harding, 1987). This insight is in keeping with Smith's (1979) claim that "social research begins with experience as it unfolds in everyday life" (1979:49). The

purpose of this chapter is not to revisit feminist standpoint theory or to give any greater depth to feminist epistemological inquiries since this is beyond the scope of this study. However, some of the major contributions of feminist epistemology and methodology are discussed here briefly insofar as they are relevant to my own research.

Feminist Epistemology

Feminist epistemology -- or a feminist approach to the theory of knowledge – is concerned with who has knowledge and "what kinds of things can be known" (Harding, 1987:3). The feminist epistemological inquiry questions whether the subject of social research is "always assumed to be a man" (Harding, 1987:3). Feminist epistemology has been insightful, particularly, as Lennon and Whitford (1994) argued "through the recognition that legitimation of knowledge-claims is intimately tied to networks of domination and exclusion" (Lennon and Whitford, 1994:1). This reference to knowledge claims highlights the importance of identifying discourse as the locus of power and inequality.

Feminist Methodology

Feminist methodology is the application of feminist theories to the science of inquiry. For feminist researchers, the "traditional theories have been applied in ways that make it difficult to understand women's participation in social life, or to understand men's activities as gendered..." (Harding, 1987:3). The methodology employed in this investigation is a field study and is discussed below.

Field Studies and Feminist Insights

Within the field study approach, data can be collected through "observation,

interviews, or the mechanical recording of conversation and/or behaviour. The analysis of the resulting textual data is a subjective/objective dance toward contextual truth..." (Miller and Crabtree, 1992:13). A field study or field research can start with "specific sampling strategies, data collection techniques, and an analysis style chosen to maximize initial understanding of the research question and its aims and objectives" (Miller and Crabtree, 1992:13). Collection of data through specific methods can be guided by some general philosophical or epistemological considerations.

A field study approach involves research conducted in a specific context or environment; or, according to Manheim, field research "refers to any research which takes place in a natural setting" (Manheim, 1977:185). A field study, as a methodological approach, is concerned with "qualitative observations of natural situations or settings" (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:1). The researcher engaged in a field study is "directly and personally engaged in an interpretive focus on the human field of activity with the goal of generating holistic and realistic descriptions and/or explanations" (Miller and Crabtree, 1992). The field study therefore has both descriptive and explanatory power.

A field study requires an appreciation for unique and evolving data collection methods since "...field research has no prepackaged research designs" (Miller and Crabtree, 1992:5). Miller and Crabtree argued that "specific data collection methods, sampling procedures, and analysis styles are used to create unique, question-specific designs that evolve throughout the research process"(Miller and Crabtree, 1992:5).

What is distinct about the field study approach is not the techniques used to collect data but rather the relationship that the researcher has with subjects and information

collected. (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). In a field study, the researcher "strives to be a participant in and a witness to the lives of others" (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:3).

The field study approach "differs from other methods of research in that the researcher performs the tasks of selecting topics, decides what questions to ask, and forges interest *in the course of the research itself*" (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:5, italics original authors). The field study approach is less concerned with hypothesis-testing, and more interested in revealing information about a social setting in the context of a research question. In so doing, the field study requires the participation of multiple players that can provide that information to answer the research question.

The field study shares similar characteristics with other methodological approaches. Examples of similar research methodologies include ethnography, case studies, and qualitative field studies (Lofland and Lofland, 1995) as well as qualitative research (Miller and Crabtree, 1992). An additional methodology that is often compared to a field study is the naturalist approach. The naturalist approach has "acquired the connotation of minimizing the presuppositions with which one approaches the empirical world" (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:7). A naturalist approach is an attempt to describe reality as objectively as possible. In order to conduct objective research, it is necessary to account for the numerous viewpoints and multiple perspectives pertaining to the subject of investigation.

A comparison between field studies and the naturalistic paradigm reveal the centrality of participatory approaches that strive for holistic studies (Lee and Shute, 1991). The field study methodology, like the naturalistic paradigm strives to "ensure that the

context is taken into account and that the views of all interested parties are included" (Lee and Shute, 1991:255). A naturalistic approach therefore takes into consideration "cultural values and biases of both the evaluator and the project participants" (Lee and Shute, 1991:262).

A field study is generally considered interdisciplinary in nature (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:6). As an interdisciplinary approach, the field study shares additional similarities with naturalism or naturalistic research. However, different academic disciplines have adopted different styles of conducting field research. The significance of an interdisciplinary technique such as a field study is particularly relevant in this study since it merges theoretical and methodological issues of a number of disciplines. These include the social science disciplines of political science, public administration, women's studies, organizational studies, sociology, international development, rural studies, and environmental studies.

Positioning

The research carried out during the field study took place in a cross-cultural environment. The nature of cross-cultural field studies has implications for the researcher's positioning, where the researcher understands him- or herself to be located in the process of data collection. "The epistemological foundation of field-studies is indeed the proposition that only through direct experience can one accurately know much about social life" (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:3). The epistemological underpinnings of the field study approach point to the importance of direct experience in the documentation of social life (Lofland and Lofland, 1995).

Researchers using the field study approach call for an approach to start from where you are (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). Recognising my position as an 'outsider' in a cross-cultural context allowed me to position myself realistically in the research project and pointed to the need for additional perspectives in this study. Seeking views from 'insiders' helped to fill these gaps created in a cross-cultural environment. I therefore hoped to obtain numerous perspectives through interaction and discussion with various people representing diverse backgrounds.

Feminist epistemologists have also pointed to the importance of positioning and the gender-related impact that positioning may have. It is important at the onset, however, to explain that a feminist epistemology is not about a female way of knowing. Rather, as Haraway (1991) noted,

> ... there is no single feminist standpoint because our maps require too many dimensions for that metaphor to ground our visions. But the feminist standpoint theorists' goal of an epistemology and politics of engaged, accountable positioning remains eminently potent. The goals are better accounts of the world...(Haraway, 1991:196).

Feminist epistemology is thus more than a simple articulation of female subjectivity (Lennon and Whitford, 1994). Instead, the feminist approach addresses the nature in which knowers are situated and their positioning in relation to the subject of research (Lennon and Whitford, 1994). It further recognises that a single female way of knowing is not possible in light of the many different ethnic and class differences among women. Instead, feminist epistemology offers a critique of what has traditionally been accepted as knowledge, the methods we employ in the pursuit of knowledge, and the gender dimensions of that knowledge.

Positionality, according to Haraway (1991), begins with a reflection on the significance of the researcher's position in relation to the subjects of research. This approach rejects the positivist approach which Corradia Fiumara (1994) identified as the positivist's "ultimate point of departure" (Corradia Fiumara, 1994:33). Positivism is the traditional approach to conducting objective research whereby the researcher is able to stand outside of the object of investigation as a removed outside observer. Haraway has further challenged the positivist's approach which she argues begins with the cannibal eye, the God's eye view or the view from above. Feminist epistemology, according to Haraway, is arguing for a view from a 'travelling lens'. Haraway seeks to recapture the essence of seeing and vision in feminist discourse by rejecting disembodied vision (Braidotti 1994).

Disembodied vision refers to the nature of observation itself. The central argument for embodied vision is that the researcher and the researcher's experience are embodied. Therefore, what is experienced and carried out is a reflection in some part of the researcher's experiences. Within the feminist epistemological paradigm, we see in multiple ways with partial perspectives. This notion of positioning and situated knowledge is central to the feminist epistemological inquiry (Braidotti, 1994).

Objectivity has been summarized by Smith (1990) as a "set of procedures that serve to separate the discipline's body of knowledge from its practitioners" (Smith, 1990:16). Feminist epistemology and feminist reflections on knowledge reveal that power is constituted and reconstituted in the unequal relationship between researcher and researched. Lazreg argued that objectivity is "an ever-receding goal and to strive to reach

it is an unending historical process" (Lazreg, 1994:58-59). The goal of conducting research therefore becomes less of a process of operating within the framework of objectivity but striving for objectivity as a process-oriented approach. In so doing, research must begin with an awareness of the researcher's positioning in relation to the subject of investigation as well as "exploring as insiders the socially organized practices that constitute objectified forms of knowledge" (Smith, 1990:12). Positional objectivity, therefore, according to Sen (1993), relies on subjectivism and cultural relativism. Mangena addressed the Subject-Subject relationship which she said "requires the respondent to be treated as one who holds 'truth'... The researcher and the researched then stand in a dialectical relationship to learn from each other" (Mangena, 1994:279).

Feminist methods have offered a valuable starting point for conducting research since they allow the researchers to connect everyday life with the analysis of the social institutions that shape that life" (Hekman, 1997:343). The way in which we see the world and the gendered symbolism that characterizes the world are at the heart of feminist epistemology. Hayles noted the particularities of our histories and circumstances which mark humans as embodied creatures. In Hayles' view, we interact with the world as embodied beings and must therefore understand our positioning (Hayles, 1995). In a similar vein, Haraway argued for politics and epistemologies of location and positioning (Haraway, 1991).

Braidotti expanded these ideas to account for the notion that "struggles over what counts as rational accounts of the world are struggles over how to see" (Braidotti, 1994:17). Our positioning is therefore central to an understanding of the social and

cultural conditions which are historically specific and result in the individual's construction of knowledge (Hayles, 1995). In the process of understanding our cultural and social positions, we are better able to provide accurate accounts of the world. The more one can understand about one's positionality, according to Hayles, the more objective one can be (Hayles, 1995).

Positioning and the subjectivity/objectivity dichotomy have particular relevance to environmental organizations that define themselves based on scientific principles. However, the artificial dialectical relationship between subjectivity/objectivity needs to be addressed in order to reveal the interconnectedness of these two themes throughout research. Mangena argued that "both subjects and objects of experience are together involved in the process of formulating human knowledge" (Mangena, 1994:279). In this dialectical relationship, both parties are expected to benefit from the knowledge shared and created. In response to these epistemological inquiries, feminists began to adopt participatory methods in their field work in order to "achieve a more humanly representative and less oppressive knowledge" (Mangena, 1994:279). An overview of participation as a consideration in field work is discussed in greater detail below.

Positioning and its Applications Throughout the Field Study

Through ongoing reflection of my positioning as a researcher in a cross-cultural context, I frequently requested feedback from the people I was interviewing. My positioning within the host organization as a volunteer meant that I had increased opportunities to collect information for this study. It also meant that I had ongoing contact with key informants within the host organization who could offer feedback on this study

and assist in the development of the research questions. On a number of occasions, various ENGO staff provided input into my research questions in order to enhance their relevance to the research study. The result of this ongoing interaction was a participatory element to the research that provided opportunities for participant observation.

The central argument here is that the researcher becomes the medium or instrumentality of the research (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:3). Lofland and Lofland (1995) noted that field studies are different than other methods in that they are concerned more with the course of the research itself. The course of the research is seen as an evolving analysis of a phenomenon. (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:5).

Evolution of the Field Study

The field study conducted in Malawi was made possible through International Development Research Centre (IDRC) funding. Also important was the support provided by the World University Service in Canada (WUSC). The assistance provided by WUSC began in 1996 during a two month applied research project in Malawi. During this applied research project, I travelled to Malawi to volunteer with CURE (the Co-ordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment), an indigenous environmental umbrella organization. During the applied research project in 1996, I met with the CURE staff and worked on a number of gender-related activities with this organization. Since CURE is one of the first and only organizations that is addressing gender issues in Malawi, their programmes and activities are very new in the country. My initial role in assisting CURE with their gender-related activities was to enhance CURE's gender programme by bringing to the programme ideas arising from my experience working in gender-related

activities in Zimbabwe in 1994 and 1995.

The experience I had working with NGOs and environmental projects in Zimbabwe exposed some of the gender issues and constraints faced by women in rural Zimbabwe (i.e., the extensive environmental and agricultural responsibilities women have as a result of the gender division of labour) (Tiessen, 1995). After completing this short-term applied research project at CURE, the staff at CURE expressed an interest in my return to Malawi to conduct further research on gender and environmental activities. This invitation to return to Malawi was a significant factor in the decision to conduct field study research in this country since it indicated support for the research that I hoped to carry out and pointed to a defined need in Malawi for further support in the development of the gender advisory programme at CURE.

In 1997, I returned to Malawi to volunteer at CURE. This volunteer placement involved working directly with the gender programme officer at CURE to develop CURE's gender advisory programme. The specific responsibilities I had as a WUSC volunteer at CURE involved the development of the gender advisory programme in collaboration with the existing CURE gender officer. I was requested by both WUSC and CURE to enhance the capacity of CURE's gender programme and CURE's gender personnel to develop a gender training programme and gender training manual. Additional responsibilities included delivering the gender awareness and analysis training sessions, assisting in the development of an assessment report of one ENGO in Malawi based on an in-depth investigation of the gender opportunities and constraints faced by this organization, and enhancing the capacity of CURE's gender officer to address feminist

theories and their applications in practice.

This volunteer placement provided direct daily access to a Malawian counterpart. Linga is a specialist on gender issues in Malawi and has been working as a gender officer at CURE for five years. Her primary responsibilities include raising awareness about gender issues with ENGO staff and providing gender awareness and analysis training. Working alongside Linga meant that I had access to a wealth of information about cultural practices and traditions in Malawi.

The volunteer placement meant that I was also able to contribute to the gender projects carried out by CURE. In effect, I was engaged in an exchange of information and skills with Linga. The opportunities that were created in this exchange of services and assistance was described by Lofland and Lofland (1995) as a trade-off. They explain trade-offs as the process whereby "people who are tolerating a known observer or an interviewer in their midst have every reason to ask, What do I get in return? What's the trade-off?" (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:59). The trade-off frequently involves assistance in mundane tasks that assist the organization and vary with the needs of the organization.

During the volunteer placement at CURE, the skills that I was able to offer the organization ranged from assistance with specific computer programme applications and routine activities such as photocopying and filing to more specialized tasks such as the facilitation of training programmes. Most important, this volunteer placement fostered interaction with the gender personnel leading to numerous discussions that enhanced the cross-cultural experience.

The physical assistance provided by CURE included an office, a desk, access to

phone, fax machine, electronic mail, resources, and the use of vehicles on occasion. CURE staff also provided contact names and assisted in developing interview questions to ensure that the interview questions were appropriate in this cultural context. The placement lasted thirteen months beginning in September 1997 and ending in October 1998.

About the Host Organization (CURE)

CURE was an ideal host organization since it is an environmental umbrella organization. This means that it works closely with all other environmental organizations in the country (government departments, United Nations agencies and NGOs) to foster sustainable development. CURE's mission is to:

> improve coordination, planning, implementation and the overall management of environmental activities at the national district and community level, amongst primarily NGOs, but also through consultations with Government and donors. CURE's activities are concentrated in three main areas: training, communications, and policy development and advocacy (CURE, 1998).

CURE is an indigenous and autonomous development organization. The staff working at CURE are Malawian and the head office is located in Malawi. Like most NGOs in Malawi, CURE relies on funding from international organizations like Oxfam. In addition, CURE, like most development organizations, has a Board of Directors that provides direction for organizational and project activities. CURE's board members consist of Malawians and expatriates from various organizations in Malawi.

As an umbrella organization, CURE offers a variety of services for organizations and individuals involved in environmental activities and CURE's primary goal is to coordinate the activities of various environmental organizations to reduce unnecessary overlap and to ensure effective development projects.

CURE's gender programme is well known in the country and provides a number of training and educational services to other environmental organizations. As a volunteer with CURE, I was primarily responsible for assisting with the gender programme at CURE and therefore was involved in delivering the training programmes. These training sessions provided an opportunity to learn a great deal about attitudes towards gender within the country and are discussed below in greater detail.

CURE also has one of the best resource centres in Malawi. The resource centre contains books, articles, magazines and project reports relevant to environmental issues in the country and the region. Access to this resource centre allowed me to carry out document review and to obtain a great deal of Malawi-specific information.

Gender Analysis Research

Feminist investigations of gender and development call for gender-sensitive participatory research in development work. Much of this feminist literature is concerned with gender inequality in the existing research and development. A gender analysis uses gender-disaggregated information to answer three questions. The first question addressed in a gender analysis is concerned with who does what work and the gender division of roles and responsibilities. This information gives a "richer and more complete picture of a production system" (Feldstein and Jiggins, 1994:3-4) and the activities carried out by men and women in this system. The second question is concerned with access to and control over the resources of production pointing to the explicit or hidden assumptions about the availability of resources. The third question involves information about the benefits of access to and control over resources (Feldstein and Jiggins, 1994).

A gender analysis relies on a set of tools to obtain information about the gender distribution and benefits of resources at the household or the organizational level. Gender analyses have borrowed the tools of participant observation and intensive interviewing from field studies approaches. During a gender analysis, the researcher is concerned with listening carefully to "how women informants think about their lives and men's lives, and critically to how traditional social scientists conceptualize women's and men's lives" (Harding, 1987:2).

Methods

Three specific methods were employed throughout the field study to obtain gender- and sex-disaggregated data. These methods included participant observation, semi-structured interviews and document review.

Participant Observation

Participant observation "refers to the process in which an investigator establishes and sustains a many-sided and relatively long-term relationship with a human association in its natural setting for the purpose of developing a scientific understanding of that association" (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:18). Traditional approaches to participant observation involve the techniques of "looking and listening...watching and asking..." (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:19). Participant observation is also known as field or qualitative observation (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:18). It is a method frequently adopted to collect information during a field study.

Participant observation, as a method adopted for this research, was made possible as a result of my volunteer placement at CURE. This volunteer placement allowed me to

observe the day-to-day activities of this organization, activities that offered valuable information about gender-related activities within environmental NGOs. The volunteer placement meant that I was an active participant in the activities of the organization. As a gender and projects officer, I participated in meetings to discuss gender and environmental issues in Malawi. I also had the opportunity to visit field projects carried out by CURE and the organizations that fall under CURE's umbrella for advisory services. As a result of these meetings and field visits, I was able to discuss informally with ENGO staff and project beneficiaries, on a number of occasions, the challenges and opportunities to addressing gender issues within ENGOs. This on-going contact that was facilitated through participant observation could not have been achieved through other methods such as survey research or interviewing alone.

Of additional significance to the participant observation method was the opportunity to observe and participate in the daily discussions with colleagues at the host organization. This interaction allowed me to discuss gender-related and cultural issues with co-workers revealing gender issues about their public and private lives. Informal conversations with co-workers throughout the day and during lunch-hours allowed for an open and informal discussion of gender-related issues without the pressure of formal interviews. Participant observation also allowed me to obtain information through a survey, group discussions and an organizational assessment/case study conducted with one ENGO.

Survey

As part of my responsibilities as a volunteer at CURE, I was required to assist in

the development of a directory of *NGOs involved in Gender and Natural Resource Management*. The gender officer at CURE (Linga) and I worked together to develop a questionnaire to be sent to all of the NGOs dealing with gender and/or NRM activities in Malawi. The questionnaire was modelled after a similar questionnaire that was mailed out two years earlier. Together, Linga and I designed an up-to-date questionnaire that was consistent with questions posed in the earlier questionnaire. However, since there were specific questions that I wanted answered for my thesis research, I was able to pose some additional questions on this questionnaire. Linga's role in relation to these additional questions was to consider the appropriateness of the questions and to offer assistance for appropriate wording of these questions to ensure that the questions were clear and easy for the respondents to answer.

The additional questions that I posed on this questionnaire were designed to learn more about the gender-related activities taking place within the organization. I wanted to know specifically where male and female staff were located within the organization, the representation of male and female staff in different levels of the organization (i.e., senior management, junior management, field staff). I also added an open-ended question probing the main gender issues or challenges in the organization. The additional questions were designed to reveal the level of awareness and understanding of the meaning of gender and gender-related concepts and therefore asked the survey respondents to define the term gender and what is meant by a gender-sensitive project. The questionnaire is found in Appendix 2. The questions that were of particular interest to CURE included those questions that addressed the specific gender and NRM projects currently taking

place in Malawi. However, CURE staff, and Linga in particular, were happy to include these additional questions that they felt would enhance CURE's understanding of gender and environment in Malawi.

Sample Group Selection Criteria for the Survey

The first factor used in selecting the ENGO participants was the nature of their development projects. The sample group selected for this research involved ENGOs (NGOs involved in environmental and natural resource management activities). While not all of the ENGO activities are limited to environmental projects (i.e., some ENGOs had small-scale enterprise activities), the basis for selection involved those ENGOs that had significant commitments to environmental management.

Equitable representation from the three regions of Malawi was used as a second criterion. The regions are identified as northern, central and southern (see Map of Malawi in Appendix 1). The purpose of regional representation was to offer a more accurate picture of gender and natural resource management activities in the country.

The identification of potential participants in the study was based on the CURE (Coordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment) *Directory of NGOs* involved in Environment which was produced in January 1997. The following chart provides a profile of the ENGOs that participated in the survey. The co-ordinating organization for ENGOs in Malawi (CURE) has defined these categorical distinctions of ENGOs as follows. An international NGO has been defined by CURE as an organization which may or may not be operating autonomously within Malawi but, otherwise falling under the umbrella of an international office while responding in some manner to the board

of directors or trustees registered in Malawi. An established national NGO is characterised by complete operational autonomy, a board of directors whose majority is composed of nationals operating in the country, independent fundraising, the place of legal operation being located in Malawi, and executives paid from within the NGO. An emerging national NGO is an NGO that has similar characteristics to established Malawian NGOs. However, these organizations have been operational in Malawi for not more than three years (CURE, 1998).

The ENGOs in this sample group have been working in Malawi for an average of 12 years. The longest recorded period of time that one of these NGOs have been working in Malawi is 51 years and the shortest period of time is two years.

Both Linga and I worked together to remind ENGO staff to return their completed survey by the determined deadline. I was responsible, however, for analysing the data and summarizing the findings. Once the information had been analysed, both Linga and I worked together to design a *Directory of Gender and NRM Activities in Malawi*. At the same time I was examining the questionnaire respondents to determine if they met the criteria of an ENGO that I determined at the beginning of the research stage. The questionnaire was distributed to 40 NGOs. These NGOs were identified with the assistance of the CURE staff and their selection was based on their involvement in CURE's activities and the nature of their organization's activities in natural resource management. The list of 40 NGOs was considered by the CURE staff to be an exhaustive list of all the organizations that work with CURE on a regular basis (i.e., take part in CURE's training programmes, attend CURE's environmental co-ordination meetings).

Table 3.1: Profiles of ENGOs that Participated in the Survey, Number of Years in Malawi and the Type of Organization

NAME	ACRONYM	YEARS	TYPE OF NGO
Plan International	Plan	4	International
Churches Action in Relief and Dev.	CARD	2	National (Established)
Christian Services Committee	CSC	30	International
Concern Universal	CU	11	International
CCAP Livingstonia Synod Dev. Dept.	CCAP	6	National (Established)
Zipatso Association of Malawi	Zipatso	5	National (Established)
Wildlife Society of Malawi	WSM	51	National (Established)
Evangelical Lutheran Dev. Programme	ELDP	9	International
Development Aid from People to People	DAPP	2.5	International
Africare	Africare	12	International
Enterprise Dev. and Training Agency	EDETA	3	National (Emerging)
Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief	CPAR	9	International
Action Aid Malawi	AA	9	International
Paper Making Education Trust	PAMET	8	National (Established)
World Vision International	WVI	16	International
Malawi Fresh Water Project	MFWP	2	National (Emerging)
Evangelical Baptist Church of Malawi	ECB	11	National (Established)
Save the Children - Malawi	Save-Malawi	40	National (Established)
International Eye Foundation	IEF	25	International
Oxfam Great Britain	Oxfam - GB	4	International
Greenline Movement	Greenline	3	National (Emerging)
Rural Foundation for Afforestation	RUFA	3	National (Emerging)
Co-ordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment	CURE	4	National (Established)

Forty NGOs were sent questionnaires and 32 organizations returned their completed questionnaires. The reasons indicated for those organizations that did not return the survey included lack of time to participate in this study, an unwillingness to participate, and in one case the NGO could not be contacted. The organization was rumoured to have folded.

Of the 32 organizations that completed the survey, only 23 of these organizations met the criteria that I established at the beginning of the research phase. These criteria were developed in order to ensure a sample group of organizations that are predominantly involved in environmental or natural resource management activities. The 23 ENGO survey responses that did meet the criteria were then analysed and the information was summarized. This specific activity was entirely my project and I did not seek assistance of feedback from Linga's while analysing this data. From time-to-time, however, I would inform Linga about the status of the findings. The survey allowed me to obtain some general, as well as specific, information about a larger number of organizations, thus providing a more comprehensive picture of the gender-related activities being carried out among ENGOs in Malawi.

One disadvantage of administering a survey is the inability to obtain detailed information through follow-up discussions with all of these organizations. Also, a number of NGOs that participated in the survey indicated that they were being faxed questionnaires on a regular basis (i.e., as much as one questionnaire per week). Furthermore, the staff who filled out the questionnaires may have provided a biased picture of the organization as a result of their positions within the organizations. Also, the

survey respondents remained anonymous and it was therefore not possible to disaggregate this data based on sex.

Group Discussions

During the volunteer placement, I was required to assist in the planning and facilitation of gender awareness and analysis training workshops for NGO staff. A total of five gender awareness and analysis training workshops were facilitated between December 1997 and September 1998. The workshops were developed and team-taught by my co-worker, Linga, and me. They lasted approximately one week and involved an introduction to the major themes and concepts in gender and development, and skills training in the use of gender analysis tools. Over the course of this week, the participants were asked to discuss their attitudes about gender issues in Malawi. Of particular interest were the group discussions and activities that revealed information about attitudes and perceptions of gender and development in Malawi. The discussion groups were formed by individuals volunteering to take part in the training workshops.

During the group discussions, I was able to moderate the discussion to ensure that the it stayed on topic. My role as researcher and as facilitator meant that the I could also participate in the discussion but play a larger role in observing the interaction between individuals and noting the exchanges taking place.

The advantages of participant observation of group discussions were that I was able to observe the gender dynamics during the interaction between the individuals and to have greater access to views, opinions, experiences and attitudes of the individuals. Despite the participatory nature of group discussions, it was found that some individuals

tended to dominate the discussions. Since I was a facilitator in these group discussions, I was able to help guide the discussions and to moderate group participation by encouraging the less aggressive individuals to participate.

An additional advantage of conducting these group discussions with Linga was that we could spend some time following the group exercises debriefing and reflecting on the comments raised by the participants. On a number of occasions, I used this opportunity to ask Linga to clarify specific examples or translate comments raised by various participants, particularly when the participants referred to a cultural practice that I was not familiar with or spoke in the national language, Chichewa. This debriefing proved to be a useful exchange as Linga and I discussed the different activities and our often different perceptions of these activities.

The purpose of the group discussions was to provide a format in which the participants could share ideas and concerns about gender and development, learn from each other, discuss cultural issues concerning gender and the problems that they pose for themselves as NGO staff and consider ways to implement gender in their programmes, projects, and activities. The group discussion format provided considerable interaction between the workshop participants. Using participatory exercises adopted from the *Oxfam Gender Training Manual* and the *CCIC Training Manual*, the groups discussed specific gender-related issues. Topics included the advantages of being a man or a woman, the traditional and culturally defined roles of men and women in the gender division of labour, cross-cutting gender themes and the gender-related issues in various sectors of society (like economics, politics and environment). A summary of the discussion group guideline

questions is found in Appendix 3. A ranking exercise was carried out in a group discussion format. The purpose of the ranking exercise was to determine whether the development practitioners considered gender-related issues to be more relevant in some projects than in others. The ranking exercise is found in Appendix 6.

One of the specific activities adopted to encourage group discussions was the use of case studies. The case studies were borrowed from *the Oxfam Gender Trainer's Manual* and allowed the group participants to consider a scenario and discuss the gender issues in that scenario. Last, the group discussions allowed the workshop participants to consider the strategies of incorporating gender into their projects and programmes. The structure of the workplan involved determining the goal of the project, activities for reaching goals and how specifically gender-related issues can be addressed.

Sample Group Selection Criteria for the Group Discussions

The participants in the group discussions were selected based on their involvement with CURE's gender awareness and analysis training workshops. These participants are working at a variety of NGOs in Malawi. Discussion group sessions were conducted with two groups from World Vision International (WVI), one youth organization, Active Youth Initiative for Social Enhancement (AYISE). Two discussion groups were conducted with representatives from a number of NGOs. The complete list of NGOs represented in the discussion groups is found in Appendix 8.

Once the workshops had ended, Linga and I would summarize the findings from the workshop in a report. I often found that Linga would recall specific activities or comments that I had forgotten and vice versa. Sharing the responsibilities of the group

discussions with Linga meant that the analysis of the discussions was much more informed and comprehensive than if I had conducted the group discussions alone.

Case Study: Gender Assessment of one ENGO in Malawi

The third activity that arose as a result of participant observation was the opportunity to conduct a case study of one ENGO in Malawi. An assessment of one international ENGO in Malawi was conducted as a component of the responsibilities carried out during the volunteer placement. The assessment was carried out by the researcher and two other ENGO staff in Malawi including my co-worker from CURE (Linga) and the gender co-ordinator from the ENGO under examination for this case study (Stella). The case study involved a comprehensive examination of gender issues at the various levels of this ENGO. The case study involved semi-structured interviews with 21 staff representing senior management, middle management and junior management. SSI were also conducted with the beneficiaries of this organization's projects (community village committees and community members).

This exercise involved considerable travel, field work and time (approximately three months). Given the time constraints, it was only possible to conduct a case study with one ENGO during the research period. The study was an important exercise because it elicited information about gender at the organizational level and at the implementation level. The case study allowed me to probe gender activities at the organizational level. The extensive interaction with the staff from this ENGO enhanced my understanding of the opportunities and constraints to the adoption of gender-related activities.

During the case study, information was collected through semi-structured

interviews with individuals and groups. Additional means of gathering information included visiting community sites and projects, meeting with village committees and review of relevant literature and documents on gender in Malawi. Throughout the data collection stage, the three of us shared the responsibilities, took turns interviewing the ENGO staff members, and discussed our findings at the end of the day together. Since I do not speak the local language, Linga and Stella were responsible for conducting interviews with community members and some of the field staff who were more comfortable answering in their local language. If Linga was conducting the interview in Chichewa, Stella would translate the questions and answers into English for me. Other times, I would wait until the end of the interview or the end of the day to read the notes that they had written in English during the interview or ask them to summarize the interview for me.

Upon completion of the data collection stage, Linga, Stella, and I met for approximately two weeks to analyse the information and to summarize it in the form of a report. Over the course of these two weeks we agreed on a format that would most clearly and accurately recount our findings. This team approach to analysing the interview findings created further opportunities for me as a researcher. It allowed me to learn how Linga and Stella reflected on the comments raised during the interviews and their perceptions of different remarks.

The analysis of the data was an opportunity to probe further into different issues to find out why Linga and Stella thought that senior management staff, for example, were not willing to address gender as an organizational issue. Their perceptions proved to be

valuable to this research since they were better placed to reflect on the culturally shaped attitudes and opinions expressed by ENGO staff.

The case study, discussion groups and survey pointed to the evolutionary nature of the research project characteristic of field studies. As the research stage progressed, additional opportunities were made available to collect data. This process of an evolving research methodology was made possible by adopting a field study approach to conducting research and through the method of participant observation. Participant observation proved to offer a wide range of opportunities to obtain gender-related information about ENGOs in Malawi. Furthermore, the method of participant observation allowed me to have increased access to information and contacts to carry out the second method which is discussed below as semi-structured interviews (SSI).

Semi-Structured Interviews

There are various methods and styles of interviewing during field studies. Lofland and Lofland (1995) call for unstructured interviewing when conducting a field study. Additional interviewing styles include semi-structured and structured. Intensive interviewing or unstructured interviewing "is a guided conversation whose goal is to elicit from the interviewee ... rich, detailed materials that can be used in qualitative analysis" (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:18) The interview is expected to reveal specific information about a particular topic and to reveal attitudes and opinions about that topic. (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). In addition, a set of guideline questions can be used to prevent the discussion from deviating too far from the discussion topics and questions. This type of interviewing style is called semi-structured interviewing.

The method of conducting semi-structured interviews (SSI) was developed to optimize knowledge, attitudes and practices in participatory research. It is a useful tool for carrying out open-ended interviews and offers a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the research. SSI, as a participatory tool, allows the researcher to generate data while establishing dialogue with the research participants.

SSI is primarily a "qualitative data-gathering technique"(Reinharz, 1992:18). As such, the SSI differs from survey research or structured interviewing because it allows for more flexible and free interaction between the researcher and interviewee. SSI uses open-ended questions which are designed to explore the attitudes, views and opinions of those being interviewed. This method also allows the interviewees to express their thoughts and memories "in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher" (Reinharz, 1992:20).

SSI are "guided, concentrated, focussed, and open-ended communication events that are co-created by the investigator and the interviewee(s) and occur outside the stream of everyday life. The questions, probes, and prompts are written in the form of a flexible interview guide" (Crabtree and Miller, 1992:16). SSI were chosen as a research tool to collect information about the views, opinions and attitudes of ENGO staff towards gender issues. The SSI began with the use of a tape recorder. However, the NGO staff appeared uncomfortable during tape recorded sessions and it seemed to take away from the informal atmosphere that was created without the use of the tape recorder.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants from ten ENGOs in Malawi. The key informants who were interviewed for the SSI process represented

various positions and levels within their organizations. The researcher attempted to meet with at least three staff members from each organization. These three staff members included a staff member from senior management, programme manager and gender focal point staff. The purpose of having key informants involved in the SSI representing these different positions within the organization was to ensure that a wider number of views and opinions were provided during the SSI. Attempts were also made to ensure that an equitable number of women and men were interviewed in this study. The equitable representation of men in women in the SSI was expected to foster sex-disaggregated data.

It was expected, at the beginning, that different staff members in different positions within the organization would have different understandings and experience in gender and development issues. In all ten ENGOs visited, at least one staff member was interviewed using SSI. In seven of the ten ENGOs, the researcher was able to interview three staff members representing these three different positions within the organization. Three ENGOs did not have representation from all three positions within the organizations. Because the organization was short-staffed, and without the staff available for interviews, only one SSI was conducted with these three ENGOs. Also the remote location of some of the ENGOs made it difficult to return to conduct additional interviews.

A total of 20 ENGO staff were interviewed - six women and 14 men. The high representation of male staff is a result of a low representation of women working in management and field staff positions. Some of the female staff did not want to be interviewed and indicated that their male counterparts would be better capable of answering the interview questions.

Sample Group Selection Criteria for Semi-Structured Interviews

In Malawi there are approximately 110 NGOs registered with CONGOMA. Of these 110 organizations, approximately 30 are described as working in natural resource management or have specific and significant activities in environmental management. It was from this group of NGOs that the ten ENGOs were identified as the sample group for SSI.

The selection of the ten ENGOs was determined by first seeking regional representation. Three ENGOs were selected from the northern region, three from the central region and four from the southern region. There is a larger number of ENGOs operating in the southern region; therefore this region had a slightly larger percentage of the ENGOs in the sample group. The selection of ENGOs also took into consideration the various types of ENGOs operating in Malawi and sought an equitable representation of national and international ENGOs. SSI were conducted with staff from four international and six national ENGOs.

Additional selection criteria involved agreement of the organizational staff being interviewed. The organizational staff were asked to indicate a willingness to participate in the interviews through a preliminary phone call to the organization. ENGO staff were asked in advance if they would be interested in participating in this research and were given the opportunity to decline an interview. Some of the ENGOs could not be reached while others indicated that they did not want to participate in the SSI. The end result was that ten ENGOs were willing to participate or had the staff available to participate in these interviews. Agreement to participate was established through verbal communication

during a telephone conversation. At times, consent to participate took place through written communication with the researcher when the individual could not be reached by telephone. In each of the organizations a senior management staff member was contacted. A senior management staff member was asked whether she or he would be willing to participate in this study. If the senior management staff member was willing to co-operate, then additional staff members (either two or three additional staff) were asked if they were willing to participate in the interviewing process. Some ENGO staff indicated that they did not have the time to participate in the interviewing process. However, the following ten ENGOs did participate in the SSI.

Table 3.2: Participants Involved in the Semi-Structured Interviews

NAME	ACRONYM	REGION	TYPE OF NGO
Beekeepers Association of Malawi	BAM	Northern	National
CCAP Livingstonia Synod Relief and Development Department	CCAP	Northern	National
Rural Foundation for Afforestation	RUFA	Northern	National
Action Aid Malawi	AA	Central	International
Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief	CPAR	Central	International
Plan International	Plan	Central	International
Paper Making Education Trust	PAMET	Southern	National
World Vision International	WVI	Southern	International
Malawi Fresh Water Project	MFWP	Southern	National
Greenline Movement	Greenline	Southern	National

The SSI with senior management staff took approximately two hours. Those SSI conducted with middle management lasted for approximately one hour. The guideline

questions used for SSI are found in Appendix 4.

Document Review

The documents that I was able to review would be extremely difficult to locate outside of Malawi. These documents contained specific country, region and district level information that helped me understand the political, economic, social and environmental context in Malawi. Document review allowed me to further explore the organizational opportunities and constraints concerning the adoption of gender-related activities.

Document review was made possible primarily by access to resources available in the CURE resource centre which contains a wide range of literature and documents. Of particular interest to the document review were the project reports and summaries conducted by ENGOs in Malawi. Additional relevant documents included government and NGO plans of action and reports. The purpose of reviewing existing documents and project reports was to better understand the activities and projects that have been undertaken in the past by development organizations in Malawi. A list of the documents is found in Appendix 7.

One of the reasons for gathering information through document review was that it was not intrusive and did not require a great deal of time from the NGO staff. Also, document review provided me with historical records that enabled me to study trends and activities taking place over a period of time. The document review complemented the other methods employed and revealed information about the extent to which ENGOs are addressing gender issues in their organizational policies and their project proposals.

Ethical Considerations

The methodology employed in this research was designed keeping in mind the potential problems that can result from cross-cultural studies. It abided by the protocols established by the ethical committee at the University of Guelph. The methods employed were also scrutinized by the staff working at the host organization (CURE) to ensure cross-cultural sensitivity. The ENGO staff working in Malawi were informed of my presence in Malawi and the purpose of my work during the research phase. This information was communicated to the ENGO staff via an announcement made in the CURE newsletter at the beginning of the research phase. Additional efforts to inform ENGO staff of the nature of this research were made through phone conversations, informal meetings during workshops and letter-writing.

Throughout the data collection stages, I informed the participants in this study that the information collected would be used for this doctoral thesis. Given the nature of the overlap in roles as a researcher and volunteer with the host organization, it was deemed appropriate to avoid the use of names of the participants to ensure anonymity.

Data Analysis

Both sex- and gender- disaggregated data analysis techniques were used. Sex-disaggregated data established the ratio of male to female staff working in the ENGOs. Furthermore, sex-disaggregated data provided information about the horizontal representation of men and women and therefore their location within the organizational hierarchy. Sex-disaggregated data further revealed the different attitudes and beliefs held by men and women.

The information collected in this study was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The survey data were analysed using the Corel Quatro Pro to derive quantitative measures such as averages, ranking and frequencies. The analysis also sought to disaggregate information based on the type of organization (international or national). This information noted some of the significant differences that exist between the two types of ENGOs. A qualitative analysis was also used to document the findings from participant observation, semi-structured interviews and document review. Qualitative analysis took place through coding.

Coding is the process of developing categories based on underlying dimensions or classifications of data. Coding involves assigning a number, symbol or word to the body of text or data being analysed (Manheim, 1977; Lofland and Lofland, 1995; Crabtree and Miller, 1992). The codebook is used for "ease in interpretation and to search for confirming/ disconfirming evidence in these interpretations"(Crabtree and Miller, 1992:99). The coding techniques adopted in this study built on feminists arguments that data needs to account for gender-disaggregated data. Gender coding allowed me to re-code existing work that had not accounted for gender differences. In so doing, gender coding offered a new set of lenses through which a body of information could be analysed. The gender coded text was then translated into a template or areas of investigation for further analysis.

The template was based on the types of information obtained from the ENGO staff. Specific categorical distinctions related to different facets of ENGO life including staffing issues, knowledge and capacity of ENGO staff to address gender issues, gender

policy formation, gender-sensitive projects, gender-sensitive programmes, gender issues as internal or external to the organization, gender and environment perceived as separate programme areas, budgeting for gender activities and reporting on gender issues.

Throughout the 13 months of the research, a log was kept on the activities that the researcher carried out, who these activities involved, and where and when the research activities took place. This log formed the basis for a chronological record that documented the course of activities over the research period. A summary of activities can be found in Appendix 5. Document review involved retrieving relevant documents and reviewing the information in these documents. The information was either photocopied or transcribed onto the computer as a form of note taking. These notes were later coded based on thematic similarities throughout the documents.

The template that divided the information into categories for analysis was used for each of the methods. During SSI, I wrote out the responses during the interview and later reviewed and recalled additional comments. This information was typed into a computer programme, reviewed and coded based on the categories identified in the template. Document review information and participant observation findings were recorded and coded in a similar fashion. Participant observation, however, relied more heavily on events that were recalled. Often the significance of an earlier event became apparent later on in the study and was recorded as a reflection on a specific activity or response. While recalling information has the potential to distort the facts, it also has the potential to provide insight and depth to a study that must also be understood in the context of a broad and interconnected set of findings.

CHAPTER FOUR:

CASE STUDY AND COUNTRY CONTEXT

Introduction

This chapter describes the setting within which the research took place, providing background information about gender issues in Malawi. The chapter provides an introduction to the economic, political and social issues in the country, commonly used indicators of gender inequality, context-specific information about lineage patterns, culture, customs and traditions, gender-specific issues at the rural community level and gender-related issues within development organizations. Researching the cultural context in which individuals and organizations operate was essential for this study.

Background to Malawi

Malawi is one of the world's poorest countries. In comparison to other countries in Africa, "Malawi is characterized by extremes of inequality and poverty" (Hirschmann, 1995:21). It is a small landlocked country of 94,300 square kilometres sharing borders with three countries -- Zambia to the east, Tanzania to the north, and Mozambique to the east, west and the south (WUSC, 1995). [See map of Malawi in Appendix 1]

Malawi's geographical character is dominated by Lake Malawi, the third largest lake in Africa. The climate in Malawi is predominantly tropical with some maritime influences during the cool season from May to July. Malawi also has a dry season from August to October and a wet season from November to April. The predominant vegetation is savannah woodland although there are some evergreen forests located in

areas where ground water is plentiful such as mountainous areas and river valleys (Kaonga, 1999).

Formerly a colony of Britain, Malawi achieved independence in 1964 when Dr. Hastings Banda and the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) came to power. Banda stayed in office from 1964 until May of 1994, controlling the country through a system of absolute rule with the support of a small group of the country's elites (Kaspin, 1995). A national election was held on May 17, 1994 which resulted in a victory for Bakili Muluzi of the United Democratic Front Party (UDF). Banda's despotism continues to have an impact on the people since Malawi continues to have a weak civil society and lack of competitive politics (Venter, 1995). The UDF is a multi-party government that is dominated by former MCP politicians and senior civil servants and the party adheres to the current economic liberalization policies introduced by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Kaspin, 1995).

The economy is dominated by agricultural exports such as tea, tobacco, and coffee. The per capita gross domestic product (GDP) is only US $ 230. The United Nations Development Programme's 1998 *Human Development Index* ranked Malawi as one of the least developed countries, placing Malawi 161st out of a 174 countries (UNDP, 1998). According to the *Situational Analysis of Poverty in Malawi* conducted by the Government of Malawi, more than half of the country lives below the poverty line (GoM, 1993).

The current population of Malawi is estimated to be around 11 million, making Malawi one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. With an annual growth rate

of 3.3 per cent, the population is expected to double by the year 2015. Between 1987 and 1994 more than one million refugees found asylum in Malawi, putting extra strain on Malawi's resources and agricultural capacity (WUSC, 1995). Population growth rates in Malawi and the pressure on natural resources and land are having a negative impact on food security (UNDP, 1995).

Poverty in Malawi is therefore increasingly linked to environmental degradation. Population growth and the influx of refugees have reduced the amount of available land per capita and the productive resource base on which the majority of the rural population depends, is shrinking. Increasing pressure on the land has forced many smallholder farmers to begin cultivating marginal lands, abandon or shorten fallow periods, reduce crop rotations, and generally resort to unsustainable agricultural practices which increase the risk of crop failure. Agricultural expansion is also the primary cause of deforestation (CURE, 1998). Poverty in Malawi has been attributed to "low agricultural production, low non-farm income, low education, poor health, rapid population growth, and weak institutional structures" (GoM, 1993).

Recognising the intricate link between poverty and resource degradation, the Government of Malawi produced a National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) in 1996 which identified the nine key environmental issues facing Malawi as soil erosion, deforestation, water resources degradation, depletion of fish stocks, reduced biodiversity, the degradation of human habitat, high population growth, climatic changes and air pollution. The NEAP outlines broad strategies for combatting environmental degradation and acknowledges the role that NGOs will play in this process (GoM, 1996).

Both the NEAP and the *Situation Analysis of Poverty in Malawi* offer little attention to the nature of gender inequality in the country and the extent to which poverty and natural resource management are gendered experiences. However, the Government of Malawi as well as the NGOs working in Malawi are increasingly linking natural resource management activities to gender issues within the community. There is a growing awareness among development practitioners about the nature of men's and women's environmental activities and their relationship to sustainable community development. For example, there is increased documentation in project reports about women's needs and concerns within environmental rehabilitation and management programmes. Environmental rehabilitation and agricultural programmes have, in the past, been insensitive to gender issues, often ignoring women's needs and failing to recognise and build upon their capacity to manage the environment in a sustainable manner. The following section reviews some of the gender issues in Malawi beginning with background information pointing to some of the commonly used indicators of gender inequality.

Gender Issues in Malawi: Commonly Used Indicators

Several reports identify the existing gender issues in Malawi. The Government of Malawi (GoM), for example, has published a document that outlines gender imbalances in almost every sector of development. The disadvantaged position of women is perceived to be a reflection of deeply entrenched negative attitudes towards women; discrimination based on sex; harsh living conditions of most women and their heavy workloads and responsibilities; gaps in policy and decision-making; and women's low levels of participation in development projects (GoM, 1998).

In an effort to balance power relations between men and women, the Government of Malawi (GoM) has produced a *Malawi Platform for Action* which acknowledges the importance of the new Constitution in safeguarding the rights and freedoms of women and identifies areas of focus in the process of promoting equality and human rights of women, enhancing the effective participation of women in development, and integrating a gender perspective into development (GoM, 1998).

A second document is still in the preparatory stages. This document is being prepared by a gender task force consisting of staff from the NGO sector. *The NGO Gender Platform for Action* is based on the findings of a *Gender Situation Analysis* of NGO activities in Malawi conducted by the Council for NGOs in Malawi (CONGOMA). This task force has asserted that although gender and development is a relatively new development approach and that familiarization with the concept is low among NGO staff, there is a growing level of awareness about the need to involve both women and men in development and to address gender issues. However, the means to achieve this involvement are not made clear (CONGOMA, 1997a).

Malawi has endorsed the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) which was signed in 1979 and ratified in 1987; and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC). It has also ratified the *Convention Concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Equal Value* (ratified 1965); the *Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation* (ratified 1965); and the *Convention on the Political Rights of Women* adopted in 1952 and acceded in 1966 (Green and Baden,1994).

Since the Beijing Conference in 1996, the Government of Malawi has finalised a *National Plan for Action* (NPFA) and has renewed the *Policy on Women in Development.* The NPFA was launched by the President in March 1997 to mark International Women's Day. This document acknowledges that there is still considerable gender-based discrimination in Malawi since the Women in Development policy is not yet in the mainstream of most of the sectoral policies and that the people of Malawi have not been adequately sensitized about gender issues.

At the community level, a range of factors have contributed to the disadvantaged position of women. One is male migration, which leaves women with additional work responsibilities such as community work and development projects. In Malawi, it is believed that approximately 30 per cent of all households are headed by women (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997). In some areas of the country, 70 per cent of the rural female population are full-time farmers (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997). A study conducted within the agricultural sector shows that approximately 70 per cent of full-time farmers are women (Ministry of Women, Youth and Community Services, 1998). Those households tend to represent the poorest of the poor at the community level and the women from these households have indicated that they have little access to -- and control over -- resources.

Various statistics that have been collected at the national level show that women remain disadvantaged in comparison to men in virtually every social and economic sector (i.e., education, political representation, employment and access to resources) (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997).

Gender Issues and the Role of Women in the Formal Employment Sector

Women's occupations are frequently confined to what are perceived to be traditional roles for women including nursing, teaching, sales and secretarial positions. Administrative and managerial positions are largely held by men; women represent an estimated five per cent or less of these posts. In 1994, of 2000 Ministry of Agriculture extension staff, only 190 were women (USAID/Malawi,1994). It was further noted that only one per cent of middle management or decision-making posts were held by women (USAID/Malawi, 1994). In the Ministry of Women, Youth and Community Services (formerly the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Community Services – MOWCACS) only 175 of 800 Community Development and Social Welfare Assistants were women in 1994 (USAID/Malawi, 1994).

Research conducted in 1966 suggested that women represented only 0.9 per cent of all economically active women in full-time salaried employment (Hirschmann, 1984). In 1977 this was estimated to increase to 2.5 per cent of all economically active women in full-time salaried employment (Hirschmann, 1984). The more recent findings in the USAID/Malawi study show that this number has increased to only five per cent of women involved in full-time salaried employment in 1994 (USAID/Malawi, 1994). While the number has doubled over this 10-year span, the number and proportion remain low.

Furthermore, women's employment opportunities are few. The manufacturing sector that represents approximately 14 per cent of the GDP employs primarily male staff (Green and Baden, 1994). Added to these constraints is the existence of wage discrimination in formal sector employment, as well as entry barriers for women. Male

employees are favoured over female employees probably as a result of traditions and cultural norms. Women who do find paid employment find that their salaries are frequently smaller than men's since women's income is perceived to be a supplementary income to their husbands' incomes (Green and Baden, 1994).

Research conducted by Hirschmann (1991) pointed to the role that women civil servants were playing in Malawi in bringing women's participation onto the political agenda. Hirschmann argued that "women civil servants were making use of the Decade of Women, sympathetic donors, the president's statements about women, the country's food production problems and their own career ambitions to press their male colleagues for changes in policies toward women" (Hirschmann, 1991:1690). The public service participation of women, however, has remained low, particularly in the senior-level positions. The total number of women represented in all government positions is only six per cent (UNDP, 1998).

The number of female administrators and managers between 1992 and 1996 was estimated to be only five per cent of all administrators and managers (UNDP, 1998). Even in those areas of formal employment where the representation of women is increasing, few women are represented in decision-making positions. In Malawi, "[a]lmost all of the decision-making power rests with men – in politics, the legal system, government ministries, donor agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), churches and mosques, and at the village level" (Orr, 1997:10).

Gender Issues in Educational Attainment

The low representation of women in these formal employment positions can be attributed in part to a lack of qualified female applicants for the available posts. The low level of qualified women is a reflection of low educational levels and low literacy rates of women and girls in the country. USAID/Malawi noted that only nine per cent of females have attended school for more than four years (USAID/Malawi, 1994). The 1998 UNDP *Human Development Report* reported that only six per cent of females were enrolled in secondary education in 1995 compared to 57 per cent of secondary age males (UNDP, 1998). The World Bank's 1998 *World Development Indicators* reported that females had an average of five years of schooling as of 1992 (World Bank, 1997).

Some of the reasons for the low educational attainment of females include higher female drop-out rates, the high incidence of sexual harassment from male teachers and the high demand for girls to assist with activities and responsibilities in the home (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997). Ali (1997) described the responsibilities accorded to the girl child in Malawi which deny some girls the opportunity to obtain an education. She noted that many girls have responsibilities similar to those as a mother at the age of seven years (Ali, 1997). A study from 1984 noted that 64 per cent of all females over the age of five had not been to school (Hirschmann, 1984). The USAID report from 1994 demonstrated that this figure has changed little in the past 10 years, as approximately 65 per cent of the females in Malawi were illiterate (USAID/Malawi, 1994). The 1998 UNDP *Human Development Report* estimated adult literacy rates to be only 41.8 per cent for women and 72 per cent for men (UNDP, 1998).

The Government of Malawi (1993) indicated that various beliefs, attitudes and practices tend to favour boy's education over a girl's education. According to this report, an educated girl is thought to be less valuable than an educated boy because girls were not likely to reap the benefits of an education (CONGOMA, 1997). If resources are limited within the home, parents will usually opt to educate boys instead of girls. Other related problems related to low female educational attainment include early marriages and pregnancies, lack of parental and community support, lack of suitable educational materials, biases against girls' education in science, lack of resources to pay school fees, high teacher/pupil ratios, overcrowded schools, irrelevant curricula, and inadequacies of the schools in terms of resources and materials (CONGOMA, 1997).

Gender Issues in the Health Sector

Health indicators also point to the disadvantaged position of women in Malawi. Women's health issues can be correlated with high fertility and high maternal mortality rates in Malawi. In the World Bank (1995) report on Human Resources and Poverty in Malawi it was noted that 21 per cent of female deaths between the ages of 15 and 49 were associated with pregnancy and childbearing (World Bank, 1995). On average, a Malawian woman gives birth to 6.7 children. The high fertility rate is also reflective of low use of modern contraceptive methods. It was estimated that only seven per cent of women use effective contraceptive methods. Poor rates of contraception use have an impact on both maternal mortality rates as well as the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Contraceptive use has been correlated with cultural and traditional attitudes towards decision-making over family planning. Women who wish to plan their families have

indicated that they are not empowered to make the decision to use contraceptives. At the same time, family planning programmes have targeted women rather than men, thus perpetuating the health issues associated with frequent pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases in Malawi (World Bank, 1995).

Health organizations in Malawi have estimated that females in the 20-24 age group are nearly twice as likely to be HIV-positive as men in this same age bracket. This high ratio is believed to be partially a result of cultural practices in Malawi such as initiation ceremonies. Among the Yao clan, for example, it is rumoured that a young woman, upon entering puberty, has forced intercourse with one of the male community members to mark her entry into adulthood.

The AIDs rate in Malawi was estimated to be 225 000 cases in 1995 (World Bank, 1995). It is further estimated that 30 per cent of women attending antenatal care clinics are HIV-positive. An additional health concern that is currently under investigation is the high correlation of death resulting from malaria in pregnant females (USAID/Malawi, 1994). This research, conducted by the Malaria Research Project, suggests that women who are pregnant are more likely to get malaria. Medical research has been making some major advances in recognizing health issues that are specifically related to women's cultural issues and traditional roles within the household.

Gender Issues Resulting from Pervasive Negative Attitudes Towards Women

Women in Malawi face pervasive negative attitudes. As Hirschmann (1985) pointed out, attitudes toward women are difficult to quantify. He suggested that the source of attitudes can be traced to culture, history and tradition. Hirschmann (1985)

found that the attitudes towards women were based on the acceptance of men as the family heads and therefore as the natural leaders, decision-makers and income earners. Hirschmann further noted that Malawi is a male-dominated society despite the presence of matrilineal societies (Hirschmann, 1985). In Davison's study of matrilineal societies in Malawi, she found that in Muslim families living in matrilineal societies "there were almost no women heading their own households" (Davison, 1997:56). In her view, religion may play a more significant role in shaping marital status within matrilineal households in Malawi than customary lineage patterns (Davison, 1997).

An additional study conducted by the Government of Malawi (1995) identified cultural and traditional practices that continue to assign women lower status and less power. The unequal power relations between men and women are also perceived to limit women's access to essential services such as education and health care. It was further noted that gender-based patriarchal subordination tends to have an impact on the creation of relevant and positive policies that aim to meet the basic needs of women in terms of income, health, nutrition, education, social support and employment (GoM, 1995).

Gender Issues and Lineage Patterns in Malawi

Malawian communities consist of both matrilineal and patrilineal communities. A matrilineal society is a society that consists of customs and traditions that traces kinship through the mother's line. In Malawi, a matrilineal society frequently has a female chief. The female chief's brothers also play an important role as decision-makers within the community. A patrilineal society is a society that traces lineage and kinship through the father's line. In a patrilineal society, the women tend to marry and move outside of their

father's village. The matrilineal societies are located primarily in the central region and some parts of the southern region of Malawi. The patrilineal societies are located predominantly in the northern region and parts of the southern region, particularly Nsanje and Chikwawa (UNDP, 1995).

Malawi's cultural diversity is a reflection of the variation in tribal groups living within this relatively small country. One major component of Malawi's culture is its 'economy of affection' which is characterized by a matrilineal system of inheritance in which matrilocal marriage is practised by the Nyanja, Yao and Lomwe people (Hirschmann, 1990b). In these cultural groups, political authority and societal roles are inherited through female lines. For example, a village headman is succeeded by his elder sister's son rather than by his own son. Land is also inherited through the female line and therefore remains in the hands of women. A common village community consists of a group of sisters and their respective families living under the authority of their senior male uncle. The matrilineal system in Malawi was significantly affected by a number of historical factors including the slave trade, rising number of estate workers, land shortage, and migration of individuals from one region to another (Hirschmann, 1990b). The male labour migration to South African mines and Malawian tobacco estates resulted in "an increased burden on de facto female heads of households" (Davison, 1997:108).

In patrilineal societies it is customary for the sons to remain in the father's village. When one of the sons marries, he brings his wife to live with him in his father's village. Decision-making in patrilineal societies is believed to be the responsibility of men. Expectations surrounding women living in a patrilineal society point to a tendency for

women to be submissive in the presence of men.

Matrilineal societies consist of a system of extended family relations whereby women remain in their mother's village along with their new husbands. In matrilineal societies, the woman is considered to have direct control over land through her membership of a matrilineal descent group. In theory, men and women together work the land that the wife has inherited through her matrilineage (Davison, 1994).

Matrilineal and patrilineal societies have been associated with the *banja* (household) production system. This system emphasizes individual production of food and export crops at the family unit level. In this system, women prefer to work individually with their immediate family members in order to maximise their own production and profits. The purpose of the *banja* system is to reduce the potential for economic dependence on others. The erosion of familial independence began in the mid-nineteenth century and accelerated during male labour out-migration to estates. Currently, many agricultural programmes designed for women farmers require women to organize themselves in collectives which is further altering their traditional *banja* or household system (Davison, 1993).

Understanding lineage patterns is problematic and confused somewhat by community level differences that cannot be generalised. Thus, lineage patterns do not exist in absolute or even discernable forms. Instead, lineage involves a process of negotiation depending on class, family circumstances, and access to land. While the lineage patterns of matrilineal and patrilineal societies exist today in Malawi, the way in which they get translated into practice is not static and at times may even contradict the guiding principles

of a lineage system. Factors influencing changes in lineage patterns include the intermarriage of individuals from two different lineage systems and lack of access to land. At times, economic circumstances intervene to dictate where a couple resides. Currently in rural central and southern Malawi, even though in theory a husband is supposed to move to his wife's village when he marries, in practice residency may depend most on where land is available (Davison, 1997). If land is scarce in the woman's matrilineal village, her father or maternal uncle may go to a chief in a neighbouring village to beg for an additional piece of land (Davison, 1997).

An additional factor that has contributed to changes in the lineage systems include the process that Davison calls "missionisation" whereby Christian sects gained access to land for missions, as well as labour to develop these lands. This process of missionisation has contributed to the erosion of women's power within specific cultural groups such as the Mang'anja. In Malawi, around the 1870s, the Free Church of Scotland, the Church of England and the Catholic and Dutch Reformed churches received a considerable amount of land during the British occupation (Davison, 1997).

The Christian missions altered matrilineal societies by providing land to men and not to women when the men adopted Christian marriage. Christian marriage entailed allocating the most important rights and powers to men, to whom women became subordinate (Davison, 1997). Christian beliefs and traditional beliefs of the matrilineal society came into conflict whereby Christians viewed gender relations in terms of male supremacy while matrilineal beliefs were based on the traditional belief that the woman was the original being and therefore traditional beliefs in a matrilineal society did not

consider women to be subordinate to men (Davison, 1997).

The expropriation of land by religious missions during the colonial period altered gender relations significantly in Malawi. Peters (1997) further noted that the introduction of estate agriculture to Malawi had an impact on changing gender relations. The estate owners assumed that men were the heads of households and therefore assigned authority to men as foremen and supervisors of labourers (Peters, 1997). The introduction of the hut tax was proposed in 1894 forcing Malawians to pay the British in cash. This forced some Malawians to provide labour for a cash income which created what Davison called a "captured labour force" (Davison, 1997). Many men were forced to leave their villages to find employment on estates and in mines in order to earn a cash income.

For over a century, colonialists and missionaries assumed and upheld the patriarchal family unit. After independence in 1964 this trend continued with agricultural extension workers and other service providers who continued to direct their services primarily to male farmers. These activities have culminated in the existing gender inequalities such as preference for the education of boys and consistent favouring of men in employment (Peters, 1997).

In Malawi, women's advancement is often seen in relation to culture, customs and traditions that might prevent that advancement. Some traditional practices of Malawian families hinder the full development of women. Educational constraints hinder girls' academic advancement since girls are often not encouraged to go to school and instead are groomed for the domestic roles they will carry out after marriage.

Economic constraints include women's lack of land and property rights. Because

women do not own resources, when the woman's husband dies, the community consisting of the husband's kin will come and take the belongings from the woman, leaving her with nothing. This example of property grabbing has existed in patrilineal societies throughout history. Recently women have been bringing this issue to the media and the authorities in order to fight for their legal rights. In 1998, Malawi passed a bill of 'Wills and Inheritance' which makes it illegal for a patrilineal extended family to take the property of the widowed wife. While this is an important first step for women in terms of safeguarding their rights, civic education is necessary to ensure that women know their rights and seek assistance in cases where their property may be taken away (GoM, 1997).

The political constraints facing women include their lack of representation at the village level in councils and committees. In many communities women are seen as incapable of participating or contributing effectively. Community work is often considered public work and therefore men's work. Participation in development projects, particularly income-generating projects, tends to attract men since development projects are carried out in the public realm. Women's community involvement tends to be an extension of their private or reproductive responsibilities and is often channelled into childcare projects and nutrition and cooking education projects. Since men are often considered the decision-makers within the household, this argument is frequently extended to the community level, resulting in men monopolizing the decision-making positions on village committees.

An example of a superstition which can have a negative impact on the advancement of women is the belief that women should not clean water wells because it is believed that their menstruation will dry the well. A second superstition is that women

should not use latrines because they will become infertile and will not be able to bear children. These superstitions may lead to poor sanitation practices around the home and within the community resulting in the spread of disease (Ikiriza as quoted in SAW, 1995).

Female circumcision and genital mutilation are practised in certain regions of Malawi, particularly among the Yao. Female circumcision contributes to the high morbidity rate and other health-related complications (Ikiriza as quoted in SAW, 1995).

The media have further portrayed women negatively through letters and articles arguing that gender equality equals the demise of culture in Malawi. Also, cartoons that have featured in one of the most popular newspapers in Malawi portray women negatively, resulting in jokes and ridicule surrounding gender concerns and women's issues. These media images perpetuate stereotypes, reinforce myths and misconceptions about women and thus contribute to the marginalisation of women (Ikiriza as quoted in SAW, 1995).

Gender Issues in Rural Communities

Malawi is a predominantly rural country with 85 per cent of the population living in a rural setting (Ali, 1997; Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997). A rural community in Malawi is characterized by lack of electrical supply, poor sanitation practices, lack of access to water, a reliance on firewood for fuel, and considerable distance from health care centres, schools, and shops. Malawi has poor public infrastructure and therefore few roads linking rural communities to urban centres. The majority of the population lives more than 20 km from an urban centre. It is estimated that more than 92 per cent of women live in the rural areas (Hirschmann, 1984) and that 70 per cent of the female population are full-

time farmers. Hirschmann's study of the agricultural sector further revealed that approximately 90 per cent of the rural population constitutes the smallholder agricultural sector (Hirschmann, 1995). Of the smallholder agricultural sector, the vast majority (80%) have access to less than two hectares of land (Hirschmann, 1995). As farmers, women frequently lack access to the same tools, equipment, agricultural extension services, training and credit to which men have access. As a result, women's work is frequently more time-consuming and more labour-intensive (USAID/Malawi, 1994). Hirschmann exposed the general "failure of policymakers to come to terms with women as agricultural producers; the neglect by extension officers of women; and the lack of relevance of extension advice to them" (Hirschmann, 1990:482). These factors point to what Hirschmann describes as the differential impact that state and economy may have on women peasants and therefore the need for a better understanding of "peasant-state relation and of relative peasant autonomy [and that] much more detailed attention needs to be given to the predicament of women" (Hirschmann, 1990:482).

Gender Issues in Agricultural Production

Given the high percentage of women in rural areas, and the increasing number of female-headed households, it is increasingly being recognized that women play a vital role in agricultural production. Patterson and Matenje (1990) found that women performed between 63 per cent and 71 per cent of all seasonal agricultural work (Patterson and Matenje, 1990, in GoM, 1993). Furthermore, women's responsibilities in agricultural work are often invisible. These 'invisible' tasks include sorting of seeds, winnowing and threshing grain, shelling, grinding, pounding and husking all types of grain and nurturing

livestock (Government of Malawi, 1993). Additional farming activities that may go unnoticed include kitchen gardens, small livestock husbandry, as well as storage and maintenance of crops. These activities are not reported as agricultural work since they are often deemed as domestic or reproductive activities despite their centrality to food production and food provision at the household level.

Malawi's policy emphasis in the agricultural sector towards cash crops, particularly the export of cash crops like coffee, tea, tobacco and maize for the purpose of earning foreign exchange, has not benefited the poor in Malawi. However, men tend to benefit from such policies more than women due to women's pressing commitments to food production which prevent them from significant involvement in the export cash crop sector (Chipande, 1987).

For those communities that farm tobacco, women play a major role in the time-consuming and energy intensive responsibilities of growing and processing tobacco; however, women are "excluded from making decisions about incomes that their husbands get from the sale of tobacco" (Chimutu, 1993:9).

Gender Issues Resulting from the Prevalence of Households Headed by Women

The increase in the number of households headed by women has resulted from male wage labour migration to earn a cash income to pay for commodities that can no longer be obtained through non-cash trading, and increasing land scarcity (Davison, 1993). The impact of male migration has been the increased burden of women household heads to carry out the responsibilities of smallholder production (Davison, 1993). Farmers' clubs have been introduced to rural women in an effort to address issues of poverty and food

shortages (Chipande, 1987).

Farmers' clubs are meant to provide input and credit to club members (as a group) and not to individuals. These clubs are supposed to serve two main purposes: to foster group responsibility for repayment and therefore cut down administrative expenses; and to instill a spirit of common endeavour which, it is hoped, will lead the better-off farmers to bail out the poorer ones in times of difficulties, thus broadening access to inputs. Second, the clubs are meant to serve as a vehicle for farmer education and to ensure that extension advice reaches a wider spectrum of people than only the progressive farmers (Chipande, 1987). Women are increasingly being encouraged to join farmers' clubs in order to ensure that their needs and interests are being addressed in these clubs. However, the extensive responsibilities women carry out, combined with a cultural resistance to women's involvement in decision-making bodies, means that the representation of women in farmer's clubs tends to be low (Chipande, 1987).

An additional strategy employed to alleviate the poverty experienced by women farmers in Malawi has been the creation of a women's programme and the formation of women's groups. These strategies are expected to increase women's participation in development projects through a problem-solving approach. The women identify their own main problems and try to explore the underlying causes of these problems. From there, the women themselves suggest what can be done and how it can be done. With the assistance of project staff, an action plan is formulated and implemented (Chipande, 1987). These alternative fora are expected to give women an opportunity to better express their needs.

Malawi's investment in human resource development has a poor track record.

Investing in women's development has been even more severely limited. Few resources have been allocated to improve the health and economic situation of women in maternal and child health care, family planning services, education training and skill development for employment (UNDP, 1995).

Gender Issues in Environmental Management

Women are the main providers of fuelwood and water for the household. These activities have an impact on environmental and natural resource management at the community level. Research has pointed to differences in access and control over trees and other natural resources for men and women. For example, lack of access and control of land may prevent women from planting tree species required within the household (i.e., multipurpose species which contribute to wood energy and food security requirements, and which allow women control over products for both subsistence and sale) (Green and Baden, 1994).

The high incidence of female-headed households can be correlated with the significant role that women play in other environmental activities such as water supply and sanitation. However, access to information, training and technology for these activities is limited, thus restricting the impact that these services can make on improved health, time saved, labour reduced, and income earning opportunities through increased access to water.

Studies have indicated that extension services relating to environmental management at the community level are male-biased (Green and Baden, 1994). This finding is consistent with research related to agricultural extension and assistance.

Understanding and addressing the socio-cultural factors that have shaped gender relations throughout history in Malawi is necessary for development practitioners to effectively implement their projects. The historical factors noted above point to the complex and changing nature of gender relations at the community level. As a result, one cannot easily generalise about women's involvement in project work.

Research conducted with rural communities in Malawi indicates that men and women both make decisions within the household. Men, however, dominate decisions regarding major purchases and large sums of cash for the household such as fertilizer purchases, credit, and the employment of farmhands (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997). Women are more likely to be responsible for decisions pertaining to agricultural production, the sale of agricultural products, crop choices, when to plant crops and how much of the crops to sell (Hirschmann, 1990b). However, women at the village level have frequently noted that even these decisions are more likely to be made by their husbands. A gender analysis conducted by CURE revealed that even though women make some household decisions, women often prefer to leave decision-making activities to men. These differences in customary decision- making practices have not been well documented in the literature.

Development practitioners seldom recognize decision-making practices and often ignore the complex nature of decision-making at the community level. Extension staff and field officers often fail to address who will be the decision-makers in development projects at the village level. The tendency towards male bias in extension work points to the need for further investigation of the unequal decision-making power at the community level.

Other influences at the village level are increasingly being forged through NGO and government community development activities. Government agencies, NGOs and religious groups are attempting to promote social change at the village level in order to reduce poverty rates. These programmes and services, however, have often had a limited impact resulting from poor participation levels from the community members. While participation in community projects is part of the traditions of Malawian society, institutional structures and development staff must recognize their own need for training in participatory methods (UNDP, 1995).

Findings from a gender analysis conducted by CURE in 1996 revealed the following information about gender at the community level:

- women's participation level is poor in decision-making activities but high in project implementation activities;
- systems of inheritance in the area (i.e., matrilineal or patrilineal) can have an effect on gender participation (in patrilineal societies factors may be unfavourable to women's participation unless it is specifically encouraged);
- few deliberate strategies are in place at the project level to see gender equality in the project outcome, and few deliberate strategies have been put in place to address gender issues in development projects;
- improving gender relations can have a positive impact on project success;
- traditional gender roles exist for daily and seasonal activities;
- women have a heavier seasonal and daily workload than men for both productive and reproductive activities;
- women either were solely responsible for -- or assist the men with – all the agricultural activities listed; and
- gender-based inequities in control over resources and decision-making were apparent (CURE, 1996).

Women have access to many resources; however, men usually enjoy absolute control over those resources and men make the decisions over the use of the resources. The roots of these inequities lie in culturally and traditionally defined gender stereotypes which have changed over time (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997).

Traditional gender stereotypes and responsibilities can hinder the cooperation between men and women in the household and in development activities. Other factors which can impede project success include the inability of women to control resources; their exclusion from decision-making; and their existing heavy workload and limited time to undertake project activities despite their willingness to participate.

Gender Issues in Relation to Women's Participation in Community Projects

Women's participation at the community level varies from community to community. In some villages, women's participation in specific project stages (i.e., implementation and monitoring) is high. Generally, the participation of women in planning and decision-making is low (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997). Chimutu (1993) further points to the "heavy workload in the home [that] precludes women from participating in other development activities" (Chimutu, 1993:9).

Hirschmann (1984) identified five reasons for the low participation of women in development projects. The first reason was a result culture and traditions in Malawi that prevented women from leadership and decision-making responsibilities. The staff he interviewed indicated that men are perceived as the heads of households and therefore the decision-makers within the household. The second reason pointed to women not being invited to attend the meetings since women were frequently not considered members of the community-level committees. The third reason was that women were too busy to attend. Women often did not attend meetings due to their extensive and time-consuming chores. The forth reason was women's low educational attainment. Girls were less likely to get an education than boys and girls were often faced with early pregnancies, marriage

and household responsibilities. The final reason cited in Hirschmann's study pointed to women's poor self-image and low self-esteem. The study noted that women felt shy or inferior and therefore feared that they would not be listened to in group meetings. This is likely to be a factor in the next point, that women are not elected to village committees and therefore their representation in community decision-making bodies is low (Hirschmann, 1984).

Cultural constraints are believed to prevent women from participating in community meetings. The cultural constraints noted are expected to contribute to women's lack of confidence which is exacerbated by low educational attainment and the absence of female role models. It is also worth reiterating the unequal gender division of labour which results in women having heavy workloads thus preventing them from having the time and energy to participate in community activities and meetings. The responsibilities held by women are believed to have increased as a result of male urban migration.

While the government of Malawi has made some attempts to increase the presence of women in community-level decision-making bodies by requesting an equitable representation of women on village level committees, these village committees frequently consist of men, particularly in the major decision-making posts. Last, it was found that despite male migration and the increasing number of households headed by women, women still did not have ultimate decision-making power. Many women reported that they still rely on their husbands to make decisions once they return from migrant labour in the cities or in estate farming.

Gender Issues Within Development Organizations

Both the Government of Malawi and NGOs have increased their efforts to address the gender issues discussed in this chapter. In particular, NGOs are increasingly concerned with gender issues at the community and project level. However, little has been written about the constraints that the Government and NGO sectors face in addressing gender issues at the community and project level in Malawi. This study is an attempt to shed light on the constraints that organizations experience in addressing gender issues. This research is particularly concerned with the gender issues that arise in the growing number of those NGOs involved in environmental and natural resource management activities (ENGOs) in Malawi (Simukonda, 1992).

The extent to which ENGOs have been adopting a gender approach, gender policies or gender-related activities required an in-depth investigation of the organizations' activities since few of the ENGOs had a specific gender policy to guide the organizations' operations. Very few ENGOs indicated in their mission statements or organizational mandates that striving for gender equality was a goal of the organization. For example, of the 23 ENGOs that completed the gender and NRM survey carried out by CURE, only two identified gender equality as a goal of their organization's activities.

In each of the ENGO's mission statements, however, a number of common themes were identified. These themes pointed to the importance of involving the community members, addressing the human dimension of environmental activities, and addressing the long-term goal of poverty alleviation.

The programmes carried out by these ENGOs include: livelihood security,

sustainable agriculture, environmental education, food security, forestry, wildlife protection, environmental rehabilitation, nutrition, hygiene, water development, afforestation, tree regeneration, and environmental networking.

The specific projects that fall under these programmes include seed development, water and sanitation, drought mitigation, health education, micro-credit, relief services, sanitation, integrated rural development, floriculture, beekeeping, mushroom growing, water supply, agroforestry, borehole construction, family planning, tree regeneration, education and awareness raising, and fruit tree nurseries.

Summary

This chapter has described the cultural context within which the research was conducted. Two important arguments emerge from the context. The first is that socio-cultural factors influence individual attitudes and behaviours pertaining to gender issues in Malawi. These attitudes are further expressed at the organizational level since individuals bring attitudes and beliefs to their work and these attitudes and beliefs are manifested in specific projects and programmes that may prevent or enhance gender equality at the organizational level. This argument refutes the view that the personal and the professional are entirely separable. Instead, it begins with the argument that development practitioners are products of their culture and history, whereby each individual experiences this culture and history in unique and fluid ways. The socialization of gender roles exists in both private spheres and public spheres. In this case, the subordination of women's roles in the home is believed to be transferred to the organizational level highlighting the complex interaction of the public and private spheres as discussed in Chapter Two.

The second argument deals with the convergence of cultures as development organizations carry out western-driven policies and projects in a Malawian context. While cross-cultural differences may exist, these differences in cultural norms are more and more obscured as the influences of North America and Western Europe become increasingly embraced in Malawian cultures. Therefore, this study takes the perspective that cultural issues and practices are dynamic and therefore, gender relations and gender issues are also changing in Malawi. These factors have significance and meaning at the local level and differ from one community to the next. This specific research, however, is concerned with the nature of organizations -- specifically environmental NGOs (ENGOs) – and how these organizations obscure cultural diversity to benefit the organization and the organization's primary decision-makers. This study begins with the argument that people live in culturally rich and diverse environments and seek means to preserve the culture and traditions that correspond with their local reality. This struggle, however, is in relation to powerful NGO development projects that obscure difference to meet their objectives. Focussing on these organizations reveals information about gendered institutional norms that constitute the gendered terrain.

In summary, the nature of gender relations and gender-related activities at the organizational level can be understood as a product of two competing trends. On the one hand, gender-related activities at the organizational level can be understood as a manifestation of the gender relations at the household level which are culturally-specific and differ from individual to individual depending on the experiences, history, traditions and customs witnessed by that individual. On the other hand, gender-related activities at

the organizational level are a product of organizational culture that is modelled on Western concepts of hierarchy, policy-driven frameworks and a single issue approach (e.g., environmental, human rights, micro-enterprise, etc.)

These arguments do not deny the presence and importance of resistance to Western influences in Malawi. There are specific individuals, groups of people and organizations that have articulated their concerns for the role that Western-funded organizations play in the Malawian context. While a more in-depth investigation of the types of resistance that exist today would be useful, this thesis is concerned with the role that environmental organizations play in addressing gender inequality and the nature of their gender-related activities in Malawi.

CHAPTER FIVE:

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

Two significant constraints to gender equality have been identified thus far: organizational culture as addressed in the literature review and context-specific culture discussed in the Malawi case study. These cross-cultural issues point to the second major constraint to achieving gender equality, as the case study section has stressed. This constraint is a result of cultural practices that disadvantage women and result in the disproportionate work carried out by women in environmental projects conducted within rural communities. The purpose of this research was to reveal the extent to which gender is being practised within ENGOs. These findings were made in the context of the three major research questions noted in the Introduction Chapter: 1. Are ENGOs committed to gender equality as an organizational issue? 2. Do ENGOs understand environment and gender to be separate and unrelated categories of development work? 3. Do ENGO staff understand gender issues in a culturally-relevant context? The research provided gender-disaggregated, sex-disaggregated and organization-disaggregated data about ENGOs in Malawi.

This chapter presents the findings in ten categories - staffing issues, the capacity of staff to address gender issues, the presence of gender personnel, gender policies, gender considered a foreign concept, reporting on gender, budgeting for gender, linking gender and natural resource management, gender awareness at the project level, and staff perceptions of the opportunities and constraints of adopting a gender approach.

1. Staffing Issues

The ratio of male to female staff members has frequently been used to show women's low representation in the public sector. Revealing the number of women working in the formal sector is not a fact sufficient to determine the nature of their relationship to men, their access to resources, decision-making power and ability to influence the operations of the organization. However, it is a useful starting point in this gender analysis of ENGOs. The male/female staff ratios demonstrated the vertical and horizontal representation of men and women within ENGOs. These findings are summarized as a low representation of female staff, the low representation of women in senior management and decision-making positions, the high level of dissatisfaction among female staff members of the low representation of female staff and the perceived importance of having women represented in senior management and field staff positions.

Male/Female Staff Ratios

The *Gender Situation Analysis Report* (1997) and the *Directory of NGOs Involved in Gender and Natural Resource Management* (1996) reported that the number of women staff appears to have increased as a percentage of the number of staff working in the NGO sector. In 1996, the ratio of male to female staff within NGOs, according to the 1996 directory of NGOs, was 482 men to 162 women which translates into three men to one woman. The percentage of women staff in 1996 was therefore 33 per cent. The findings from this more recent survey, two years later, indicated that the total number of male staff was 695 to 239 female staff or approximately a 3:1 ratio. Thus women represent 34 per cent of all NGO staff members.

The Vertical Representation Male and Female Staff

The 1996 *CURE Directory of NGOs involved in Gender and NRM in Malawi* noted that of 27 organizations, the highest position within the organization (i.e., Executive Director) was predominantly held by men. In 24 out of 27organizations, men occupied the highest position within the organization. Only in three out of 27 organizations was the position of Executive Director held by a woman.

A total of seven staff interviewed represented senior management, 10 represented middle management positions, and three from senior management positions. There were 14 men interviewed (of whom six were senior management, nine were middle management, and one was junior management). There were six women interviewed (one from senior management, four from middle management and one from junior management). There was a low representation of women working in ENGOs. An additional reason for the considerably larger number of male staff interviewed had to do with the willingness and the time that male staff had to meet with me. The female staff were often out of the office, attending a meeting, too busy to participate in the interview, and according to some of the male staff interviewed, women did not feel comfortable answering interview questions if there was a male co-worker willing and available to participate in the interview. The ratio of male to female staff is summarized in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Ratio of Male to Female Staff at the Different Levels of the Organization

LEVEL OF THE ORGANIZATION	RATIO OF MALE TO FEMALE STAFF	PERCENTAGE OF STAFF THAT ARE WOMEN
Field Officers	398:68 or 6:1	17 per cent
Support Staff	188:81 or 2:1	43 per cent
Management Staff	88:44 or 2:1	44 per cent
Total Number of Staff	695:239 or 3:1	34 per cent

Action Aid noted that only four out of 34 senior management staff were women and that only one of these women is on the executive committee which is the decision-making forum for the organization. Therefore, women represented only 0.6 percent of all those staff within the organization responsible for decision-making. Another ENGO indicated that all three of their senior management staff are men and that there are no women at the management level. PAMET noted that the female to male ratio of staff is 2:1 reflecting a considerably higher representation of female staff at the organization. However, the staff indicated that certain positions within the organizations are held by men, particularly the position of accountant. The staff members interviewed during SSI pointed to the need for accountants to be gender-sensitive since the accountant makes decisions about how money will be allocated and which programmes receive money. Accountants often make decisions about access to vehicles, availability of funds to purchase resources and other day-to-day decisions that ENGO staff members felt had an impact on whether or not gender personnel had access to money to carry out their work.

During SSI Malawi Fresh Water Project staff noted that all senior management staff are male; however, attempts have been made within this organization to seek out

female board members. SSI revealed similar findings as those found from the data collected in the survey and from the case study, pointing to a disproportionate representation of women within NGOs in general and a low representation of women at the level of senior management in particular.

These findings are consistent with the 1997 *Gender Situation Analysis* and reflect a low representation of women at the management (senior, middle and junior) level. The report indicated that the female/male staff ratio at the management level was 1:5. It was further noted that the majority of the middle management staff were also men (CONGOMA, 1997a).

During the field study conducted in Malawi between 1997 and 1998, I had the opportunity to interact with ENGO staff in a number of contexts and physical settings. My observations of the numerical representation of women in these various contexts varied depending on the physical setting. When I met with some ENGO staff members within their offices, I was often surprised to see that the representation of women in the office was fairly high. Approximately half of the staff that I observed in various office situations were women. In fact, the first person I usually met upon entering the office was a woman, often the receptionist. In different contexts, particularly at meetings that were held out of town, most of the ENGO staff were men. There were many occasions when I was the only woman attending the meeting and occasionally, I was one of two or three women in a group of 40 or 50 men. The third context in which I observed male and female staff ratios was at the field level during field visits to various ENGO projects. The vast majority of the field staff were men. My observations of male/female staff ratios were dependent on the

physical setting, but more important, showed that women's work tended to include cleaning, administrative work, secretarial positions and other clerical placements.

When the data were disaggregated based on the type of ENGO (national versus international) it was found that the total representation of women as a percentage of all staff was 26 per cent for both international and national ENGOs. The representation of women differed between the two types of organizations when the information was disaggregated for Field Staff. The findings showed that the representation of women as a percentage of staff was considerably lower for international ENGOs. Women represented only 15 per cent of all field staff in international ENGOs but 26 per cent for national ENGOs. Respondents indicated that the percentage of female staff working at the level of support staff was much higher. Among the international ENGOs, women represented 30 per cent of the support staff while at the national ENGOs women represented 20 per cent of the staff.

The percentage of female staff tended to be highest at the management level regardless of the type of ENGO. The findings from the survey indicated that 30 per cent of the management staff were women at international ENGOs while 33 per cent of the management staff were women at the national ENGOs. However, most of these women represented in senior management positions were not part of the decision-making fora for the organizations.

The Perception of the Importance of Female Staff

The findings from the SSI uncovered a higher level of dissatisfaction among female staff concerning the low number of women in senior and middle management positions.

The female staff interviewed were more likely to express the need for more women in senior management positions. One female staff member indicated that increasing the number of women staff at the management level would be an advantage for cultural reasons since "other women will see these positions occupied by women and aspire to them, thus changing cultural attitudes toward certain jobs" (female ENGO staff representative, PAMET).

The perceived benefits of providing women field staff are mixed. Some women field staff found that female community members were able to participate more freely in the presence of a female ENGO staff member. Others felt that the sex of the extension worker did not make a difference in terms of gender equitable participation in projects. This finding confirmed similar research conducted by Jackson (1996a) and Kabeer (1994) that noted mixed responses to the perceived importance of female staff role models. However, the findings indicate that women required increased contact with extension and field staff whether they be male or female staff. Thus, the goal may not be to increase the number of female staff but rather to increase awareness among the existing field staff about gender issues.

When the ENGO staff were asked whether increasing the number of women field staff was a necessary activity for ensuring that gender is integrated into programmes and projects, the staff noted that this activity is somewhat important in relation to other activities. On a scale of 1- 5 (whereby one is not very important and 5 is very important), the average ranking for this activity was approximately 3. When this information was disaggregated based on the type of ENGO (international and national), it was found that

national ENGOs considered this activity to be of greater importance than did international ENGOs.

Reasons for the Low Number of Women Staff in ENGOs

The research uncovered four predominant reasons for the low number of female staff working in ENGOs, including low education levels for women, a perceived lack of commitment among women to do ENGO work, a bias determined by culture and traditions in Malawi, and organizational constraints that prevent women from working in ENGOs.

Low Educational Attainment for Women

Both male and female ENGO staff noted that there is a general lack of qualified women available for the positions offered by ENGOs as a result of women's low educational attainments. This finding supports earlier studies that point to the limited representation of women in formal employment and in senior positions within organizations as a result of "women's lack of access to higher education and wage employment" (Parpart and Staudt, 1989:8).

Similar findings resulted from semi-structured interviews. One male staff member from a national ENGO commented that the reasons for the low number of female staff is correlated with low educational attainment among girls. The person interviewed indicated that "girls frequently drop out of school and opt for marriage" (ENGO staff member, BAM). Most of the male and female ENGO staff interviewed noted that low education levels of girls and women was the primary reason for the low representation of women in ENGOs.

Perception that Women Lack a Commitment to ENGO Work

One male staff member noted that "women lack commitment to the work; the benefits of employment are not understood by women; and women cannot devote time to work-related activities due to household responsibilities" (ENGO staff member, BAM).

Bias, Discrimination, Culture and Traditions

ENGO staff reported that they considered the nature of the work at ENGOs to be inappropriate for women, particularly those with families and dependents. For example, one male staff member felt that the significant amount of travel meant that women were "not well suited for the position since it would require women to leave their families for days and weeks at a time" (ENGO staff member, CPAR).

Some of the female staff indicated that there was a biased perception of what women can and cannot do by virtue of their sex and their roles in the private sphere. This is related to a similar comment that pointed to the impact of a significant representation of men in decision-making positions. Some female staff indicated that men are biased against women in general and this spills over into their hiring decisions and their perception of which sex is best qualified to perform the specific duties. A related point raised by the ENGO staff is the perceived potential for problems of sexual harassment which may discourage women from working at organizations and may dissuade senior management staff from accepting female applicants. These points confirm that there are, in the words of one female staff member, "a lack of deliberate strategies to encourage women to apply and to retain female staff within ENGOs" (ENGO staff representative, CURE).

A number of the individuals indicated that women lack confidence to apply for the

positions. This is believed to be a result, according to some of the individuals later interviewed, of cultural perceptions of women's appropriate behaviour in that women were not expected to be assertive. Female and male ENGO staff frequently noted that cultural beliefs and traditions reinforce female subservience which prevents women from attaining an education and applying for jobs.

Participant observation during the group discussions uncovered information about attitudes toward men and women and how these attitudes may prevent women from obtaining jobs at ENGOs. Discussion group participants noted a number of negative attitude towards women in Malawian culture in general. Some participants cited Biblical explanations for the inferiority of women, noting that women were created from Adam's rib and were therefore second class or inferior to men. One participant demonstrated his prejudice toward women based on one woman manager he had heard about. This female manager was believed to have demonstrated unprofessional behaviour and was therefore incompetent in the position of manager. Therefore, this participant considered all female managers to be unprofessional. Other comments pointing to a prejudice towards women expressed the attitudes that many ENGO staff have toward women that may provide an additional explanation for the low representation of women at ENGOs.

My daily activities as a volunteer working with ENGOs in Malawi revealed an additional interesting finding. On a number of occasions I was asked to look over the application files of potential candidates for jobs that had become available at the ENGO. My task was to read the applications and resumés of the various candidates and create a shortlist of candidates to be interviewed. Other staff members also created a shortlist of

candidates. While looking over these resumés and applications, I was surprised to see the number of applications from women and the extent of their qualifications. Many had an undergraduate degree in the social or biological sciences and a significant number of these women also had graduate degrees and years of experience working in the environmental sector. I presented my shortlist of ten potential candidates (four women and six men) to the ENGO management staff who compared my list with their own lists and came up with a final list of nine candidates to be interviewed. It came to my attention later that only one woman was being interviewed.

Through discussions with some of the key management staff and with board members two significant factors became apparent. The first factor had to do with the age of the female candidates. There was a general unwillingness to interview female candidates who were considered too young or inexperienced for the position. However, the lack of work experience alone was not the only factor that disqualified them. The perception among many of the male staff members was that young women would leave the organization after a short period of time because they get married and stop working or move to another location to be with their husbands. The likelihood of women starting families and leaving the organization to raise children was seen as a second reason for not hiring women.

Age was also a factor in decisions not to interview women with experience working in the environmental sector. Male ENGO staff expressed discomfort with women being in powerful positions since it was culturally inappropriate for women to be in leadership positions. In essence, many of the ENGO staff (male and female) seemed to

fear that hiring a woman with too much experience would result in them being pushed around by this woman. The male and female ENGO staff did not indicate similar concerns for the male candidates.

The daily interaction with female ENGO staff both within the host organization and with other female staff working for ENGOs in Malawi meant that I frequently heard 'off the record' comments, criticisms and frustrations. Female ENGO staff members often indicated that men felt threatened by women in senior management posts and that men feared embarrassment when taking direction from women staff members.

Three of the female staff interviewed during SSI emphasized cultural obstacles women face in obtaining jobs at ENGOs. These obstacles were identified as women's low level of confidence in working in the environmental sector, fear of sexual harassment from male co-workers and the impact that this harassment would have on their relationships with other men, and lack of support or encouragement from men (husband, father, brother) to apply for jobs. The male staff interviewed did not mention concerns.

Organizational Constraints Experience by Female Staff

Some male and female staff indicated that there is a lack of funds for organizations to hire more staff and therefore ENGOs, while they may be willing to hire more women, do not have the finances required to increase their staff. Furthermore, some staff members indicated that there are a lack of facilities for women who may be interested in working for the organization. These facilities may include childcare services and transportation for women who might have to work late and fear the risks of returning home late at night.

2. Capacity of Staff to Address Gender Issues

The extent to which ENGO staff have the capacity to address gender-related issues was determined by establishing whether ENGO staff were able to define gender and gender-sensitive projects or organizations, whether they understood gender as a cross-cutting issue in development, their familiarity with gender-related documents, whether they had participated in gender training, the methods and approaches they used in their development projects and their attitudes toward gender.

Definitions and Understanding of Gender and Gender-related Concepts

The survey respondents were asked to define gender on the questionnaire. The question format was open-ended and the questionnaire provided three lines for the respondent to write her/his answer. Once the survey information was returned, I was able to establish trends or common themes in the definitions provided. The major themes that were used in defining gender included:

1. equal opportunities for men and women;
2. equal participation and equal employment opportunities;
3. societal roles and responsibilities of men and women that are socially constructed; and
4. men and women working together.

The most common themes used in defining gender-sensitive projects included:

1. a project that takes into consideration gender barriers in order to maximise participation;
2. a project that is designed based on gender-disaggregated information;
3. a project that involves both men and women in all stages of the project cycle;
4. a project that begins by identifying the roles, responsibilities, needs and effects of the project on both men and women;
5. a project that addresses gender issues of both males and females;
6. a project whereby management of the project is controlled by women and that women are the beneficiaries;
7. a project that involves the participation of female members of a community;

8. a project that provides equal opportunities to men and women, equal access to resources and services, an equitable gender division of labour, equality in representation and decision-making within and outside the home; and
9. a project that does not take people as a homogenous group but recognises the different and distinct needs of men and women.

Participant observation revealed a wider range in the understanding and of the meaning of gender as a concept in development work than the survey responses. Many of the ENGO staff were not able to distinguish between the concepts of gender and sex. For example, one female ENGO staff member defined gender as: "about men and women" (ENGO staff member, CU). Other female staff members defined gender as "the representation of men and women at different levels" (ENGO staff member, CU) and as "seeing the person as a person: their capabilities and putting them in the right places" (ENGO staff member, CU). Definitions of gender-sensitive projects that were provided during participant observation included "taking into account the involvement of women in the project: their roles in planning and implementation" (ENGO male staff member, CU) and "looks into the differences between males and females: who is privileged, and who is not" (ENGO male staff members, CU). Some of the ENGO staff revealed the complexity and difficulty in defining gender concepts. One female staff member in particular indicated that "you don't define it, you live it" (ENGO staff member, CU).

During the case study, ENGO senior management staff were asked to define a gender-sensitive organization. The following definitions were provided:

1. "the organizational members own themselves...practice what they are aware of" (ENGO female staff member, CU);
2. "strategic thinking about the people you are working with" (ENGO male staff member, CU);
3. "not pushing women into positions of power" (ENGO female staff member, CU); and

4. "working with all sorts of groups" (ENGO male staff member, CU).

Other ENGO staff members indicated that they had "never thought about it as a specific issue or task" to be addressed at the organizational level (ENGO male staff member, CU).

A report published by Action Aid following an in-house gender training at that organization noted some of the staff attitudes to the concept of gender. They defined gender as "females complaining", "the roles of men and women that are not biological", "gender is about neutral status", "the socio-cultural characteristics of human beings", "male and female things"; and "males feeling insecure" (Action Aid, 1997). These findings uncovered the wide range in understanding of gender and are more reflective of the responses obtained during SSI.

CSC's *Draft Gender Policy* defined gender issues as those issues that are: "about the relationship between men and women and how their roles are divided in their societies. Sex is biological, gender is social" (CSC, 1998:annex 1). This document further provided information about gender issues in Malawi that can be summarised as:

1. most programmes address practical gender needs and leave out strategic gender needs;
2. women's presence does not equal women's participation;
3. women lack access and control of resources; programmes and projects need to move from a welfare approach to an empowerment approach; and
4. women's household or reproductive activities need to be recognised as work in and of itself (CSC, 1998).

While many of the ENGO staff interviewed were unable to distinguish between gender and sex, some of the staff did provide a more advanced understanding of gender. One male BAM staff member noted during a SSI that gender is "about sharing responsibilities among the sexes" (ENGO staff member, BAM). He indicated that gender

is not about women but both men and women. Another male staff member understood gender to mean "men and women having equal rights in any form of development" (ENGO staff member, BAM). This junior staff member had heard of gender on the radio and has seen it mentioned in newsletters but felt that he did not have a very good understanding of gender. A representative from CCAP defined gender as more than just the participation of women. He noted that gender is also about "decision-making and the involvement of women at all levels" (ENGO staff member, CCAP). A female representative from WVI defined gender as "being about culture and changing mind-sets" (ENGO staff member, WVI). Greenline Movement noted that few staff have had gender training but the little training the staff have had in gender provided some background to gender.

In summary, the capacity of ENGO staff to define gender and gender-related concepts confirmed that their capacity is mixed but generally low. Clearly, information about gender is not being made adequately available to all of the staff members, resulting in some staff members having a strong understanding of gender and gender-related concepts and others having a very weak understanding.

Both men and women ENGO staff expressed a mixture of good and poor understanding of the concept of gender. Those individuals representing senior management posts tended to have a stronger understanding of gender and gender-related concepts. This was not true of all senior management staff at all organizations. ENGO staff representing middle and junior level positions had a tendency to define gender and gender-related concepts in more simplistic terms and indicated uncertainty of the meaning

of gender. The understanding of the concept of gender tended to be strongest for the women working in senior management posts and weakest for men working at this same level of the organizational hierarchy. One female staff member in a senior management post defined gender as "how people live together, interact, express themselves and their attitudes" (ENGO staff member, CU). Another female staff member defined gender in terms of women's unequal access to resources and decision-making power in relation to men (ENGO staff member, CU). The male staff occupying positions in senior management in this same organization defined gender as "different sexes: male and female" (ENGO staff member, CU).

The interviews with staff in middle and junior management uncovered diverse responses irrespective of the sex of the individual. Some of the male middle management staff defined gender as "equality of decision-making power...representation of men and women at different levels" (ENGO staff member, CU). A female staff member in middle management defined gender as: "women doing men's roles" (ENGO staff member, CU). When the ENGO staff taking part in the case study were asked to define a gender-sensitive project, both men and women staff members identified the need for equal opportunities for men and women to participate in the project. There were no significant differences in the responses to this question when the information was disaggregated based on the sex of the individual.

The information provided by national and international ENGOs revealed no significant differences in terms of the understanding of gender and gender-related concepts. The international ENGOs, however, tended to be comprised of expatriate staff

at the senior management level. These expatriate staff felt that they had a stronger understanding of the term gender than their Malawian counterparts. Reference was made in a couple of instances to the fact that gender is a foreign concept that has no direct translation into the local language (Chichewa). However, those expatriates, when asked to define gender, often did not have a good understanding of it and many could not distinguish between sex and gender.

Understanding Gender as a Cross-cutting Theme in Development

During the group discussions, the participants were asked to reflect on their definition and understanding of development. In groups of approximately four or five people, the participants came up with both a definition of development and a pictorial representation of development. The purpose of the exercise was to gauge the extent to which participants considered gender a component of development. The definitions of development from the three different groups indicated that development was about a process of change and a positive transformation for improved standards of living. One group indicated that development was about people working together regardless of sex. However, most groups did not identify gender equity or equality as a salient theme in development. The pictorial presentations of development primarily depicted the material gains associated with development. One picture noted the increasing involvement of women in non-traditional fields such as politics as a form of development. However, most of the pictures showed men carrying out work and reaping the benefits of that work through material gains such as improved houses with corrugated roofs, radios and bicycles.

In a second exercise, groups of four or five people discussed gender as a cross-cutting issue in education, economics, politics, culture, law, agriculture, environment, and health. The information collected in this exercise identified some of the constraints to gender equality in Malawi. The gender issues noted in the economic realm included lack of equitable representation of women in formal employment and unequal access to loans. The gender issues that were considered a factor of education included unequal access to information and to education; unequal representation of female teachers; unequal representation of girls in specific subjects (particularly math and science); low number of women attending colleges and universities; lack of opportunities for girls to achieve high educational levels; cultural constraints for girls in acquiring an education (i.e., pressure for early marriages, sexual favours requested by male teachers, and early pregnancies).

The gender issues relevant to health included unequal access to information about family planning and sexual health; unequal participation of men in the caring for children (i.e., bringing children to the Under Five clinics). The gender components of cultural issues were noted as the unequal division of labour, women's lack of decision-making power; practices that favour men and disadvantage women; lack of access to resources (particularly inheritance); and unfair cultural practices (i.e., initiation ceremonies and spiritual cleansing).

The gender dimension to the political factors included low and unequal representation of women in parliament and political fora. The gender dimensions noted for the legal issues were lack of information and awareness about laws that can protect women from property grabbing, inadequate laws to protect women who are raped and low

representation of women staff in legal institutions.

The gender issues in the agricultural sector were identified as lack of access to information and technology necessary for sustainable agriculture and unequal division of labour in agricultural activities. The gender issues noted in the environmental sector included unequal division of labour in environmental projects (women do most of the work); unequal access to and control of the resources (men are primarily in control of the resources); and unequal levels of participation in environmental projects. The understanding of gender as a cross-cutting theme in the area of the environment demonstrated that these ENGO staff members had a considerable understanding of what the gender issues are in environmental projects.

Gender as a Cross-cutting Theme in Lineage Patterns

During field visits I often inquired about the lineage patterns in a specific region or community. Many of the ENGO staff interviewed were not sure whether the communities were matrilineal or patrilineal. The ENGO staff did not have an awareness of the different cultural practices that occur at the community level and therefore they were not sure what impact the lineage patterns, customs and traditions had on male and female community members.

Some of the ENGO staff members noted that lineage patterns had changed significantly over the past century. During one interview ENGO staff members from CU described changing marital patterns such as inter-lineage marriages whereby individuals from matrilineal societies are increasingly marrying individuals from patrilineal societies. An additional factor that has altered lineage patterns is land scarcity. Newly married

couples opt to move to the community where land is available. This is particularly the case, according to one informant, for inter-lineage marriages. One ENGO staff member argued that these inter-lineage marriages have further eroded women's power at the community level because matrilineal societies are disappearing. Most of the ENGO staff interviewed did not consider ethnicity or lineage patterns to be significant to their projects.

Familiarity with Gender Documents and Gender Reports

Less than half of the ENGO survey respondents (nine out of the 23 ENGOs) were aware of gender policies or documents. Examples of these documents include the *Oxfam Gender Training Manual*, *the Government of Malawi Gender Policy*, the *Beijing Gender Platform for Action*, the *NGO Plan of Action*, World Vision International documents and reports, and GAD training manuals. However, the majority (18 out of the 23 respondents) indicated that they are familiar with the CONGOMA *Gender Situation Analysis* and the *Gender Plan of Action.* In terms of the usefulness of these documents, 10 ENGOs felt that this *Plan of Action* will be very useful, nine ENGOs felt that this document would be somewhat useful, and one ENGO indicated that it would not be very useful.

The situation analysis report conducted by CONGOMA indicated that approximately half (17 out of 29 NGOs) interviewed were familiar with gender documents (i.e., The Beijing and Government of Malawi *Platforms for Action*). This finding was particularly surprising in light of the fact that 10 of 17 organizations had these documents available within the organization. None of the NGO staff interviewed had read the documents nor were they familiar with the *Critical Areas of Concern* that these *Platforms for Action* identify (CONGOMA, 1997a).

SSI with BAM staff revealed that some of them were familiar with gender-related information. One staff member from BAM had participated in the CONGOMA Gender Situation Analysis. He further indicated that he felt that "women were left behind in development and that Malawi needs to educate women in order to empower the nation" (ENGO staff member, BAM). The CPAR staff who were interviewed indicated that they have heard of the CONGOMA *Gender Plan of Action* and the Beijing conference. They further indicated that they did not receive enough information about gender and would like to learn more about it through workshops. These staff members indicated that information was not adequately shared within the organization.

SSI with additional ENGO staff members pointed to a lack of information available to staff represented in the middle and junior management positions. One male ENGO staff member indicated that: "gender information is not trickling down to field staff" (ENGO staff member, CPAR). One female staff member who participated in the SSI noted that "they have heard of the *Gender Plan of Action*...[and]...heard about the Beijing conference, but feel that they are given a teaspoon full of it...would like to learn more about it through talks rather than through reading" (ENGO staff member, PAMET). When the data were sex-disaggregated, it was most often female staff members who expressed frustration with lack of information sharing from senior management staff. However, some of the male staff (although a smaller number) did highlight the need for better information exchange and awareness about documents and gender-related information.

Gender Training

The research found that most of the female staff interviewed during SSI had been trained in gender. Five of six female ENGO staff noted that they had participated in gender training workshops. Of the 14 male ENGO staff, only two said they had been to gender training sessions. This finding was then contrasted with the observations of the male/female participant ratio of discussion groups during gender awareness and analysis training workshops. The total number of ENGO staff attending these workshops was 87 staff. The male/female participant ratio of 64:23 or 3:1.

The survey research found that 14 of 23 ENGOs indicated that at least one staff member had gender awareness and analysis training. The research also found that international ENGO staff have had a considerably larger number of staff attend gender training workshops than the national organizations. Additional gender training workshops are being carried out (e.g., eight ENGOs indicated that staff at their organization have had Gender Awareness Training; three ENGOs indicated that staff had training in Gender Training of Trainers; and 13 ENGOs indicated that staff had received gender training as part of other participatory training sessions such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The number of staff at the different levels of the organization who have had gender training was highest for field staff, second highest for management staff, and lowest for support staff (see table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Total Number of Gender-trained Staff, the Percentage Ratio of Males and Females Trained in Gender and Their Location within the Organization

Total Number of Staff Trained in Gender	Male/Female Staff Ratio Trained in Gender (%)	Management Level	Field Staff Level	Support Staff Level
189	74:25	67	85	38

When this information was disaggregated based on the type of ENGO (international versus national), it was found that the majority of staff from international ENGOs trained in gender are field staff. For national ENGOs, few field staff have been trained in gender. National ENGOs indicated that the majority of their staff trained in gender have been from management level positions (see Table 5.3).

Table: 5.3: Comparison of International and National ENGO Staff Trained in Gender and the Percentages of the Total Number of Staff Trained at the Different Levels of the Organizations

Organizational Level	Gender-trained staff in International ENGOs	Gender-trained Staff in National ENGOs
Management	15 per cent	80 per cent
Support	18 per cent	9 per cent
Field	47 per cent	15 per cent
Unaccounted	20 per cent	0 per cent

Participant Observation and SSI found that international ENGOs tend to have a high percentage of expatriate staff working in management positions. Few of these expatriate staff have attended gender awareness and analysis training workshops in Malawi. Some of the staff noted that they have had exposure to gender in some of their academic course work. Most felt that they did not need gender training, noting that they felt they understood the concepts sufficiently to address them in their work. A few of the

senior male staff members also indicated that an understanding of gender issues is not relevant to their work since they are not dealing directly with community members or designing programmes. For example, the accountants at two of the ENGOs visited indicated that there was no reason for them to learn about gender issues since gender inequality did not have an impact on their specific work. International ENGOs were more likely to send field staff for gender training than management staff.

Table 5.4: Types of Gender Training Workshops Ranked as Most Common (1) to Least Common (7)

TYPE OF GENDER TRAINING WORKSHOPS
1. Gender Awareness
2. Gender Awareness and Analysis
3. Gender Training of Trainers
4. Gender Sensitisation
5. Gender in Agricultural Development
6. Gender Mainstreaming
7. Gender sessions during PRA training

Table 5.4 shows the types of gender training workshops that are most popular in Malawi. The introductory gender training sessions are the most common while the gender training sessions that attempt to integrate gender into other programmes and training sessions are the least popular.

Training is playing an increasingly important role in the capacity building of NGOs. Training workshops for NGO staff usually involve skills development in various methods such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA). More recently, NGOs have been using gender training to raise awareness about gender issues. However, PRA is considered one of the

most popular training methods in Malawi.

During SSI, staff from MFWP noted that gender training is needed for select staff. This interview uncovered MFWP plans to train the gender desk officer (gender focal point) and the secretary of the organization. The staff at Greenline Movement noted, at the time of the interview, that none of the staff at this organization had gender training. One male staff member noted that he had a gender session during a PRA training. Greenline Movement intended to send the gender focal point officer for gender training. CCAP-Development Department indicated that at the time of the interview only three staff had basic gender training. WVI had been actively promoting gender training to a wide range of staff members, particularly project officers; to date, more than 50 staff had been trained in gender. Some of the ENGOs have made an effort to provide gender training to all or most of their staff. Other organizations tended to send gender focal point officers to gender training.

CPAR staff noted that most of the gender training workshops had been attended by senior management staff and that this has resulted in insufficient training for project staff. Two of the male field officers who were interviewed noted that they had not received gender training. At the time of the interview, these staff indicated that only one project staff member had gender training as part of other training courses in the three years that this staff member had been working at CPAR. CPAR planned on providing in-house gender training to all staff. When the CPAR in-house gender training did take place, attendance was low and the trainer lacked sufficient training in gender awareness and analysis to adequately impart this knowledge to his co-workers.

Observation of one PRA session uncovered a small representation of female participants. One female ENGO staff member noted that PRA training workshops target male ENGO staff while gender training workshops target female staff. This process of channelling men and women into gender-typed training reinforces gender stereotypes in methodological approaches. To date, however, little effort has been made to integrate the different types of training workshops. Gender training and other types of participatory training are often viewed as separate training exercises. This failure to link the relevance of gender to other important community work reflects the difficulty in linking two important concepts into one comprehensive training exercise.

In Malawi, gender training is relatively new to the ENGO staff. Currently, very few ENGOs have held in-house gender training. Gender training is therefore often conducted by outside agencies or consultants. When asked if field staff would be interested in having more gender training workshops, many indicated that they needed to learn more about gender and therefore requested gender training. None of the staff interviewed felt they would like to receive gender training in connection with other training workshops.

Participant observation of gender training workshops uncovered the extent to which ENGO staff valued these workshops. The respondents noted that the introduction to gender (gender awareness) informed the participants about gender concepts and clarified questions and concerns. The gender analysis provided in training workshops, according to the respondents, imparted the skills necessary for the field staff to encourage equitable gender participation in development projects. All of the staff from the sample

group organizations felt that gender training was integral to understanding gender and to implementing effective projects.

Some differences were noted between the male and female staff members and their exposure to gender awareness and analysis training. Of the six women who were interviewed, five have had gender training. Of the 14 men interviewed, only two indicated that they had taken part in gender awareness and analysis training. Many of these male staff members expressed an interest in receiving this training.

One of the concerns related to gender training workshops noted by one ENGO staff member was the financial rewards that are gained through these training events. ENGOs often pay for these training sessions and also pay for ENGO staff per diem allowances. These daily allowances are designed to ensure that the ENGO staff are able to have comfortable, moderate living accommodations while away at training sessions as well as an allowance for food and incidentals that might be needed while travelling. The reality of the per diem allowance, according to one ENGO staff member, is that the money obtained during out-of-town training sessions is considered a supplementary income for ENGO staff. The money that is supposed to be spent on comfortable accommodation is often not used to pay for a moderate motel. Instead, ENGO staff opt to stay with relatives or in very cheap motels so that participants may pocket the money that was allocated to accommodation. Since per diem allowances have become a supplementary income for many ENGO staff, the motivation for ENGO staff to attend training sessions or conferences may be questioned. The extent to which gender training workshops are considered a means to supplementing incomes can furthermore have implications for who

will attend these workshops.

Methods and Approaches at the Implementation Level

The information that ENGO staff learn during gender training workshops is expected to facilitate gender-related activities at the field level. However, participant observation and SSI revealed that there were only isolated examples of gender-disaggregated data collected at the project level. Some projects, such as small enterprise projects, continue to target men while other projects, such as vegetable gardening, tend to target women. This division is in keeping with the traditional division of labour in Malawi and reinforces gender roles in development projects. Many of the ENGO staff have undertaken participatory approaches in their projects; however, the extent to which women and other marginalised groups participate is not clear and has not been reported. Few ENGO staff indicated that they have adopted a gender analysis approach to obtaining information at the community level. However, the staff noted that when baseline surveys were conducted, information was being collected about men and women.

The ENGO staff were further cognizant of the fact that men and women participated in different aspects of the project and at different times in the project cycle. The staff noted that women were more likely to participate in the implementation and monitoring stages while men were most likely to participate in planning and decision-making stages. However, the ENGO staff did not indicate that they have been using this information to alter the design and implementation of development projects.

The SSI found that some field staff from MFWP have had training in PRA. The strategy adopted at MFWP is to train two or three staff members who are then responsible

for training others at the office. To date, five staff members have been trained in PRA. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by CONGOMA during the gender situation analysis of NGOs in Malawi. The capacity of NGOs to address gender issues was considered to be low. Few staff had gender training and many of these organizations were found to address the practical gender needs of women without addressing the strategic gender needs of women and the often unequal power relations within the community (CONGOMA, 1997a:16).

Attitudes Toward Gender

The group discussions also provided an opportunity for me to learn about various attitudes towards gender held by ENGO staff. Comments from the participants revealed stereotypes pertaining to women and men. One male participant noted that the low representation of women in the formal employment sector was a result of women being poor managers and that women were not able to perform in certain fields. The participants in the group were then given an opportunity to reflect on this statement and to discuss possible reasons for this perception of women. The participants noted that these attitudes towards women are frequently based on one negative experience and that it is important not to generalise about all women in similar situations. It was also noted that the perception of women's inability to perform in certain circumstances may be a result of unequal or unfair working environments which prevent women from working effectively. For example, the unequal division of labour in the home may result in a woman being unable to stay late at the office, according to one female participant.

A second attitude raised by a male participant was that gender is perceived to be

an urban issue that is relevant to elite women and not to rural women. The participants reflected on this distinction and commented on the numerous gender issues that apply to both rural and urban women (i.e., property grabbing from widows). One female ENGO staff member noted that women's silence does not imply that these women do not experience discrimination.

Attitudes towards women and men were further addressed through an exercise that asked the participants to consider and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of being male or female. These advantages and disadvantages pointed to the inequality in access to education, employment opportunities, decision-making power, unequal division of labour, and unequal control of resources. It was noted that women were disadvantaged in relation to men. The disadvantaged position of women is believed to be reinforced through attitudes expressed by the country's President.

One female ENGO staff member offered an example of a contradictory message given in a speech at the 1996 International Women's Day events. The President of Malawi, Bakili Muluzi, gave a speech about gender issues to a crowd of hundreds of interested men and women. His speech was first given in English during which time the President stated his commitment to gender equality, pointed to the various reasons why gender equality is important to the development of Malawi and what specifically the country needs to do in order to ensure gender equality. This speech was well received by the donors, international representatives and other community members.

Following his speech in English, President Muluzi spoke in Chichewa. It was reported to me later, as one ENGO staff member recounted the event, that his speech in

Chichewa was considerably different than the speech in English. According to bilingual observers, in his speech in Chichewa the President contradicted his earlier statements. In the second speech the President noted that women need to obey their husbands and to recognize the importance of preserving culture and traditions. My informant noted that those advocating for gender equality in Malawi were shocked and disappointed in this speech. They felt that it was underhanded and unacceptable for the President to tell the international community that he was committed to gender equality while at the same time telling the citizens of the country that culture and traditions that subordinate women are necessary for development.

The observations that were made over the course of the 18 months living and working in Malawi pointed to a conflicting approach to gender and development. On the one hand, a number of Malawian staff working in ENGOs rejected the use of the term gender indicating that it is a Western construct that lacks application in Malawian culture. On the other hand, these same Malawian ENGO staff frequently provided examples of the changing cultural context in which they are living. Culture was changing because of male migration from rural to urban areas, resulting in the changing roles and responsibilities of women in rural areas. The Malawian ENGO staff often pointed to the need to address women's issues in rural communities, women's lack of access to resources, and their inability to make decisions despite women's changing roles and responsibilities.

The capacity of ENGO staff to frame or contextualize gender issues within the gender and development framework was low. In other words, to adopt the framework developed by Molyneux and expanded by Moser (1993), ENGO staff had a sense of the

practical needs of women but did not have the tools and language to translate these practical needs into an analysis of their strategic interests. The extent to which ENGO staff understood gender issues as strategic interests was often limited to a distorted and confused understanding of urban women that they perceived as trying to change culture and in effect, becoming Westernized. Male ENGO staff said they feared that gender equality would have a negative impact on culture and on development. This finding was particularly intriguing in light of an earlier finding that ENGO staff did not consider lineage patterns and cultural practices to be relevant to their NRM projects.

3. Presence of Gender Programmes and Personnel

This section summarizes the findings related to the presence of gender programmes, gender personnel, and the responsibilities and capacity of the gender focal point staff. The ENGOs that completed the questionnaire noted that their organizations have made an effort to appoint a staff member to address gender issues. The survey revealed that 17 out of the 23 ENGOs have a gender focal point officer, eight ENGOs indicated that they have a gender desk, five indicated that they have a gender programme, one ENGO has a gender co-ordinator and one ENGO has a gender task force in place. Only three out of the 23 ENGOs that responded indicated that they did not have any specific gender personnel (see Table 5.5).

When the survey data were disaggregated based on the type of organization, it was found that the majority of national ENGOs had a gender desk. International ENGOs were most likely to have a gender and development (GAD) programme or a women in development (WID) programme. Both international and national ENGOs had an equal

number of GAD and WID programmes, although, there were more WID and GAD programmes noted among the international ENGOs.

Table 5.5: Gender Personnel and Types of Gender Programmes

TYPE OF Gender PERSONNEL/PROGRAMMES	NUMBER OF ENGOs	TOTAL NUMBER OF ENGOs
Gender Focal Point Officer	17	23
Gender Desk	8	23
Gender Programme	5	23
Gender Co-ordinator	1	23
WID Programme	3	23
Gender Task Force	1	23
No Gender Personnel or Programmes	3	23

The number of ENGOs with gender programmes is consistent with the findings from the 1996 CURE *Directory of NGOs involved in NRM and Gender.* This directory identified 24 NGOs involved in NRM, but only five of them indicated that they have a gender programme at their organizations

The gender advisor to the NGO sector recommended that each NGO establish a gender focal point position within the organization. This activity was identified by the CONGOMA gender officer as the "most urgent move for every NGO" (CONGOMA, 1997d:3). CONGOMA later reported that many of the organizations have made only cosmetic changes. For example, the report noted that some NGOs have changed the names of their programmes from women in development (WID) to gender and development (GAD). It was further noted in this report that this activity has been undertaken without a significant change in the development approach that is used at the

project level (CONGOMA, 1997a). This study uncovered that many of the gender personnel were little more than figureheads within the organization. These staff members tended to lack influence and decision-making power. The introduction of gender personnel is new to most of the organizations in Malawi. Since 1997 many ENGOs hired gender personnel or appointed an existing staff member to this position.

Gender Focal Point Officer Responsibilities

Semi-structured interviews with 10 ENGOs in Malawi demonstrated that all of the ENGOs visited had gender focal point officers. However, only two of these organizations indicated that the gender focal point officer is not assigned to any other post within the organization. Thus, 80 per cent of those ENGOs visited had gender focal point officers with responsibilities in addition to the gender-related responsibilities. Examples of these responsibilities include: projects/programme officers (3), executive directors (2), accountant/accounts officer (2), and volunteering (1). At MFWP, the staff noted that it is difficult for the accounts officer to carry out the responsibilities of both roles within the organization due to the amount of time required to carry out each task.

The responsibilities of the gender personnel vary from organization to organization. These responsibilities included co-ordinating and mainstreaming gender within the organization, programmes and projects; representing the organization at gender meetings and networking; developing a gender strategy for the organization; providing civic education about gender issues; encouraging the participation of men and women in projects; reporting, monitoring, and evaluating gender activities within the organization; and sensitising and training staff on gender issues. While these responsibilities are diverse

in nature, the responsibility most frequently indicated for the gender personnel was the provision of gender training to staff members.

During an extensive investigation of Concern Universal, it was found that the responsibilities of the gender focal point officer included pursuing further training which would assist the gender officer to carry out capacity building activities within the organization, such as information dissemination, networking, production of materials, conducting project analyses, taking part in field visits and increased interaction with staff. The gender officer was further responsible for providing training to the staff members, designing gender-sensitive policies for the organization, assessing and monitoring the activities of the organization in relation to gender progress. The gender officer was also responsible for budgeting for gender activities on behalf of the organization and for her own programmes and providing necessary resources for staff to conduct gender-related activities. All of these responsibilities were expected to be carried out within Concern Universal as well as Concern Universal's partner organizations in Malawi. The job descriptions for gender personnel are therefore broad. It was also unclear what the specific and primary roles of the gender co-ordinator would entail. Gender focal point staff were frequently away attending meetings and in some cases gender focal point officers were in different countries in the region receiving additional gender training.

Capacity of Gender Personnel

The CONGOMA situation analysis conducted in 1997 revealed that the capacity and knowledge of gender focal point officers was lacking (CONGOMA, 1997a). This study noted that very few of the NGOs visited had gender focal point officers with the

necessary capacity to deal effectively with gender issues in their organizations. The situation analysis report identified this problem as a result of the selection process of gender focal point officers. These gender focal point officers were believed to be selected by virtue of their sex; women were appointed gender focal point officers since gender was perceived to be a woman's issue. The report further indicated that the gender focal point officers did not have the skills and training needed to effectively promote gender in all the organizations' activities.

SSI with staff from various ENGOs revealed that the position of the gender focal point officer was new to the organization. One of the male ENGO staff members interviewed during SSI indicated that his organization had a gender co-ordinator; however, "the gender co-ordinator is not influential...has no access to funds...lacks confidence in her work...lacks training...[and] lacks support among many senior management staff" (ENGO staff member, WVI). These concerns highlighted the lack of impact that the gender co-ordinator could have in programmes and projects as well as the relationship between the gender co-ordinator and the senior management staff since very few organizations had a gender focal point officer represented on major decision-making bodies.

The case study found that the representation of the gender focal point officer in relation to senior management was unclear and was reflected in her absence from management meetings. Senior management staff indicated that they had an open-door policy. Furthermore, the research noted the location of the gender focal point officer under an un-related programme was a result of the gender focal point officer being added onto

the existing structures. There was a lack of support for the necessary structural changes that would be required in order to effectively integrate gender into the organization and no clear strategy for integrating gender within the organization.

These findings were consistent with the gender situation analysis conducted in 1997 by CONGOMA which found that most of the gender focal point officers were working within the junior levels of the organization and were therefore ineffective. During the case study the ENGO staff members were asked to discuss the gender focal point officer's relation to management and her potential to influence organizational activities. Both the male and the female staff members were not clear about the impact that the gender focal point officer would have by virtue of her presence in the organization. There were no significant differences in the responses of male and female staff. All of the staff members felt that the gender focal point officer would have access to decision-making bodies within the organization, although none of the staff were clear as to how this would take place.

On a number of occasions, I had the opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities for gender issues at the organizational level with the gender focal point officers. These informal discussions often took place over a lunch break during a conference or training session. These discussions revealed the competition that existed between women. One example of this competition was made apparent following the 1997 International Women's Day functions. The CONGOMA gender task force had worked hard to arrange an event to mark International Women's Day. They claimed that although they had done all of the difficult and time-consuming tasks to get ready for this event, the

Ministry of Women, Youth and Community Services came in and took control of the day and also the recognition. Gender personnel were therefore faced with challenges that reinforced the gap in communication between the governmental and nongovernmental sector. There were clear divisions between different groups of women, their strategies, and how different women and groups of women and men hoped to achieve gender equality. This was a major concern for some of the women in Malawi who preferred women to form coalitions to promote the interests of women rather than further divide the country on gender lines.

Divisions between different women and groups of women were often a result of various approaches to address gender issues in Malawi. In 1998, Malawi's newspapers and radio news reported a rift that had developed between two prominent women who were advocates for gender equality in Malawi. The media portrayed this disagreement in an extremely negative way, highlighting the spiteful manner in which this dispute took place. A number of men I spoke to reported that this spite-filled dispute was indicative of women's inability to act professionally. However, some of the women I spoke with felt that the media portrayed this dispute in this way to reinforce stereotypes about professional women. One female ENGO staff member noted that if a disagreement between two professional men took place, the media would probably not report it and certainly not in such a negative manner.

4. Gender Policies

This section summarizes which organizations have gender policies in place, what these policies entail, who designs these policies, the influence that gender policy-makers

have within the organization, and how the policies are being monitored.

Prevalence of Gender Policies

Although some ENGOs were developing policies to guide their work, most ENGOs did not have a gender policy. In the survey responses, seven out of 23 ENGOs indicated that they had a gender policy while three out of 23 ENGOs noted that they were in the process of designing their gender policies. Seventeen out of 23 ENGOs indicated that they had an interest in developing a gender policy, while only two ENGOs indicated that they had no interest in the development of a gender policy for the organization.

The need for gender policies at the organizational level had developed as a result of the need for an organizational environment that is conducive to the needs and interests of men and women. Some of the ENGOs in Malawi had adopted an Affirmative Action approach which was referred to among ENGO staff in Malawi as 'positive discrimination'. This policy was expected to encourage women to apply for positions and to assist in pressuring ENGO management staff to hire more women despite what is perceived to be the comparatively lower qualifications of women.

Of the ten ENGOs interviewed during SSI, two ENGOs (CPAR and Plan) indicated that they had a gender policy in place for the organization. One of these organizations (CPAR) noted that the gender policy was in draft format. BAM indicated that the organization did not have a gender policy and that gender was not clearly specified in the mission statement or the objectives. PAMET did not have an organizational policy on gender. The organization had some policies in place that reflect gender concerns.

In the situation analysis, CONGOMA identified very few ENGOs that address gender in their mission statements. The research found that only five ENGOs out of the 29 visited had clearly articulated gender in their mission statements (CONGOMA, 1997a). This study further noted that very few ENGOs had an operational gender policy or addressed gender equity within the organization (CONGOMA, 1997a).

Making, Monitoring and Influencing Gender Policies Within the Organization

During the SSI, it was found that many organizations had allocated the responsibility of formulating a gender policy to the gender focal point officer. Gender focal point officers, who were often overwhelmed with a vast array of responsibilities, indicated that they had not found the time to create this policy. An additional constraint was that the gender focal point officer, who usually occupied a position in the lower levels of management, was not able to influence gender policies since she or he is often outside of the decision-making body of the organization. For those organizations that had adopted a gender policy, there was no indication that those policies influenced project activities. In other words, policies could enhance the appearance of activities carried by ENGOs but the actual implementation of gender policies was rarely monitored.

Gender Policy Details

One gender policy stipulated that a woman working for PAMET was not supposed to get pregnant within the first year of being hired; if she did, she would be fired. After this first year, women were able to take a paid pregnancy leave. This policy had been criticised by some of the ENGO staff as working to the disadvantage of women. One female ENGO staff member indicated that it is rarely the woman's decision when to have a child and that

women often do not have control over their fertility. This example illustrated how organizations attempt to control issues such as family planning.

The *NGO Gender Plan of Action* was an effort by all NGOs working under the umbrella organization (CONGOMA) to design a policy and guidelines for activities that could be adopted by NGOs to enhance gender equity in their organizations, programmes and projects. This plan of action addressed six policy areas specific to Malawi that were also included in the *Beijing Platform for Action* - poverty alleviation and empowerment, reproductive health, education and training, environment, the advancement of women in decision-making, human rights, women, and the girl child (CONGOMA, 1997c).

The *NGO Gender Plan of Action* identified activities, indicators, a time-frame and the organizations responsible for assisting in the implementation of the NGO Plan of Action between 1997 and 2000. The *NGO Gender Plan of Action* was still in its draft stage; however, the goals of this plan were, in general, reflective of the goals promoted by the Government of Malawi's gender policy.

The Ministry of Women, Youth and Community Services prepared a *Draft National Gender Policy*. The *Draft National Gender Policy* was circulated in July 1998. This Policy had been prepared in the recognition that "sustainable economic and social development of the country requires full and equal participation of both women and men" (Ministry of Women, Youth and Community Services, 1998:3). The gender policy came about in reaction to unsuccessful attempts at achieving gender equality in Malawi through the adoption of the WID strategy in 1993. The gender policy acknowledged inequality between women and men in power sharing, participation and control over decision-making

processes. The document further stressed that extension and training services had tended to favour men as a result of male dominance in the formal employment sector and owing to cultural factors (Ministry of Women, Youth and Community Services, 1998)

The goal of the gender policy was to "mainstream gender in the national development process to enhance participation of men and women, boys and girls in sustainable and equitable development for poverty alleviation" (Ministry of Women, Youth and Community Services, 1998:6).

This policy document asserted that women were most disadvantaged in environmental issues resulting from the socially defined gender roles in Malawi. The document further uncovered the significant absence of women from all levels of decision-making in policy and project formulation. The goal of the natural resources and environmental component of the policy document was to "promote the participation of men, women, boys and girls on the sound management, conservation and utilisation of natural resources and the environment so as to achieve sustainable and equitable development" (Ministry of Women, Youth and Community Services, 1998:31).

The following is a summary of the various environmental strategies proposed in the policy document:

1. provision of more resources and training;
2. social mobilisation campaigns;
3. promoting participatory resource management;
4. sensitisation and awareness raising of participation in resource management for both communities and government staff;
5. provision of training to researchers and extension staff; development and dissemination of technology;
6. provision of technical skills; provision of marketing skills and information;
7. introduction of credit schemes;
8. ensure increased access to necessary resources; policy review and formulation;

9. provision of career guidance;
10. construction of necessary infrastructure;
11. provision of favourable conditions to motivate and retain female staff; and
12. curricula review.

During the document review, two draft gender policies were examined and compared. The gender policy mission statement and gender policy goals of CSC and CPAR are summarized in Table 5.6. Both of these policies addressed the importance of dealing with gender issues internally (within the organization) and externally (with the communities and other organizations).

Table 5.6: Comparison of Gender Policies Designed by CSC and CPAR

Area of Investigation	CSC's Gender Policy	CPAR's Gender Policy
Gender Policy Mission Statement	"Because women are in subordinate positions, CSC will make special efforts to promote their full and active participation in all stages of development programmes/projects. Because of Malawian culture, mostly, men are in decision making positions, therefore, CSC will sensitize them on the gender imbalance."	"Malawian women's full and meaningful participation in development of Malawi is restricted by their subordinate position in the society and by cultural, economic and institutional barriers"
Gender Policy Goal	"CSC's development programmes should benefit both men and women."	"CPAR is committed to transform gender relations both in the community and within CPAR which will enable Malawian women to participate fully with men as actors and agents in their efforts to achieve good health."

(CSC, 1998; CPAR, 1997).

The gender policy that HURAC developed specifically addressed the girl child. However, this organization's gender policy stated that the organization "actively promotes the welfare and development of women and girl children by progressively adopting and

implementing policies and regulations aimed at achieving gender equality" (HURAC, 1998). Additional document review noted that while a number of organizations did not explicitly address gender in their mission statements, their goals and activities addressed women's concerns or issues. For example, PAMET was an organization "committed to the promotion of small-scale recycled paper making in order to alleviate poverty and improve standards of education throughout Malawi" (PAMET).

5. Gender as a Foreign Concept

Many ENGO staff noted that gender was perceived to be a foreign concept. Gender was considered foreign to Malawian culture and traditions and imposed from outside agencies. Gender was also considered to be foreign to the organizational culture of ENGOs and confined to the project level. The survey asked the respondents to identify who was responsible for initiating gender activities within the organization. Out of the 23 respondents, five indicated that gender was initiated by the international office or donors. Eight of the ENGO respondents noted that senior management was responsible for initiating gender. One ENGO noted that communities have initiated gender activities, and two ENGOs noted that gender was initiated by the middle management and field staff.

Approximately half of the international ENGO staff believed it was the international office that initiated gender activities. Nearly half of the national ENGO staff (46 per cent) believed that gender activities were initiated primarily by management. Participant observation further revealed that management staff of both international and national ENGOs were under increasing pressure from international donors to address gender issues. Donor influence in relation to gender activities was tied to the conditions of funding. If

junior management staff were not part of the negotiating and decision-making bodies of the organization, they were not as likely to be in direct contact with the donors. As a result, these staff may not be aware of the donor demands that senior management staff were trying to meet by addressing gender in their funding proposals.

The gender situation analysis conducted in 1997 found that those projects and programmes that were considered gender-responsive tended to be donor-driven. Ten out of the 29 NGOs that CONGOMA visited indicated that their gender efforts were solely initiated by the donor (CONGOMA, 1997a).

This research found that gender is considered by some ENGO staff to be a Western or foreign concept. Many of the ENGO staff indicated during group discussions that "gender is in conflict with Malawian culture" (ENGO staff member). According to this group discussion participant, gender was an issue for Western women and was increasingly being addressed by urban, elite women in Malawi. This staff member went on to explain that he thought gender issues did not apply to women and men in rural communities since culture prevents women and men from sharing responsibilities. The perception of a rigid gender division of labour at the community level existed among ENGO staff members despite the changing reality of women's work at the community level. The preservation of Malawian culture, according to some of the ENGO staff members, depended on maintaining the existing gender relations at the community level. Many of the ENGO staff members did not see culture as a dynamic process and that any change in culture was considered a negative change since it was likely to alter a status quo that favoured the interests of men.

These findings confirmed that attention to gender is largely foreign to the

organizations. The staff who were interviewed (management and field staff) tended to consider gender as something that required attention only at the field level. It was found that few ENGOs considered an organizational analysis of gender activities within the ENGOs to be of relevance. In fact, many of the ENGO staff were very defensive about any suggestions that gender needed to be considered at the organizational level. Discussions with gender focal point officers revealed their perceptions that ENGO staff (particularly men in senior management positions) considered gender to be threatening to male privilege within the organizations. Addressing gender at the community or project level was a safe activity because it did not directly impact on the gender relations and power structure of the organization itself. These findings support the participant observation in which interviews were held with staff from various levels of management. For the most part, senior management did not wish to address gender issues as they related to the organizational structure and the influence the gender personnel would have in the organization. Gender was therefore not necessarily addressed internally within the organization (Mihowa, Tiessen and Twea, 1998).

Both gender issues and issues of diversity tended to be "externalised by NGOs as problems out there with programmes" (James, 1998:151). There is a lack of willingness on the part of organizational staff to address gender issues internally, within the organization and among the organization staff. These internal gender issues would include issues about who holds power, how power is distributed, who makes decisions and how these decisions are made, the channels of communication and the conditions within which NGO staff operate (James, 1998).

6. Reporting on Gender

This section summarizes the findings related to gender reporting within ENGOs. The research discovered that there was little gender-related information being gathered, few staff members knew of existing gender-related information, the information that had been collected was not being used to design new projects, information obtained by senior management was not trickling down to other staff members, and it was not clear how information was collected and summarized by ENGO staff.

Lack of Gender-related Information Collected

Few ENGOs had undertaken gender analyses at the community level. Fourteen of 23 ENGOs had conducted an assessment of women's or gender issues within their projects. When the ENGOs were asked the extent to which women and men participated in the various stages of the project cycle they noted that women participated mostly in implementation and the needs assessment stages. Women's participation was less in the decision-making, monitoring and evaluation and planning stages. These latter stages, according to the ENGO staff, were more frequently carried out by men within the communities.

The CCAP Development Department hoped to develop some information to reveal the gender-disaggregated information within their projects. World Vision had been reporting on gender in the form of training reports that were created by CURE (the training NGO) which were passed onto the supervisor. The gender co-ordinator from WVI indicated that she did not generally receive feedback on these reports. The gender co-ordinator had only received minor feedback from the international gender co-ordinator.

The information collected indicated that ENGOs lacked specific mechanisms to report on gender and to share gender-related information within the organization. Lack of information disaggregated by gender was expected to have implications for project success. The success of a project depended on the ENGO staff's capacity to determine who was carrying out the projects and at what phases of the project cycle, and to anticipate the implications of the participation of certain groups within the community.

Gender Information Not Shared Within the Organization

The SSI with ENGO staff found that gender was primarily being discussed at the senior management level within the organization (half of the organizational staff noted that gender information was not being adequately shared within the organization). The staff reported that the information that was available was concentrated at the senior management level and that this information was not trickling down to the staff at other levels of the organization. CPAR field staff indicated that gender was considered to be "paper work". PAMET staff observed that the meetings that pertain to gender issues and the information that comes into the organization about gender was primarily directed to the Executive Director. MFWP noted that most of the information pertaining to gender that was collected was reflective of the work carried out by the men and women.

While there were limited gender-disaggregated data available within the organization, the ENGO staff who work most closely with the community members were able to comment on the nature of men's and women's participation in the community development projects. ENGO staff noted that women's participation was low in all of the decision-making activities of the project. More gender-disaggregated information was

necessary, however, to ensure that the projects were designed and implemented with both men's and women's interests in mind. While some ENGO staff were aware of gender issues at the community level, proper mechanisms needed to be established so that this information was circulated within the organization and used by the decision-makers in planning and budgeting activities.

7. Budgeting for Gender Activities

The findings related to budgeting for gender activities summarized who was responsible for budgeting activities, who was responsible for proposal writing, whether the organizations were committed to budgeting for gender-related activities, how gender funds were being allocated, and the gender-related budgeting issues experienced by women within ENGOs.

The Extent to which ENGOs are Budgeting for Gender-related Activities

Of the 23 ENGO survey respondents, only seven ENGOs indicated that they had budgeted for gender. The percentage of the budget that these seven ENGOs allocated to gender-related activities ranged from 15 per cent to 50 per cent. Three of the seven ENGOs remarked that budgeting for gender took place through programme prorating. Thirteen of the 23 ENGOs indicated that they did not budget for gender within their organizations, while two ENGOs did not respond to this question. The organization-disaggregated data revealed that more of the international ENGOs had budgeted for gender-related activities than the national ENGOs. In total, five international ENGOs indicated that they had budgeted for gender-related activities while only three national ENGOs noted that they had budgeted for gender-related activities.

Semi-structured interviews provided further insight into budgeting activities. The ENGO staff interviewed reported that donors were increasingly supporting gender-related initiatives and providing funding for these activities. One SSI pointed to the low budget allocated to gender-related activities. Additional SSI found that the ENGO staff did not believe that senior management staff were committed to addressing gender equality and therefore limited funds had been allocated to addressing gender issues. Some of the ENGO staff interviewed also indicated that they lacked the skills necessary to write effective proposals and to request funding that would be allocated to gender-related activities.

Budgeting, in general, had been identified by Ebdon (1995) as a result of NGO organizational growth and expansion pointing to "the need for increased capacity to raise material and human resources" (Ebdon, 1995:54). NGOs had therefore become dependent on donor funds, and in so doing "they become subject to upward accountability" (Ebdon, 1995:54). Funding that was allocated to gender activities tended to be, according to Ebdon, diverted away from women at the community level and channelled to developing the institutional capacity of the organization to address gender issues (Ebdon, 1995).

How Gender-related Funds are Being Allocated

The participant observation of one ENGO as a case study revealed the difficulties that ENGO staff had in translating these budgeted gender activities into practice. One ENGO noted that gender would not be given specific budgetary funds. Instead, funds for gender-related activities would be integrated throughout the programme activities whereby each programme would have a gender budget-line. The purpose of this approach was to better integrate gender-related activities into the programmes. However, the gender focal

point officer at this organization noted that she lacked influence in this procedure and thus had no control over how these programme managers allocated gender funds in their activities.

Furthermore, the gender focal point officer said that there were no specific funds allocated to her projects and she therefore had no access to finances to buy resource materials, conduct field visits or other gender-related activities. All of her movements, therefore, depended on the decisions made by other staff within the organization.

Cultural and Gender-related Issues Experienced by Women in ENGOs

The problem of budgeting came into play particularly when it came to the issue of petty cash allocation. Many of the female staff indicated that they had not had access to funds when they needed to travel to meetings and other locations. Female staff faced significant constraints in getting the necessary funds when they approached the accounts officers. Women were often asked to justify their requests, they said, when men were not challenged in this way. These female staff members indicated that this obstacle to receiving money was a spillover of the cultural practices that occurred in the home whereby a woman had to ask her husband repeatedly for money.

Female staff members also complained of a lack of access to resource materials, (i.e., books, training manuals) since there was no specific budget allocated to these resources. Female staff commented that they did not have access to transportation when they needed it and noted that men did not face the same obstacles in access to company vehicles. During my experience in Malawi, on a number of occasions a vehicle had been reserved by the gender personnel who needed to travel to a field location but was taken by another staff

member. Some of the female ENGO staff members noted that the activities carried out by the gender personnel were perceived to be less important than those carried out by other staff members. On a number of occasions, I waited for long periods of time, up to eight hours, for a senior staff member to return with the vehicle which he said was only needed for a couple of minutes while he ran an errand.

The perception among many of the women staff of vehicle use tended to point to a general powerlessness women experienced in securing transportation because they were women and because the work that men needed to do was considered more urgent and more important than women's work. For gender personnel, lack of access to vehicles meant that gender issues themselves were not deemed important in the face of other issues within the organization therefore allocation of vehicles was determined by the importance of environmental programme staff. While a number of staff members, particularly women, indicated their frustration over lack of access to resources and budgets, there were few instances when these staff members brought these issues to senior management staff.

8. The Link Between Gender and NRM

A CURE report indicated that excluding women from mainstream participation in environmental activities was an obstacle to the country's development (CURE, 1998). The research found that there were some environmental projects which were perceived to be more suitable for men than for women. Some ENGO staff thought that gender was another word for women and therefore their gender-sensitive approach to environmental projects did little more than recognize the high representation of women living in rural communities. Environmental projects had a tendency to target men and women for specific activities. The

gender-related strategies adopted by ENGOs were few and efforts to integrate gender issues into environmental projects had not been successful.

Targeting Men and Women for Sex-typed Projects

A technique used during a group discussion exercise was ranking of projects based on the ENGO staff's perception of the gender significance of each project (see Appendix 6). The exercise was used to determine the extent to which gender is considered relevant in projects that have not traditionally targeted women. The results of this exercise indicated that the ENGO staff considered certain projects to have a more significant gender component than others. Those projects that involve health, sanitation and nutrition were considered to have a more significant gender component while those projects that have traditionally targeted men were considered to have a less significant gender component (e.g., tree nurseries, beekeeping, brick-making, and borehole drilling). It was further noted that those activities that were primarily carried out by ENGOs were ranked low in terms of gender significance which coincides with the above argument that gender and environment were frequently considered separate and unrelated issues.

It was suggested earlier that the failure to link gender and environmental issues was a result of the misunderstanding of gender and the fact that ENGO staff considered gender to be about women rather than the relationship between men and women determined by socialized gender roles and the symbolic association of men with the public sphere and women with the private sphere.

In the discussion that followed this exercise, participants explained why certain activities were not seen to have a significant gender dimension. In the case of beekeeping,

the participants noted that beekeeping was an activity that had a cultural component whereby " women were not supposed to climb trees" (ENGO group discussion participants). It was also noted that "women were afraid of bees and shy away from beekeeping projects because they fear bee stings" (ENGO group discussion participants). The participants were asked to reflect on some strategies that could be used to get women involved in these projects in order to overcome the cultural barriers. One of the solutions identified was appropriate technology (i.e., Kenya Top-Bar style beehives) which would allow women to participate in beekeeping without climbing trees to collect the honey.

The types of projects implemented by the ENGOs in this study tended to reinforce gender stereotypes about specific types of programmes and projects. Men continued to be targeted for small enterprise projects while women were targeted for gardening projects. This finding pointed to a similar finding in the region whereby NGOs working in Zimbabwe tended to introduce projects for rural women that were an extension of their reproductive roles within the family (Tiessen, 1995). Gardening projects for women, for example, tended to reinforce the gender division of labour at the community level.

Strategies to Address Women's/Gender Issues in NRM

The research was expected to reveal information about the current activities being adopted by ENGOs to ensure that gender issues are addressed in their projects. The ENGOs were asked in the survey to identify what specific strategies they had to address women's or gender issues in their NRM projects. The NGOs collectively listed the following strategies:

1. supporting women through farmer's clubs;
2. involving women in various NRM activities;
3. ensuring the participation of women in their projects;
4. ensuring that half the number of beneficiaries are men and half are women;

5. providing courses to both boys and girls;
6. ensuring an equitable ratio of male and female members when distributing loans;
7. encouraging the formation of women's groups; reducing the workload of women so that they have more time to participate in development projects;
8. providing alternatives to firewood and charcoal to reduce the labour and environmental destruction; and
9. promoting family planning to improve the health of women and to ensure that they can better participate in community projects.

Most of the strategies identified by the ENGOs were geared to increasing the participation and effectiveness of women in development projects. No ENGOs mentioned that they were interested in women's empowerment, women's increased decision-making power, or other gender issues that might ensure that women's status and decision-making power were strengthened by project activities.

The SSI with ENGO staff revealed that some of the staff members recognised that gender was relevant to NRM activities. One staff member indicated that "women are more influential, committed, and take NRM more seriously than men within the communities" (ENGO staff member, WVI). Another ENGO noted that "it is women who have the majority of information about NRM and therefore, women need to be addressed in their projects" (ENGO staff member, RUFA).

Some of the projects, however, carried out by these ENGOs were considered to have a less significant gender component. For example, the micro-enterprise project was considered to have less of a gender component. Micro-enterprise or other projects that were geared to income-generating in Malawi had a tendency to encourage the participation of men moreso than projects that did not result in a cash income.

SSI revealed that gender was not integrated into the organization's programmes and projects. However, a number of staff members indicated that integrating gender was a goal

of the organization. PAMET saw itself as having achieved gender mainstreaming throughout its programmes. The CONGOMA *Gender Situation Analysis* pointed to the problem of integrating gender within other programmes. The NGO staff noted a tendency to view gender as a separate project activity which was unrelated to the other NGO activities. The lack of incorporation of gender concerns and gender responsiveness was expected to result in the marginalisation of gender issues and of the gender focal point officer. According to the gender task force, this pointed to "a situation which is counter productive to mainstreaming gender" (CONGOMA, 1997a:25).

There was little evidence in Malawi to suggest that environmental NGOs had attempted to integrate gender into their programmes. Some of the ENGO staff indicated during the semi-structured interviews that gender was addressed in programmes carried out by other NGOs such as nutrition and health pogrammes and that it was not pertinent to environmental programmes.

9. Gender Awareness at the Project Level

The research noted a number of strategies that had been used by ENGO staff to encourage participation of men and women in their projects. This study summarized the problems with women's and men's participation and awareness of the term "gender" at the community level. The following section introduces some of the strategies used to encourage women's participation in NRM projects.

Strategies to Encourage Women's Participation

The 1996 CURE *Gender Directory* contained information about how organizations had attempted to increase the participation of women in their projects. Some organizations

indicated that they encouraged women to participate in village committees. Other activities carried out by NGOs to encourage participation of women and men in their projects involved:

1. consultation with the communities;
2. recognising the various roles and responsibilities carried out by women particularly since women are often responsible for carrying out the project implementation;
3. the promotion of the active participation of men and women in all facets of programming;
4. working with women's groups; facilitate a needs assessment of women's needs; and
5. the involvement of women in decision-making (CURE, 1996).

A CURE assessment report of NGO activities in NRM was consistent with the above findings. This report found that women's participation was often low in decision-making activities but high in project implementation (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997). The CURE report also anticipated that the impact of the project would be felt by all community members. Many ENGO project staff believed that all projects would benefit community members equally. However, the CURE report noted that marginalised groups frequently did not reap the benefits of projects. The negative impacts of environmental degradation felt by women can have an impact on the entire family. Projects that did not address household daily needs (i.e., time and access to resources) were not likely to assist the community's development (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997).

One project manager reported that although that women were frequently present on committees and at community meetings, they were not active participants. The project manager said that women's low participation rates were a result of prevailing negative attitudes of male extension staff and other men within the community, reflecting negative perceptions of women's involvement in decision-making activities. Additional reasons for

women's low level of active participation in decision-making roles included cultural factors that discouraged women from participating as well as lack of time for women to be involved in these projects, resulting from their heavy household responsibilities. In this study, it was found that there were no interventions made by the NGO staff to ensure the active participation of women in decision-making roles (Mihowa, Tiessen and Whyatt, 1997).

Problems Experienced with Women's Participation

During the discussion groups, the ENGO staff were asked to reflect on the problems women faced in terms of project participation. The constraints identified during the discussion groups included:

1. low literacy levels;
2. lack of confidence and courage;
3. cultural and traditional barriers;
4. the heavy workload of women;
5. unequal division of labour at the community level;
6. agricultural activities perceived to be men's activities;
7. lack of community understanding of gender equality;
8. lack of access and control of resources, lack of support from their husbands;
9. lack of alternatives in life, lack of strategies to incorporate women in the projects;
10. lack of decision-making power of women; and
11. lack of understanding of women's role in development (Group Discussions)

Problems Experienced with Men's Participation

The participants in the group discussions were then asked to reflect on the problems men experienced in participating in ENGO projects. These problems were identified as:

1. lack of resources to carry out projects;
2. traditional roles prevent men from taking part in certain activities that are considered women's work;
3. men lack the initiative to be involved;
4. lineage patterns prevent men from getting involved at the community level;
5. agricultural responsibilities prevent men from getting involved in community projects;
6. male labour migration;

7. preference for activities that produce a cash income;
8. men lack role models;
9. alcohol use and abuse;
10. lack of commitment to some projects (i.e., nutrition);
11. high levels of poverty; and
12. negative attitudes towards development (Group Discussions, 1997-1998).

The staff interviewed during SSI demonstrated a strong understanding of the participation of men and women at the community level. The staff members from CPAR indicated that there was gender equitable participation in the activities that they carried out with communities. However, one staff member noted that at the community level the perception of women was that "women are not on the same level as men" (ENGO staff member, CPAR). During their project meetings, CPAR staff noted that women were not comfortable participating in the presence of men. To address this issue, CPAR had been using separate groups (i.e., men only and women only) to allow for greater participation of women. They noted that the best way to involve women was to have women-only groups so that women can make decisions without the interference of men. In so doing, the staff felt that there had been a higher success rate in projects. CPAR staff considered gender issues relevant to their work, noting that women were the majority of people in the most vulnerable groups and that as a result of male migration, women were responsible for three-quarters of the work. In one of the regions where CPAR was operating (Lilongwe), the staff determined that most households were headed by women. Furthermore, CPAR staff had found that the access to and control of resources was a gender issue. The staff cited an example of the tobacco growing nurseries in which it was found women did most of the intensive work while the profits made from the sale of the tobacco were often controlled and spent by men.

With regard to increasing women's control of resources and involving women more effectively in projects, CPAR staff noted that the existing channels of authority (like the Ministry of Agriculture and Traditional Authorities) needed to be utilised. Examples of the existing channels of authority include the Ministry of Agriculture and Traditional Authorities. In general, the staff indicated that some aspects of culture needed to change in order for development to be successful.

During the interviews, PAMET staff said that there was an unequal division of labour between men and women at the community level. PAMET staff noted that the labour intensive process of pounding the materials for recycling is primarily carried out by women since pounding is traditionally the role of women. It had been found that men were willing to do pounding during the training programme but once they returned to their villages, they requested their wives or other women in the village to do the pounding for them. Men's unwillingness to pound was linked to traditions that suggest that "men who pound will become infertile or will never get married" (ENGO staff member, PAMET). Men who created herbal medicines did their own pounding so that the ingredients were kept secret. PAMET staff further noted that it was primarily women who participated in their projects. However, men usually had access to and control of the money earned by the women. PAMET staff provided one example of the husband of a woman successful in a paper recycling project declaring himself the 'director of the business' in order to control the money earned from the sale of these products. PAMET attempted to intervene in such cases to educate the community members that women who carried out the work were entitled to have access to and control over the money that was earned in these projects. This example

provided evidence of the extent to which the public sphere can and does intervene in the private sphere.

The staff from MFWP identified some of the reasons for the low levels of men's participation in their projects. Water-related issues were viewed as women's issues and men failed to see their role in this activity; men were frequently searching for cash income-earning activities; and "men see themselves in terms of their roles as decision-makers but are not interested in the implementation of the projects" (ENGO staff member, MFWP). The problems related to women's participation in MFWP activities were low levels of literacy and lack of information about the importance of development projects.

Greenline Movement staff found that women's participation in their projects and tree nurseries was high. Men, on the other hand, often lacked interest in the project, seeing the work as women's work since it is women who were responsible for the collection of firewood. Greenline Movement also found that there was a high rate of male migration, leaving few men in the communities to assist with their projects. Staff from CCAP noted that gender issues had not been adequately addressed at the project level. However, the projects that were being carried out by CCAP were striving for equal participation of men and women. RUFA staff indicated that women carried out most of the work in their projects. The staff members further considered women to be more knowledgeable about access to trees and the types of trees that are needed. As a result, RUFA staff received more information about environmental degradation from women than from men.

SSI conducted with WVI revealed that participation of women in their projects in the Northern region was high and that the reason for the low participation of men was a

result of high levels of male migration to urban areas. However, committees were not comprised of women. Representatives and committee members were primarily men since decision-making was considered by community members to be the responsibility of men.

During SSI, field staff were asked to comment on the representation of men and women on community-level project committees. The field staff noted that the representation of women on these committees was high. In fact, government policies require that all development committees have an equitable representation of women (i.e., preferably more than half of the committee members should be women). This representation was confirmed during project visits (often 50 per cent or more of the committee members were women). However, when these committees were asked which positions were held by women, the community members in almost all of the project sites noted that the decision-making positions were held by elder men in the community. Thus, the high representation of women on project committees was more about meeting the stipulations of the ENGOs or the government ministries at a superficial level. The significance of having a high representation of women on the committees was not effectively communicated to the community members and the ENGO staff themselves.

When the information was disaggregated based on the type of organization (international versus national), there appeared to be no significant difference in the gender awareness levels of ENGO staff as it pertains to project level information. Both international and national ENGOs consisted of Malawian field staff who were familiar with the local languages and worked directly with the community members. These ENGO field staff were aware of the problems and opportunities of participation for men and women since they

witnessed these factors on a daily basis. Many of the ENGO staff, however, were quick to dismiss any discussion of gender at the community level since they felt that community members were not capable of discussing gender because it was perceived to be a Western concept. Also, ENGO staff indicated that community members would not be willing to address gender issues since gender equality was believed to compromise traditions and culture.

Both male and female ENGO staff members identified opportunities and constraints to men's and women's participation in environmental projects. The female field staff who were interviewed, however, were able to provide more concrete examples of the gender inequality that women experience in the projects. In particular, the women interviewed from PAMET were very aware of the gender issues that arose in their paper recycling projects pointing to the need for better awareness raising among male community members to enable women to make decisions and reap the benefits of the work that they do in these projects.

Community-level Understanding of the Concept "Gender"

During the case study, the ENGO staff were asked whether they thought that community members understood the term "gender", had heard about it, and whether community members were willing to discuss gender issues in their projects. Most of the staff said they thought the community members were not familiar with the term "gender". Since there was no direct translation of the word "gender" into the local languages, ENGO staff felt that community members would not be familiar with this term. In order to confirm that community members were in fact unfamiliar with this term, a number of community members were asked to define it.

The case study found that the community members actually did have a significant understanding of the term "gender" and its applications at the community level. The community members that were asked about gender indicated that they had heard about it on the radio and had heard people discussing it within the villages. When community members were asked to define gender, their responses included definitions such as: "gender is about love between a man and a woman...that responsibilities and activities are equally shared within the household" (Community members). The community members stated that their attitudes toward gender were gender-positive. These community members further indicated that gender inequality was related to traditions that have been altered to benefit men and disadvantage women. For example, one individual indicated that the *lobola* or bride-wealth no longer held the same cultural significance as it did in the past. Current *lobola* practices are less concerned with providing gifts to the bride's parents and more interested in the exchange of valuables for ownership of a woman.

While ENGO staff members had demonstrated that they have a significant understanding of some of the gender-related issues at the community level (particularly in relation to the male and female participation rates), the findings from this research indicated that these ENGO staff did not know the capacity of the project beneficiaries to address gender issues.

10. Staff Perceptions of the Opportunities for and Constraints to Gender Equality at the Organizational Level

This area of investigation addressed the extent to which ENGO staff thought gender was a priority issue in their organizations, the constraints to and opportunities for gender equality at the organizational level.

Gender Issues or Challenges in ENGO Staff Work

The NGOs that completed the survey were provided with an opportunity to discuss the gender issues or challenges in their work. Their responses included the following issues or challenges:

1. sensitising grassroots communities on gender issues;
2. attaining equal participation of men and women in their programmes;
3. integrating gender within the organization;
4. monitoring projects and programmes from a gender perspective;
5. lack of confidence and decision-making power;
6. lack of training;
7. unequal representation of women in specific posts within the organization;
8. lack of qualified women staff resulting from low educational levels of women in general;
9. culture is a limiting factor (ie., traditional gender division of labour);
10. lack of time to address gender issues;
11. gender is considered a foreign concept; and
12. a general resistance among people to addressing gender issues (ENGO survey respondents).

Organizational Needs

The ENGO survey respondents were asked to rank the needs they had within the organization pertaining to gender-related assistance. The respondents ranked their needs in the following order where one was the highest ranked need and 7 the lowest ranked need:

1. training in gender;
2. workshops on gender;
3. guidance in gender policy formation;
4. monitoring and evaluation services for gender;
5. discussions and discussion groups on gender;
6. talks and seminars on gender; and
7. videos and other media resources that can increase awareness of gender (ENGO survey respondents).

The survey respondents therefore identified training and increased information and awareness raising as the most important activities that need to take place in order to address

gender issues in Malawi.

Gender Issues or Challenges at the Organizational Level

The ENGO staff responding to the survey were also requested to reflect on the gender issues or challenges at the organizational level. The following responses are a summary of the gender issues or challenges experienced at the organizational level:

1. an overall lack of gender awareness;
2. lack of gender training;
3. difficulty in mainstreaming gender within the organization;
4. female staff are not empowered and lack confidence within the organization;
5. insufficient funding to address gender issues;
6. problems with finding qualified women staff;
7. lack of understanding of concepts (eg., gender and feminism);
8. lack of information sharing within the organization on information pertaining to gender issues;
9. inability to translate gender at the policy or mission statement level into practice; and
10. lack of organizational commitment to gender (ENGO survey respondents).

The responses provided by the ENGO staff during the survey revealed the significant level of awareness among staff of the gender-related issues that needed to be addressed at the organizational level. These ENGO staff pointed to a variety of issues highlighting access to and control of resources, power, and information between male and female staff at the organizational level and the marginalization of gender concerns within ENGOs.

Gender Opportunities Within the Organization

ENGOs responding to the survey provided the following examples of the opportunities for implementing gender at the organizational level:

1. there is general support within the organization to address gender;
2. there is an ability to develop gender policies;
3. guidelines and resource materials are available;
4. some programmes have a specific mandate to address gender;
5. there is a growing number of female staff and increased participation of women at

the project level;
6. there are some policies in place (i.e., staff recruitment policies) which are geared to achieving gender equality;
7. there is considerable support from donors to adopt gender-sensitive strategies;
8. some gender programmes are in place; and
9. funds are being made available (ENGO survey respondents).

Priority Areas for Further Gender Activities and Interventions

ENGO respondents carried out a ranking exercise during the survey to provide suggestions for implementing gender-related activities in which 1 was ranked as the highest or most important activity that organizations should carry out and 4 was ranked as the lowest or least important activity to be carried out by ENGOs:

1. more gender training provided to management level staff;
2. more gender training provided to field staff;
3. more women working at the field staff level; and
4. more women working at the management level.

A report conducted during an Action Aid in-house gender training session noted the following strategies for incorporating a gender approach in their work:

1. training of trainers in gender;
2. setting up a gender task force within the organization;
3. appointing a gender desk officer;
4. sensitising the communities about gender issues;
5. conducting research and documenting information pertaining to gender;
6. incorporating gender into human resource development policies;
7. networking with other organizations about gender issues;
8. designing indicators to measure gender impacts;
9. addressing the gender gap in staff (the low representation of female staff; advocating for gender-sensitive school curricula;
10. sensitising staff on gender issues; and
11. providing gender training to the communities (Action Aid, 1997).

The document review uncovered some additional considerations for gender equality. In a collection of speeches and papers from a conference on raising the status of women in

Malawi, and produced by the Society for the Advancement of Women (SAW), the following quotation summarized the meaning of women's empowerment.

> To me, empowering of women really means making tools accessible and increasing opportunities to enable women to enhance their overall capabilities while managing the available resources in a sustainable manner (Kalyati as cited in SAW, 1995).

In a three-year proposal prepared by CONGOMA, a number of priority areas were identified for further gender-related activities and programmes for NGOs in Malawi. The proposed activities demonstrated the importance of capacity building, communication, collaboration and networking, and lobbying and advocacy (CONGOMA, 1997b). This proposal did not address the lack of information available about gender inequality within Malawi. It also did not stress the need for further awareness raising of gender-related issues that are specific to the NGO sector. While the document highlighted the importance of increased gender training for NGO staff, it did not point to the need for context-specific training and the need for gender trainers in Malawi to design a context-specific training package that can be used for training Malawi staff.

During SSI with PAMET staff, the staff noted that the organization would be better placed to address gender issues if the staff had more information about gender. SSI with CCAP staff noted the following strategies that can be undertaken to ensure gender equitable development: train project officers and community members on gender issues; change attitudes towards women; develop action plans; analyse the organization to determine how well it is doing; change policies; encourage women to be active representatives and not just observers; work closely with existing local institutions to empower women (i.e., the Women's Guild) (ENGO staff member, CCAP).

Additional SSI conducted with ENGO staff established a need for more training and awareness-raising pertinent to gender issues. According to one staff member from BAM, "with gender training, they could provide gender awareness meetings" to the community members (ENGO staff member, BAM). Information about gender gave one of the ENGO staff members "some general background to gender that he did not previously have" (ENGO staff member, Greenline Movement). One ENGO had devised an implementation strategy that began with the training of officers on gender issues to ensure that project officers were able to change negative attitudes towards women. Additional activities included developing an action plan, internal gender assessment of the organization itself, improvements to their organization's policies and to encourage women to participate more in decision-making (ENGO staff member, CCAP). Interviews with RUFA pointed to the need to "encourage young girls to get involved" (ENGO staff member, RUFA). Most of the staff interviewed during SSI pointed to training. Two ENGOs highlighted the need to work with existing institutions to encourage women's participation (i.e., women's guilds and traditional authorities) (ENGO staff members, CCAP and CPAR).

Both male and female ENGO staff were able to identify some strategies for ensuring that gender issues were addressed within ENGOs. However, female staff were more likely to address the need for new approaches within the organization to ensure gender equality while the male staff primarily address gender-related activities at the project level.

The Challenge of Hierarchies

There was a tendency for ENGOs to be hierarchical, consisting of individuals who exerted their influence and power over other individuals whether they were men or women.

In one specific example the secretary perceived her relationship with the administrative assistant to be disempowering at times since the administrative assistant would exert her influence over the secretary by delegating responsibilities that were outside of the secretary's job description.

An example of the complexity of gender relations was brought to light during SSI with staff from PAMET. During this interview, the staff indicated that they did not have the same opportunities as a senior staff member to attend gender meetings. Gender awareness was therefore perceived to be the privilege of women in more senior positions within the organization. In this example, women in junior positions within the organization were frustrated with their lack of opportunities compared to female senior management staff.

Women in powerful positions had more access to information about gender issues while women in less powerful positions had indicated general lack of opportunities to learn about gender issues. Furthermore, both national and international ENGOs experienced the presence of expatriates who often filled powerful and decision-making positions. The presence of these Western women contributed to the complexity of gender relations and power differences at the organizational level. Men working at the field level also indicated that they lacked access to decision-making power and were not able to obtain information about gender issues since staff in the senior management positions held a monopoly on gender awareness and information.

For the most part, women were concentrated at the junior level positions of the organization and they structured their own hierarchies at this level. Men were most represented in middle and senior management positions. Thus the chain of influence tended

to have a gender dimension that reinforced male privilege and female disempowerment.

The Challenge of Culture

Marital Status and Gender Issues

On one occasion, a board member commented that the gender officer had improved significantly over the past year which he attributed to what he perceived to be a change in marital status. This board member had been misinformed that the gender officer had recently been married. However, his perception of the gender officer as a married woman meant that he perceived her to be more capable of performing her tasks as an organizational staff member.

An additional comment revealed the significance attached to age and marital status as a reflection of status within the organization. The senior management staff and board members were discussing whether to increase the salary of one of their employees. While this staff member was ranked as one of the most senior staff members within the organization, her salary was not in line with the salaries of other staff members in similar positions, with similar education and years of experience. The reason for this female staff member's significantly lower income (half of what her male colleagues were earning) was a result of the perception that as a single woman she did not require the same income as a man who must support a family. The perception of men as breadwinners was therefore a predominant factor in decisions about salaries.

Educational Level and Gender Issues

Education, training and experience were ever-changing qualifications for staff members. Many of the junior management staff were obtaining post-secondary educations,

taking courses and attending training sessions. The changing nature of educational levels and exposure to training workshops created a great deal of complexity in determining power relations. Gender awareness and analysis training was considered to be an empowering experience for both men and women. In Malawi, as elsewhere, knowledge is power. On numerous occasions, Malawian friends would recount stories about a project that failed when a staff change took place. The reason for the failure, according to some ENGO staff members, was a result of Malawians being unwilling to share information and knowledge with their co-workers.

For those staff members who had access to additional training, the nature of their relationships with other staff members was changing. For example, administrative staff who had been trained in gender awareness and analysis indicated that they had more confidence approaching men in the organizations and were able to exert greater influence in decision-making through the empowering exercises of gender training. One example involved a secretary feeling empowered to confront the male accountants in the organization to change the amount of money allocated for her travel expenses. In this example, the junior management staff received a much smaller travel and expense allowance for out-of-town meetings than did the senior management staff even though the junior management staff were performing the same tasks. The underlying explanation was that junior management staff did not need the luxuries of a nicer hotel or expensive food because they are junior management staff and are accustomed to a lower standard of living. The access to information, knowledge and training can be understood in relation to the nature of discourse and the impact that knowledge of that discourse can have for individuals working in organizations.

While additional factors such as age, education level, experience, and marital status were all considered relevant to an analysis of inequality within organizations, there was a specific gender dynamic in each of these examples. For example, the marital status of the ENGO staff member was expected to reflect the capacity of that staff member to perform her duties. However, marital status was only relevant when it was in reference to women. The marital status of men was considered insignificant since men are expected to behave the same before and after marriage. Women, on the other hand, are expected to perform more professionally if they are married.

Educational levels were also important to consider in this analysis. The higher the educational level, the more the individual was respected within the organization. For example, a university education was valued over a diploma. However, when this variable was considered in light of the sex of the individual, there were significant differences in the perception of male and female staff members. For example, women who have the same educational background as men indicated that they often earn half of the salary that their male colleagues earn. This was justified by the organizational management based on a perception of women as less likely to need a salary since they have husbands or boyfriends that will look after them financially.

The Opportunities for Resistance

Day-to-day interaction with ENGO staff and lunch-hour discussions with co-workers uncovered strategies of resistance used by female staff to regain power within hierarchical organizations. One ENGO staff member mentioned that she had been treated poorly that day by a senior staff member. Her response was to withhold his telephone messages for the rest

of the day. This form of resistance signified opportunities for empowerment. Other forms of resistance used by disenfranchised ENGO staff were expressed through coalitions and alliances with other staff members.

The forms of resistance that were observed tended to be subtle and not overt. During an organizational development course, for example, ENGO staff expressed their dissatisfaction with the leadership capabilities of their senior management staff by being silent when asked about the positive and negative aspects of his leadership style. A second approach used to express dissatisfaction with another staff member entailed long narratives that provided an example or analogy. This approach tended to convey information in a subtle and obscure manner, requiring interpretation and reflection. Many of the female staff members I observed used avoidance as a strategy to empower themselves. For example many female ENGO staff dodged face-to-face interaction with senior staff members in order to avoid condescending remarks. These forms of resistance were ways in which ENGO staff members could empower themselves and they provided examples of opportunities for addressing gender inequality within organizations.

ENGO staff also referred to the importance of alliances and networking to empower staff and communities to address gender inequality. ENGO staff noted that female community members can make use of existing organizations such as the women's guilds which are community-based political organizations set-up under the Banda regime. ENGO staff also suggested that existing networks, such as the CONGOMA Gender Task Force, can be instrumental in addressing gender issues at the organizational and community levels.

Summary

The findings uncovered the complex nature of gender relations and the multiple dimensions of gender inequality at the organizational level. In general, there appeared to be a lack of commitment to address gender equality at the organizational level which limited the ENGO staff's capacity to address gender inequality and empowerment. These constraints can be examined at the organizational level by pointing to the low representation of female staff within ENGOs, in particular the low representation of women in decision-making positions. Second, the capacity of staff to address gender issues was limited given the small number of staff that have been trained in gender awareness and analysis and the confusion over gender and gender-related concepts.

A third constraint involved the challenges faced by the gender focal point staff who were burdened with multiple tasks and often the responsibilities of two staff members while having very unclear job descriptions and sets of responsibilities. The fourth constraint pointed to the lack of gender policies among ENGOs in Malawi and the vague and noncommittal wording of the existing gender policies. For the most part, ENGO staff referred to gender as a foreign concept in two specific ways. On the one hand, ENGO staff often indicated that gender was a Western concept and lacked relevance in Malawi. On the other hand, when gender was addressed within the ENGOs, it was frequently understood as an issue to be addressed at the project level and lacked relevance at the organizational level. The sixth constraint identified as an area of investigation for this study pointed to the lack of information available in the country relevant to gender issues and the kinds of strategies that can be adopted to ensure gender equality in development projects and organizations.

An additional and related finding pointed to a lack of budgeting and resources for gender-related activities which limited both the research and activity related to gender issues. The ninth area of investigation revealed the inability for ENGO staff to link gender and natural resource management as inter-related concepts. For the most part, ENGOs considered these concepts as separate and unrelated. One specific example of this segregation could be found in the type of training that staff were receiving and to whom that training was targeted. The extent to which ENGO staff were aware of gender issues at the project level was mixed. Some of the ENGO staff had a strong understanding of the challenges men and/or women faced in participating in their projects. However, many of the ENGO staff members were not familiar with appropriate strategies to address gender inequality in their work.

The final area of investigation examined the perceptions of the ENGO staff of the opportunities and constraints to adopting a gender-sensitive approach in their organizations. The ENGO staff pointed to a number of challenges. The most commonly cited example was the need for further gender training and awareness raising. Some staff mentioned that the nature of power relations and inequality within the organization was a challenge. For the most part, however, ENGO staff did not address systemic issues within the organization. Opportunities to address gender inequality were also expressed. Many ENGO staff had gained power within the organization through covert forms of resistance. These forms of resistance tended not to address systemic issues but rather how individuals negotiated hierarchy and power inequality in complex and diverse ways.

CHAPTER SIX:

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Navigating the Gendered Terrain of ENGOs

This chapter offers additional explanations and draws conclusions from the research findings in the context of the three main research questions posed at the beginning of this study. These questions were concerned with the extent to which gender and environment are seen as separate or interrelated themes, the nature of and extent to which ENGOs were committed to addressing gender equality at the organizational level, and the capacity of staff to understand gender and gender-related concepts. A discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the methods used in this study is also provided in this chapter. The chapter concludes with some considerations for future research and recommendations for ENGOs to enable them to better address gender issues.

As the title of this section and of the thesis indicate, the navigation of gendered terrain is an exploratory exercise. As an exploration, there is need for ongoing research and discussion. This thesis provides a broad overview of the gender-related activities undertaken within ENGOs. The findings in this research were concerned primarily with the structures and activities that perpetuate gender inequality in ENGOs. A recent discussion with Rieky Stuart confirmed that there is a growing body of literature about gender and organizations. In November 1999 a book co-authored by Rieky Stuart, Aruna Rao and David Kelleher entitled *Gender at Work: Organizational Change for Equality* will be available. This book notes what Stuart calls the "four deep structures" of organizations (Stuart, 1999). Further

exploration and research that uncovers the details of life-histories and in-depth analyses of the interaction of staff will enhance our understanding of agency, resistances and actions.

The public/private model discussed in this chapter highlights the explanatory nature of this binary framework of analysis. However, the findings from this study point to the innovative and more nuanced ways in which this model can help explain complex male/female and masculine/feminine interactions. Furthermore, this exploratory research uncovered the multiple cultures that are coming together at the organizational level and the ways in which these cultures are clashing, colliding and collaborating in new and multifaceted ways.

Gender and Environment Seen as Separate Units of Analysis

The research found that ENGOs tended to view gender and environment as separate and unrelated themes thus supporting the findings of Rathgeber (1995b). Rathgeber argued that development organizations reduce the object of inquiry into an easily quantifiable indicator such as environmental degradation rather than accounting for the gendered relations of environmental management which entails a more complex and qualitative analysis of community-level development.

The public/private analytical framework was used to explain the difficulty experienced by ENGOs in linking gender and environment. For the most part, ENGOs tended to associate environment with the public sphere and gender with the private sphere. Gender issues were perceived to be private matters relevant to household and family-level relationships and activities. There was a general failure to see environmental management as a gendered experience whereby environmental activities were socially constructed as men's or women's work. Environmental activities, such as the collection of firewood for cooking, were

previously associated with the private sphere. As environmental issues and environmental services become more and more professionalised, they take on increasing male values.

The use of the public/private division was problematized, however, when the types of ENGO projects were taken into consideration. For example, ENGO staff considered environmental issues to be public issues that could be addressed at the community level. Gender issues were seen as private issues and not discussed by ENGO staff in any great detail. However, the environmental projects implemented in the communities tended to relate directly to socially constructed gender roles within Malawi. The research raised the issue of what it means for male ENGO staff to be teaching women about gardening, nutrition, and family planning. In one example, the male ENGO staff pounded, processed, and cooked soya products.

As Pettman noted, "men move from public to private and back again" (Pettman, 1996). In both the public and private spheres, men maintain authority and power. Women also move between the public and private spheres but the presence of women in the public sphere remains contentious. The division between public and private therefore does not correspond neatly with the division between men and women. Both men and women have gendered roles in each of these spheres. The public/private framework was useful for this study since it discloses information about these gendered roles but also the value that is attached to masculinity and the devaluing of femininity within organizaitons.

The subject/object framework further explained the difficulty ENGO staff experienced in linking gender and environment as interrelated concepts in development projects. Addressing gender issues tended to be reduced by ENGO staff to targeting women

to carry out environmental projects. The high representation of women living in rural communities provided the impetus for ENGOs to adopt what they considered to be a gender approach. This gender approach, however, viewed women as objects of policy attention and development assistance rather than understanding environmental issues as a gendered experience.

The types of activities that ENGOs had offered community members tended to reinforce the gender division of labour at the community level, targeting women for specific projects such as vegetable gardening. Many ENGO staff acknowledged the cultural dynamics at play, noting that environmental projects were linked to women's and men's traditional roles in environmental activities -- roles that they considered immutable. The projects implemented by ENGOs reinforced the traditional roles of men and women by targeting women with environmental projects that were considered an extension of their reproductive roles. However, the ways in which these projects were implemented complicates the clear division between male and female gender roles as mentioned earlier in this section.

There was a lack of understanding among ENGO staff of the meaning of gender since ENGO staff defined gender in relation to women's traditional activities and women's issues rather than seeing gender in terms of inequality in access, control and decision-making power between men and women. However, the very act of transforming traditional female roles into project activities blurred the distinction between public/private and subject/object and demonstrated the overlap between public and private spheres.

Integrating Gender into Environmental Programmes

Many ENGOs had created a gender programme or unit within the organization to address the growing gender-related demands placed on these organizations. However, there were some serious deficiencies noted since these gender programmes -- and the staff who filled the positions within these gender programmes -- were marginalised within the organization. In some instances gender programmes and the gender staff were physically removed from the operations of the ENGO and operated out of a tiny space in a separate office building. On the whole, ENGO gender staff believed that they did not have an impact on the other environmental programmes carried out within the ENGO and that there was little effort made to consult with the gender staff.

A failure to link gender and environment at the programme level had resulted in the marginalisation of gender within ENGOs. Gender was considered an add-on programme and, in general, it was not considered as an important part of the mainstream environmental activities. However, ENGO staff indicated a high level of interest in integrating gender within the programmes rather than separating gender as one programme within the organization. Staff noted that the advantage of integrating gender was to ensure that all programmes and projects carried out by the ENGOs were gender-sensitive. Avoiding the marginalisation of gender within the organization was considered a necessary step in ensuring the influence of gender personnel in organizations. Many ENGOs, however, lacked awareness of how to ensure that gender is integrated into the organization's programmes.

Those ENGOs that had attempted to integrate gender indicated that there was a tendency to obscure gender-related activities resulting in a reduced commitment to gender

equality. Jackson (1996b) found similar challenges among development institutions addressing poverty. She noted that integrating gender into poverty programmes tended to depoliticize gender issues and women became "resources in meeting other development goals" (Jackson, 1996b:501).

The inability of ENGO staff to adequately integrate gender issues into the mainstream of the organization reflects a tendency to view gender issues as private issues that should not be discussed in the public realm of organizational life. In spite of this, both male and female ENGO staff have become increasingly interested in learning about gender issues. While some ENGO staff reject gender as a concept to be considered in their environmental activities, these same ENGO staff are finding ways to learn about gender issues in order to remain competitive in the ENGO world. The result of which is a confusing combination of both resistance and acceptance of gender equality issues at the organizational levels as ENGO staff struggle in a domain where multiple cultures exist and interact.

Training Methodologies Seen as Separate Disciplines

The disciplinary divide extended to the type of training that different staff received. Training workshops were designed to build the capacity of NGO staff to address issues that arose in their development work. Training workshops for ENGO staff usually involved skills development in various methods such as participatory rural appraisal and gender awareness and analysis -- two of the most popular methods currently taught in Malawi. However, these two training methods tended to reinforce stereotypes in development that marginalised women and their concerns. For example, women in junior management positions were targeted by ENGO senior management staff to take part in gender training while PRA was

primarily attended by male field staff. This process of channelling men and women into sex–typed training marginalised gender within the organization and resulted in the subordination of gender concerns, and therefore women, within the organization. Few efforts were made to integrate the different types of training workshops. The perception among many ENGO staff was that gender training sessions were attended by women but PRA sessions were attended by men. This was true for PRA; however, nearly half of the training workshop participants during gender awareness and analysis were men during some of the training sessions. On the one hand, male ENGO staff viewed gender training workshops as training for women. On the other hand, many male ENGO staff were aware of the need to learn about gender-related issues in the changing climate of ENGOs as these organizations increasingly come under donor pressure to adopt gender-related policies.

The failure to link gender issues and environmental issues resulted in women being viewed as objects of policy attention. Addressing gender issues in environmental projects tended to reinforce the view that women could be better utilized as resources for environmental rehabilitation. ENGO staff had not been trained to recognize the gender dynamics in natural resource management such as access to and control of natural resources, and decision-making power in the use of these resources. The public/private analytical framework became blurred and complicated, however, when ENGO staff went into the communities to implement their seemingly objective, environmental programmes that belonged to the public world of organizational life. The public sphere thus spilled over into the private world of community members as these staff entered their communities, altered their daily tasks and responsibilities and impinged on the private lives of women.

Lack of Organizational Commitment to Gender Equality

At a gender, science and technology (GASAT) conference held in Malawi, a group of NGO and government representatives presented papers and discussed a number of strategies for involving women in non-traditional scientific fields. One woman commented that governments need specific policies in place to ensure gender-sensitive programmes and projects. In response, a second woman argued "there is no lack of policy...what seems to be coming out...is lack of resources... policy statements should involve resource allocation" (GASAT conference participant, 1997). Another female participant added that "the policy is there but the attitude and gender sensitization is not" (GASAT conference participant, 1997). These women demonstrated a strong understanding of the current challenges they face in getting institutions and organizations right for women in development. Their comments established the need to move beyond the superficial gender policies that satisfy donors and to adopt a transformational and substantive gender approach to development. This study identified patterns of gender inequality in policy formation, organizational structures, horizontal and vertical representation of men and women within the organization, access to and control of resources and the ability to make decisions about the use of those resources.

Representation and Influence of Women and Men

The horizontal and vertical representation of men and women within ENGOs showed the low representation of women working in ENGOs. This finding was compounded by an additional observation that the representation of most women tended to be in the lowest paid and least powerful positions within the organization. Women were not represented in decision-making positions in which they could contribute to policy matters. Furthermore,

women tended to be represented in specific sex-typed jobs as an extension of their roles in the private sphere.

The value associated with the public sphere confirmed Hirschmann's findings related to Malawi's enclave politics. Hirschmann (1997) argued that "men feared that a changed perception of rural women's roles would affect relationships within the civil service...changes in the bureaucracy would disturb established patterns of behaviour in the private sphere" (Hirschmann, 1997:197). Hirschmann's examination confirmed a similar trend in the government sector as that in the NGO sector since women acknowledged that "they transferred their domestic sense of subordination to the bureaucracy" (Hirschmann, 1997, 198). Women were not supposed to disagree with men in the home and therefore women working in the public sphere continued to find conflict difficult (Hirschmann, 1997).

The research found that there are numerous ways in which conflict can be measured. Frequently, conflict and forms of resistance are documented only when they take the form of verbal expressions of dissatisfaction. However, ENGO staff demonstrated additional forms of resistance and conflict that were manifested in covert ways. Silence and subtlety are frequently overlooked as forms of resistance but were observed during the field study conducted in Malawi. The sense of subordination that women supposedly transfer from their homes to their offices should therefore be challenged since women may actually transfer covert forms of resistance and conflict from the private to the public sphere.

ENGO staff had a limited level of awareness related to gender issues. Most ENGO staff were aware that women lacked education and that some cultural practices could have a negative impact on girls and women. However, few ENGO staff were able to provide

transformative solutions that would address cultural bias and discrimination against women. Community members and ENGO staff both noted that increasing the number of female role models is important when addressing gender inequality. The challenge facing many ENGO staff is how to find solutions that will advance women's positions without jeopardizing men's power. In this sense, international pressure for gender equality has come into conflict with international patriarchal culture as well as local patriarchal cultures. ENGO staff are attempting to negotiate these multiple cultures in ways that serve competing interests.

Gender Personnel and Gender Programmes

This research found that most of the ENGOs had a gender focal point officer within the organization, the majority of whom were women. One of the reasons for the disproportionate representation of women in these positions was an overwhelming perception of gender as a woman's issue and therefore less significant. The findings support Jahan who found that the "image of WID positions being 'women's jobs' made them appear less professional" (Jahan, 1995:41). An additional reason for the number of female gender focal point staff is a result of international pressure to hire more women and international funding available for gender focal point staff. Some discussions were taking place within ENGOs that established the need for male gender focal point staff as role models both within organizations and in the communities. Many ENGO staff noted that having a male gender focal point officer is an important step in the transition from WID to GAD approaches. There was a limited number of interested male staff for this position and also a need to increase the number of female staff within the organization.

The gender focal point officers were most often located in junior management or

support-level positions. The influence of the gender focal point officer on senior management was minimal as was her impact on changes within the organization. Appointing a staff member to address gender issues was a practical solution to meeting the gender needs of the organization. The presence of the gender focal point officer enabled organizations to meet donor demands and also relieved other ENGO staff of gender-related responsibilities. While the gender focal point positions researched in this study provided a foundation for future gender-related activities within the organization, they had not demonstrated an adequate solution to addressing gender issues since they lacked decision-making power and access to and control over resources. Gender focal point officers are undervalued because it is predominantly seen as women's work and raises the additional question of whether or not the position would be valued and located in senior management positions if the positions were occupied by men instead of women.

Reporting on Gender Issues and Activities

Since most ENGOs had not been collecting gender-disaggregated or even sex-disaggregated information at the project level, they lacked necessary information to guide their projects. However, many ENGO field staff were knowledgeable about the gender dynamics at the community-level and how these dynamics reinforced gender inequality. Gender- and sex-disaggregated data were not considered a priority within ENGOs and therefore the information that had been collected was not properly documented and circulated within the organization. The sex-disaggregated data that were available targeted women or men for specific projects in ways that reinforced the traditional gender division of labour, extended the symbolic association of women in the home with reproductive activities,

and valued public activities such as men's community work over women's private-sphere activities.

Gender Policies

Gender-related policies were increasingly being accepted in principle; however, the findings from this research supported Goetz's claim that there is little evidence that these policies were in any way benefiting women and/or men (Goetz, 1992). Many of the ENGO staff were not familiar with the gender policies that did exist in some ENGOs. The organization's commitment to developing and then enforcing gender policies depended on the capacity of the designated staff to design and implement them. This study found that most of the ENGO staff responsible for developing gender policies were the gender focal point staff who lacked decision-making power and influence within the organization. The power of gender policies was limited since they tended to enhance the appearance of gender-related activities carried out by ENGOs; however, their actual implementation was rarely monitored by organizations.

Policies that addressed gender inequality at the project level emphasized the negative impact of environmental degradation on women rather than addressing the gendered nature of environmental degradation. In particular, these policies did not provide information pertaining to unequal access to and control over resources and women's lack of decision-making power over the use and management of resources. Gender policies often reinforced the subject/object relationship between male ENGO staff and female community members and women were viewed by organizational staff as objects of policy attention. The primary reason for the introduction of gender policies is linked to international pressure for ENGOs

to adopt such policies. The adoption of gender policies demonstrates the ways in which multiple cultures get played out at the organizational level.

Resources and Budgeting for Gender Activities

One of the related constraints identified in the research was the lack of financial resources allocated to the gender focal point officer and to gender-related activities. The majority of ENGOs indicated that they did not budget for gender-related activities. A commitment to gender at the organizational level relies on the necessary human and financial resources to ensure that gender-related activities are carried out and that the necessary capacity is built within the organization to achieve gender equality. Gender issues were rarely discussed during staff meetings yet the staff indicated that gender would be integrated throughout the different programme budgets. On the one hand, there was a clear commitment to address gender issues and to allocate funding for gender-related activities throughout the various ENGO programmes. On the other hand, there were unclear mechanisms for bringing gender into the mainstream of the organization.

Lack of Awareness among ENGO Staff of the Meaning and Relevance of Gender Equality

The research demonstrated that ENGOs lacked an awareness and understanding of the concept of gender and of gender-related issues in natural resource management. It was frequently noted by ENGO staff that gender is considered a foreign concept and that culture and gender are in conflict in Malawi. Many of the ENGO staff noted that gender equality would result in the demise of culture and traditions. These ENGO staff rejected gender as a concept that applied to Malawian culture. Many ENGO staff felt that addressing gender equality meant compromising culture and traditions in order to meet the demands of

donor agencies. Most national and international ENGOs in Malawi relied on donor funds to cover the daily expenses of these organizations and therefore were obligated to address gender issues. The perception among ENGO staff of gender issues as external or donor-driven issues suggested that ENGO staff in Malawi are not committed to addressing gender equality but rather committed to ensuring that donor funds continue to be channelled into their organizations.

The concern for cultural preservation was not expressed in relation to changing lineage patterns and therefore suggested that gender equality was considered a threat to male privilege in decision-making positions. Rather than seeing gender as a culturally relevant concept, many ENGO staff noted that gender lacked relevance in the Malawian context due to the perception of the immutable gender division of labour and the understanding of masculinities and femininities as constants. A lack of organizational commitment to defining gender in a context-specific environment resulted in superficial ENGO attempts to address gender at the organizational level.

Gender "Inside" Versus Gender "Outside" the Organizations

Gender was also seen as a foreign concept by senior management staff in ENGOs. These staff argued that the significance of gender was limited to project participation of community-level men and women. There was little recognition among the ENGO staff of the importance of the internal organizational environment being conducive to gender equality.

Many management staff indicated that gender was clearly something that needed to be addressed in their projects, that there was gender inequality in the communities and that rural women were burdened with a disproportionate percentage of the workload. However,

when gender was discussed as an organizational issue, many staff shied away from the discussion noting that gender issues were extraneous to management issues. Gender-related activities were not considered relevant to the operations of management since gender equality was not expected to be a transformative process leading to changes within the organization. On the whole, gender-related activities were confined to the project level with the expectation that gender-related strategies would result in women and men participating in – and benefiting from – the projects implemented by ENGOs.

This understanding of gender as external to the organization supported the subject/object framework of analysis since many ENGO senior management staff viewed women as objects of policy attention and as recipients of development assistance. The failure of ENGOs to address gender issues internally was attributed to a desire to maintain the status quo. The resistance of ENGO senior management staff to address gender as an organizational issue can be understood within the public/private framework of analysis. Since gender issues are perceived to be private matters, there is an additional perception that they need not be discussed in the public sphere. For the most part, ENGO senior management staff considered the public sphere of organizational bureaucracy to be gender-neutral. Furthermore, ENGOs are constructed as intermediaries through which donor money is allocated in an effort to reach the rural communities more efficiently. Capacity building within organizations is only recently being discussed as an important component of development. It is at these organizations that donor directives get interpreted, cultures clash and come together in interesting ways, and programmes and projects are designed. ENGOs are therefore more than a channel through which funding gets administered. ENGOs consist

of staff that decipher development initiatives, translate information, and create discourse out of competing cultures and multiple codes of conduct. Understanding gender issues and gendered discourse at the organizational level is therefore crucial.

While the majority of the ENGO senior management staff were men, there were also some women in these positions who exerted influence over other staff in the organization and who had increased access to information about gender issues in environment and development. Extending the arguments for a more nuanced and complex understanding of gender relations from the community level to the organizational level pointed to the complex hierarchies that existed within development organizations and the nature of power relations and inequality that existed between men and women and among women or among men.

Additional factors needed to be considered in an analysis of gender inequality to reveal how specific staff experienced gender inequality in diverse and complex ways. The influence of education or status on power, for example, needed to be taken into consideration. More recent contributions to feminist theories therefore were useful in revealing staff perceptions of gender issues and the complex environment in which gender issues were being addressed.

This research confirmed the findings of Wright (1997) who conducted research in the Maquiladoras in Mexico. While the number of women working in ENGOs was approximately one-third of all staff, they tend to be treated "as though their primary responsibility were domestic and their paid labour were of secondary importance" (Wright, 1997:83). In fact, the perception held by a number of senior staff members and board members was that women were not the primary breadwinners and therefore agreed to lower salaries. Women's work in

ENGOs reflected "the symbolic association of women with the private sphere" (Wright, 1997:86). The work carried out by female ENGO staff members was considered by some of the male staff as a temporary activity before women returned to the private sphere to raise families and do other domestic responsibilities in the home (Wright, 1997).

An Integrative Feminist Framework of Analysis

The feminist theoretical frameworks of analysis summarized in this thesis as the public/private, patriarchy and subject/object had explanatory power in an analysis of the gender-related activities carried out by ENGOs. The research found that the binary frameworks of analysis held explanatory power for structural inequality. In particular, this study found that the public sphere tended to be over-valued in relation to the private sphere.

The research also pointed to the problem of programme bias. Environmental studies and NRM tended to be male-dominated areas. Attempts to integrate gender issues into environmental and NRM programmes have proved to be a challenge for ENGOs partly due to an inability to understand environment and development from a people-centred approach. Environmental projects tended to support an approach to development work from the perspective of objective, quantifiable, expert-driven research. When efforts had been made to consider NRM activities carried out by community members there was a tendency for ENGO staff to view women as the objects of policy attention thereby reinforcing the binary framework of subject/object. Malawi's androcentric culture was a third important variable in this study. The study found that institutions and organizational practices in Malawi supported patriarchal norms and the unequal relationship between dominant men and subordinate women.

The feminist theoretical debates related to gender inequality within organizations need to confront the gendered patterns of inequality reinforced at the institutional and structural levels. However, this analysis is not sufficient to explain the role that diverse individuals play in shaping gender inequality in binary terms and in exploring these dualisms. A gender analysis of organizations was also informed by an additional theoretical inquiry which took into account the diverse and complex ways in which men and women navigated the gendered terrain of environmental organizations. This alternative framework for analysing gender inequality within organizations was able to account for differences among and between men and women and how access to power at a number of levels within the organizations shaped relations of inequality. In order for ENGOs to become accountable for gender issues both within and outside of the organizations, they need to, as Parpart argued, recognize "that differences, and different voices, cannot just be heard, that language is powerful and that subjectivity (voices) are constructed and embedded in the complex experiential and discursive environments of daily life" (Parpart, 1995:239).

Taking these considerations into account, we must also consider both the extent to which postmodern feminism has pointed the way to a viable solution to the systemic oppression of women and whether accounting for multiplicity and difference would be sufficient to create space for women's voices and to ensure that these voices were heard. Oakley (1998) had reservations. She argued that postmodern feminism is "wrapped up in its own wordy academic debates, and is failing to address the relationship between feminist scholarship and women's studies and the situation of women out there in a world that does definitely exist, and that remains obdurately structured by a dualistic, power-driven gender

system" (Oakley, 1998:143). Oakley's critique of postmodern feminism, however, perpetuates the problem of binary frameworks by posing feminist theories in an antagonistic and diametrically opposed context. In so doing, Oakley did not create space for moving feminist theory forward.

Postmodern feminist literature, in focussing on the particular, local, and context specific, has the potential to overlook structural inequality that is reinforced through powerful dualities at the institutional and organizational levels. However, postmodern feminism has also enhanced feminist critiques of binary frameworks and offered a multi-layered and multi-dimensional approach that took into account agency and the ways in which individuals navigated the gendered terrain of ENGOs. This study supported the argument posed by Okeke who noted that the challenge for feminist scholarship relied on the formation of coalition politics and networks that "give voice to the multiple realities of womanhood in Africa and the diaspora" (Okeke, 1996:231).

ENGOs, in this study, were ambiguous, intermediate and exposed the interface of public/private and the way in which these divisions were blurred. This study began from the starting point that there was a symbolic association of men with the public sphere (inside) and women with the private sphere (outside). Turning the inside/outside debate inside out meant distinguishing and analysing the interplay between binary frameworks in order to understand their complexity and to use them to better explain gender inequality.

A more nuanced understanding of women's lives requires new theories that "reject totalities and embrace temporalities as enriching and empowering opportunities for new insight" (Malson, O'Barr, Westphal-Wihl, and Wyer, 1989:13). These theories need to also

provide channels for appropriate actions that can reduce the gender inequalities experienced within organizations. Attention to both plurality and the dynamism of individual and organizational actions is essential to conducting research for a more nuanced, multifaceted and enhanced representation of reality.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Research Methods

The field study conducted in Malawi had some distinct advantages and disadvantages. The field study allowed me to study the topic of investigation over the course of one year thus revealing the fluidity and changing nature of the debates surrounding this issue. After spending a couple of months in the field, I was better able to design the interview questions so that they would be easier for ENGO staff to understand. With the support and assistance from co-workers at the host organization, the interview questions were better designed to account for the appropriate level of difficulty, colloquialisms and proper use of terms.

The use of participant observation allowed me to take part in additional research techniques as they arose which gave me access to further qualitative and quantitative data. Of particular interest was the opportunity to help design a gender survey and to analyse the data. Additional techniques such as the group discussions allowed me to observe the interaction between individuals and the interplay and exchange of ideas concerning cultural beliefs and attitudes surrounding gender issues. The case study allowed me to have access to a large number of staff and the beneficiaries of one ENGO which gave a more comprehensive picture of gender activities carried out by one organization. This case study would not likely have been possible without employing the method of participant observation since it required access to information and people that is normally difficult to obtain in a survey approach.

Participant observation was enhanced through day-to-day interaction with ENGOs through my position as a volunteer at the umbrella ENGO.

The disadvantages of conducting a field study in a cross-cultural environment included the considerable amount of time spent in the field, the lack of access to telephones that worked, difficulties in reaching ENGO staff members for interviews, irregular electricity supply, lack of transportation to reach ENGOs in remote areas or in towns that are more than four hundred kilometres from where I was based, and the numerous funerals that were being attended by ENGO staff that resulted in a number of interview postponements or cancellations.

An additional challenge was posed when I attempted to use a tape recorder to record the semi-structured interviews. The use of the recorder created a more structured and stiff response from the interviewees. This was likely due to the participatory nature of most of their work. The use of a tape recorder impeded the fluidity of discussions and altered the dynamic between me and the ENGO staff. In the end, I decided not to use the tape recorder to ensure that the best information was made available to me in a comfortable interviewing environment.

The methodology adopted in this study provided some insights into the role of positioning and participation in research activities. My positioning as a volunteer within an ENGO allowed me to learn with and from other ENGO staff. My day-to-day interaction with ENGO staff created space for discussions and the exchange of ideas and information. My close relationship with my co-worker Linga provided opportunities to discuss gender issues in Malawi and contributed to the evolving nature of the study. This interaction created

opportunities for my participation in ENGO work but also the participation of ENGO staff in my research. ENGO staff had the opportunity to pose some of the questions that they thought needed to be answered in this research. The participation of ENGO staff further enhanced the research by providing multiple and diverse views and perceptions of gender-related issues.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research was primarily concerned with gender inequality in ENGOs in Malawi. However, other variables of difference require further examination such as marital status and education levels to determine the extent to which ENGOs have met their objectives of assisting the poor and disadvantaged groups through sustainable development initiatives. These findings would enhance the gender-disaggregated information by providing a more complete picture of the nature of inequality as experienced at the ENGO level. Future research could benefit from an investigation of other variables and the extent to which they overlap with gender issues.

Addressing gender inequality and other variables of difference such as age, education level and marital status could expose the cultural practices determined by various institutions. The cultural practices are learned both in the private and in the public sphere. Understanding how culture reinforces inequality within and between the public and private spheres will provide the foundation for further examinations of the resulting discourse and narratives of oppressed or subordinated groups. Marital status and education level tended to be of significance in this study in particular because they are examples of how cultural practices in the private sphere have had an impact on hiring practices in the public sphere. Since marital

status is valued in the home and community and has meaning in a cultural context. The values attached to marital status are transferred to the organizational level and female staff candidates are measured by these criteria. Marital status does not have value in organizational culture but instead individuals working in the organization place value on it for cultural reasons. As one of the GASAT participants noted, "the issue we are dealing with here is culture and how to change it" (female GASAT conference participant). However, this research found that there are multiple cultures operating on numerous level and individuals used culture(s) to further their own interests. In particular, men used patriarchal organizational culture to further their interests within the organization such as access to resources. Men also used culture and traditions learned in the home to further their status within the organizations. Future research must therefore be mindful of multiple cultures and how cultures clash or come together to address issues of inequality.

This study found that gender remained the predominant cross-cutting theme throughout the research even when other variables such as educational level and marital status were being addressed. The research found that education levels had an impact on how staff were treated within the organization. However, the sex of the individual tended to reveal more about inequality since a man and a woman, both with the same educational level were likely to have different pay scales. In general, women were not seen as bread-winners and were not paid an equitable salary compared to their male co-workers. Future research could enhance these findings by revealing, in greater depth, the interrelationship between variables and their multiple layers.

This research further began with the assumption that activities occurring at the

organizational level will have an impact at the community level. Thus, if gender inequality is experienced within ENGOs, it will also be reflected in the programmes and projects implemented with the beneficiaries. There has been some research conducted to support this argument (see Goetz, 1997and Jackson, 1996a) but it requires further examination.

This research was primarily concerned with gender practices at the organizational level and their potential impacts at the community level. Additional research that focusses on the institutional level in more depth would be valuable. For example, future research could uncover the institutional norms that guide culture and traditions, how these norms translate into practices within the organization, and the gendered dynamics that are created as a result of these norms. The institution of marriage, for example, can shape gender relations in specific patterns of inequality if the norms and practices associated with marriage serve the interests of men and subordinate women.

Future research should also examine in greater depth the nature of resistance struggles occurring in a number of contexts and consisting of a wide variety of techniques. Determining what these resistance techniques entail, who carries them out, how they are carried out and the extent to which they have been successful should add to our understanding of gender issues.

The research that was conducted for this thesis was limited to the extent that it focussed primarily on the organizational structures and processes in which gender discourse and gender dynamics take place. These structures and processes tend to value masculinities and masculine discourse. However, organizational power relations that exist within ENGOs cannot be entirely explained as a function of fixed structures and established processes. As

Savage and Witz argued, organizational power relations are fluid and are embedded in discourse (Savage and Witz, 1992). Future research needs to go beyond the structural and procedural limitations of development organizations to uncover the covert power relations and the multiple manifestations of power that result from the collision and collaboration of cultures. A more nuanced investigation will reveal power relations and highlight the role that language, practice, knowledge, behaviour and discourse play in the production and reproduction of power relations at the organizational level. This information will enhance our understanding of the fluidity of cultural practices and power relations and uncover the subtle gender dynamics that occur within the gendered organizational bureaucracies.

Directions Without a Destination: The Way Forward for Gender-sensitive ENGOs

In order to get "institutions right for women in development" (Goetz, 1997) and to ensure that development organizations such as ENGOs are responsive to women's and men's needs, it is first important to reveal gender issues, gender relations and the nature of gender inequality at the organizational level. For ENGOs, in particular, gender issues need to be understood in terms of a strategic approach rather than the instrumental approach of targeting women to carry out the environmental activities because of women's high representation in rural communities. The feminization of sustainable development therefore needs to highlight gender inequality in access to and control of resources for environmental management and women's lack of decision-making power. This study examined the nature of gender relations at the organizational level and the extent to which gender-related issues are being addressed within ENGOs. The findings from the research conducted in Malawi pointed to some very superficial attempts to address gender issues within the organizations. While

this effort can be construed as an important stepping stone in achieving gender equality, a series of recommendations will be offered here to help guide ENGOs and to help them get their organizations right for women and men in development.

Organizational and Senior Management Commitments

First, the ENGO staff need to be mindful of the organizational culture within which gender issues are being addressed and the ways in which cultures both clash and come together to shape gender relations at the organizational level. There also needs to be a commitment to addressing gender-related activities at the level of senior management. Since senior management staff are the primary decision-makers within the organization, they are therefore well positioned to ensure that gender issues are being addressed. This commitment will involve a financial obligation to provide funding and resources to gender programmes, personnel and activities. This funding needs to be provided in a way that can enhance the gender and environment approach to projects and therefore integrate these concepts in meaningful ways.

Strategies and Mechanisms at the Organizational Level

Once a commitment to addressing gender equality at the organizational level has been established, there also needs to be a mechanism that will allow for gender and development activities to take place. This mechanism can occur through the formation of a committee of staff from a variety of levels and positions within the organization to address gender issues and to plan for future gender-related activities. The creation of a committee is likely to take the burden away from one individual who is often cross-appointed between the gender programme and another programme or role within the organization such as a secretary. Such

a committee should be able to ensure that gender permeates throughout the organization since it will expand the group of people responsible for it.

Specific efforts need to be made to ensure that women within the organization are able to advance to new positions. There need to be structural arrangements and facilities available to address concerns that women may face such as inadequate provision of child care and safety issues when working late. There needs to be communication, co-ordination and planning of activities to promote gender-sensitive strategies throughout the organization and across the organization. There needs to be more information available about gender inequality. This information can be collected through gender-disaggregated data and can be used for planning activities and for assessing the performance of the organization. Training in gender-related issues and strategies needs to be carried out with all staff members, particularly managers and decision-makers within the organization. Gender awareness could be made a criterion for selection of individuals applying to the positions available in ENGOs. Integrating GAD into the fabric of the organization may require a process of (re-) orientation, training and dialogue with staff, volunteers and overseas partners and is likely to require changes in project development, implementation and monitoring practices (CCIC, 1991).

A further recommendation involves the nature of internal organizing, restructuring and awareness raising. There is a need for an increased awareness for what gender inequality means to the ENGO staff both in their development projects and in the organization in which they work. This in-house work needs to begin with a critical analysis of how gender inequality is perpetuated through the organizational structures and the programme bias

towards environmental science. This process of organizational awareness must also recognize the complex and hierarchical nature of these organizations, the way that power and decision-making are concentrated in the hands of a few people and how certain individuals, as a result of their position in the organization, whether men or women, have a monopoly on gender-related information.

ENGOs need to address, as Warner, Al-Hassan and Kydd suggested, the multiple and diverse categories of individuals that include social and economic roles as defined by age, marital status, etc., in order to guarantee an approach that is flexible enough to account for diversity (Warner, Al-Hassan and Kydd, 1997).

In keeping with Macalpine's recommendation, ENGOs could benefit from an analysis of women's words and narratives to raise awareness about gender bias within organizations (Macalpine, 1995). The research conducted in this study confirmed that female ENGO staff have expressed discontent and some have found channels of resistance such as withholding information. Studying these forms of resistance and learning from women's and men's narratives can offer a more nuanced analysis of organizational discourse.

Implementing Gender-sensitive Projects

After establishing a commitment at the organizational level and creating mechanisms to address gender issues at the organizational level, ENGOs will be better placed to address gender issues in their projects. ENGO staff can play a role in facilitating projects in such a way as to empower local communities. This approach to development requires significant demands on the development practitioners as change-agents. Integrating gender concerns and gender issues into all aspects of the projects could alter the image of gender which is often

equated with women's issues and expand the notion of gender to account for issues of inequality, lack of access to resources, and the unequal distribution of power and decision-making. Project development and management systems need to address gender issues, promote women's strategic interests and to assess project impact on women and men. The recommendations summarized in this section are expected to contribute to gender-sensitive organizations, programmes and projects.

Rethinking the Feminization of Sustainable Development

This study found that an analysis of gender inequality needs to begin with an investigation into the gendered discourse that shapes organizational life and fosters inequality within organizations. An analysis of inequality must not rely on simplistic divisions between domination and subordination or public and private but must understand these concepts as layered, contextualized domains that are shared by both men and women. Organizational activities are shaped by complex patterns of segregation that are both vertical and horizontal whereby interactions occur at the interface of public and private spheres. Collapsing the public and private discourse uncovered the symbolic associations that men and women hold in each of these spheres.

The feminization of sustainable development continues to adopt features of an instrumental women, environment and development (WED) approach. The instrumental nature of the WED approach obscures difference in power, access to and control of resources at the community level. Future gender-related activities, therefore, stand to benefit from an increased awareness of the meaning and implications of gender-related concepts and how the local realities of men and women are shaped by environmental degradation in

Malawi.

ENGO staff require an increased awareness of the significance of gender inequality specifically in the context of environmental degradation. Increased awareness about gender-related issues on the part of ENGO staff is central to ensuring that environmental degradation is understood as a gendered and gendering process insofar as environmental degradation alters and shapes the roles of men and women in their local environments. Sustainable development approaches also need to be mindful of the institutional norms that reinforce the symbolic association of women with the private sphere and the symbolic association of men with the public sphere.

Understanding the feminization of sustainable development requires gender analyses that point to strategic gender issues in environmental degradation and NRM such as access to and control over resources and decision-making power. These analyses must move beyond the instrumental approach -- which views women as an underutilised resource for environmental and development projects -- to account for the challenges and opportunities for gender-equitable sustainable development.

Extending this argument to the organizational level demonstrated the extent to which female ENGO staff are being targeted for gender-related activities. The donor-driven nature of gender policies tended to treat female ENGO staff as both the objects and the instruments of foreign policy. The high representation of female staff in gender positions in ENGOs was evidence of the perception of gender activities as women's activities. The feminization of sustainable development therefore has implications for both the community level and the organizational level. Gender issues at the organizational level tended to focus on women's

increased roles and representation in environment and development activities without a proper analysis of women's access to and control of resources and decision-making power within environmental organizations.

This study explored the organizational challenges and opportunities that constitute the gendered terrain of ENGOs, pointing to the feminization of sustainable development. Future research will benefit from this overview and broad study of issues of gender inequality in ENGOs. However, future research needs to take the next step in this investigation and begin to look in greater depth at the gendered discourse of ENGO staff interaction and the complex and multifaceted ways in which male and female ENGO staff negotiate the public and private and navigate the gendered terrain of organizations.

REFERENCES

Aboud, A., A. Sofranko, and S. Ndiaye (1996) "The Effect of Gender on Adoption of Conservation Practices by Heads of Farm Households in Kenya" *Society & Natural Resources*, Vol.9, pp. 447-463.

Acker, Joan. (1992) "Gendering Organizational Theory" in Mills and Tancred (eds) *Gendering Organizational Analysis*, London: SAGE Publications.

Acker, Joan (1990) "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations", *Gender and Society*, Vol.4, No.2, June, pp. 139-158.

Action Aid (1997) "In-house Gender Training Workshop Report", Action Aid.

Afshar, Haleh (ed) (1987) "Introduction" in *Women, State and Ideology: Studies from Africa and Asia*, Albany: State University of New York Press.

Agarwal, Bina. (1997) "Environmental Action, Gender Equity and Women's Participation", *Development and Change*, Vol.28, pp. 439-64.

Ali, Margaret (1997) "Efforts in Reducing the Gender Gap in Science and Technology", paper presented at the Regional Africa GASAT Conference, 19-24 October.

Alvesson, Mats and Yvonne Due Billing (1997) *Understanding Gender and Organizations*, London: SAGE Publications.

Bernards, Reena (1993) "Forging Across the Borders of Conflict: Women's Diplomacy", Gay Young, Vidyamali Samarasinghe and Ken Kusterer (eds), *Women at the Centre: Development Issues and Practices for the 1990s*, West Hartford: Kumarian Press

Boserup, Ester (1970) *Women's Role in Economic Development*, London: Allen and Unwin.

Braidotti, Rosi, Ewa Charkiewicz, Sabine Hausler, and Saskia Wieringa (1994) *Women, the Environment and Sustainable Development*, London: Zed Books.

Braidotti, Rosi (1994) "Body-Images and the Pornography of Representation" in Lennon and Whitford (eds) *Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives in Epistemology*, New York: Routledge Press.

Brettell, Caroline B. and Carolyn F. Sargent (eds) (1993) *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Brohman, John (1996) "The Postwar Tradition in Theory" in *Popular Development: Rethinking the Theory and Practice of Development*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Burrel G. and J. Hearn (1992) "The Sexuality of Organization", Chapter one in Hearn, Sheppard, Tancred-Sheriff and Burrell (eds) *The Sexuality of Organization*, London: Sage Publications.

CPAR (Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief - Malawi) (1997) "Draft Gender Policy".

CCIC (Canadian Council for International Co-operation and MATCH International Centre) (1991) "Two Halves Make a Whole: Balancing Gender Relations in Development", Ottawa, August.

Cebotarev, N. (1994) "Households, Gender and Sustainability" in Bryden (ed) *Towards Sustainable Rural Communities*, Guelph.

Charlton, Sue Ellen M.., Jana Everett, and Kathleen Staudt. (1989)"Women, the State, and Development" in Women, the State and Development (same authors), Albany: State University of New York.

Chimutu, Gladys (1993) "A Critical Reflection on WVM Efforts in Integrating Women in Development for the Past 10 Years", Paper Presented at Staff Enhancement Day, Blantyre: World Vision Malawi, July.

Chipande G. H. R. (1987) "Innovation Adoption among Female-headed Households: The Case of Malawi", *Development and Change*, Vol.18, pp. 315-327.

Christian Services Committee of the Churches of Malawi (CSC) (1998) "Draft Gender Policy".

Code, Lorraine (1993) "How Do We Know? Questions of Method in Feminist Practice" in Burt and Code (eds) *Changing Methods: Feminists Transforming Practice*, Peterborough: Broadview Press.

CONGOMA (Council for NGOs in Malawi) (1997a). "Gender Situation Analysis Among NGOs in Malawi", CONGOMA document.

CONGOMA (1997b) "Three Year Gender and Development Programme for NGOs in Malawi: Project Grant Proposal", CONGOMA document.

CONGOMA Gender Task Force (1997c) "NGO Plan of Action on Gender for 1997-2000", CONGOMA Gender Task Force, CONGOMA document.

CONGOMA (1997d) "CONGOMA Situation Analysis on Gender Among NGOs in Malawi" by Beatrice Banda, paper presented at the Regional Africa GASAT Conference, 19-24 October.

Corradi Fiumara, Gemma. (1994). "The Metaphoric Function and the Question of Objectivity" in Lennon and Whitford (eds) *Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives in Epistemology*, New York: Routledge Press.

Crabtree, Benjamin F. and William L. Miller (eds.) (1992) *Doing Qualitative Research*, London: Sage Publications.

CURE (1998). "CURE Gender Directory: A Directory of Organizations Involved in Gender and Natural Resource Management Activities", Blantyre: CURE, September.

CURE (1996). "Gender Directory: A Directory of Organizations Involved in Gender and Natural Resource Management Activities", Blantyre: CURE, June.

Dankelman, Irene and Joan Davidson.(1988) *Women and Environment in the Third World: Alliance for the Future*, London: Earthscan.

Davison, Jean. (1997) *Gender, Lineage and Ethnicity in Southern Africa*, Boulder: Westview Press.

Davison, Jean. (1994) "Changing Relations of Production in Southern Malawi's Households: Implications for Involving Rural Women in Development" in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies.*

Davison, Jean (1993) "Tenacious Women: Clinging to Banja Household Production in the Face of Changing Gender Relations in Malawi", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol.19, No.3, September, pp. 405-421.

Davidson, Joan. (1993) "Women's Relationship with the Environment" in *Focus on Gender* (1), Oxford: Oxfam, February.

Douma, Willy, Heleen van den Hombergh and Ange Wieberdink. (1994) "The Politics of Research on Gender, Environment and Development" in Harcourt (ed), *Feminist Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, London: Zed Books.

Eade, Deborah and Suzanne Williams.(1995) *The Oxfam Handbook of Development and Relief*, Vol.1, Oxford: Oxfam.

Ebdon, Rosamund. (1995) "NGO Expansion and the Fight to Reach the Poor: Gender Implications of NGO Scaling-Up in Bangladesh", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 26, No.3, pp. 49 - 55.

Edwards, Michael and David Hulme (eds) (1996) *Beyond the Magic Bullet: NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold War World*, West Hartford: Kumarian Press.

Eisenstein, Zillah (1979) "Developing a Theory of Capitalist Patriarchy" in Eisenstein (ed) *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism*, New York: Monthly Review Press.

Ekechi, Felix K. (1996) "Perceiving Women as Catalysts", *Africa Today*, Vol.43, No.3, pp. 235-250.

Elliot, Jennifer A.(1994) *An Introduction to Sustainable Development*, London: Routledge.

Elson, Diane (ed) (1991). *Male Bias in the Development Process*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Fatton, Robert Jr. (1989) "Gender, Class, and State in Africa" in Parpart and Staudt (eds), *Women and the State in Africa*, Boulder: Lynne Reinner.

Feldstein, Hilary Sims and Janice Jiggins (1994). (eds) *Tools for the Field: Methodologies Handbook for Gender Analysis in Agriculture*, West Hartford: Kumarian Press.

Ferguson, Kathy E. (1984) *The Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Fierlbeck, Katherine. (1995) "Getting Representation Right for Women in Development: Accountability, Consent, and the Articulation of Women's Interests", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 26(3).

Flax, Jane (1989) "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory" in Malson et al. (eds). *Feminist Theory in Practice and Process*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fowler, Alan (1997) *Striking a Balance*, London: Earthscan Publications Ltd.

Frank, Andre Gunder (1978) *Development Accumulation and Underdevelopment*, London: MacMillan Press.

Geisler, Gisela (1993) "Silences Speak Louder Than Claims: Gender, Household, and Agricultural Development in Southern Africa", *World Development*, Vol.21, No.12, pp. 1965-1980.

Gladwin, Christina H. (1991) *Structural Adjustment and African Women Farmers*, Gainesville: University of Florida Press,

Goetz, Anne Marie (1988) "Feminism and the Limits of the Claim to Know: Contradictions in the Feminist Approach to Women in Development", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol.17, No.3.

Goetz, Anne Marie (1992) "Gender and Administration", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 23 (4).

Goetz, Anne Marie (1994) "From Feminist Knowledge to Data for Development: The Bureaucratic Management of Information on Women and Development", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol.25, No.2, pp. 27 - 37.

Goetz, Anne Marie (1995) "Institutionalizing Women's Interests and Accountability to Women in Development", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 26(3).

Goetz, Anne Marie (1998) (ed) *Getting Institutions Right for Women in Development*, London: Zed Books.

Goetz, Anne Marie (1998) "Introduction: Getting Institutions Right for Women in Development" in Goetz (ed) *Getting Institutions Right for Women in Development*, London: Zed Books.

Government of Malawi (GoM) (1993) "A Policy and Plan of Action for Women in Malawi" Government of Malawi.

Government of Malawi (GoM) (1995) "Women and Gender Issues", Lilongwe: Government of Malawi.

Government of Malawi (GoM) (1996) "National Environmental Action Plan", Lilongwe: Government of Malawi.

Government of Malawi (GoM) (1998) "Malawi Platform for Action", Lilongwe: Government of Malawi.

Graf, William (1997) "Reappropriating the Past: History in Ideology and Discourse in the Third World", *New Political Science*, Vol.40, Summer, pp. 45-48.

Green, Cathy and Sally Baden (1994) "Women and Development in Malawi", *BRIDGE Report* No.23 (May).

Haraway, Donna J.(1991) *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, New York: Routledge Press.

Harcourt, Wendy (1994) "Negotiating Positions in the Sustainable Development Debate: Situating the Feminist Perspective" in Harcourt (ed) *Feminist Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, London: Zed Books.

Harding, Sandra (ed) (1987) *Feminism and Methodology*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Harding, Sandra (1991) *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Harrison, Elizabeth (1995) "Fish and Feminists", *IDS Bulletin* Vol 26(3).

Hartsock, Nancy (1987) "The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism" in Harding, Sandra (ed) *Feminism and Methodology*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Hayles, Katherine (1995) "Searching for Common Ground" in Soule and Lease (eds), *Reinventing Nature*, Washington: Island Press.

Hearn, J., D.L. Sheppard, P. Tancred-Sheriff, G. Burrell (eds) (1992) *The Sexuality of Organization*, London: SAGE Publications.

Hekman, Susan (1997) "Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited" *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol.22, No.2, pp. 341-363.

Held, David (1980) *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, Berkeley: University of California Press

Hirschmann, David (1997) "The Malawi Case: Enclave Politics, Core Resistance, and 'Nkhoswe No. 1'" in Staudt (ed) *Women, International Development and Politics: The Bureaucratic Mire*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Hirschmann, David (1995) "Managing Equity and Gender in an Agricultural Programme in Malawi", *Public Administration and Development*, Vol.15, pp.21-40.

Hirschmann, David (1990) "Malawi's 'Captured' Peasantry: An Empirical Analysis", *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol.24, July, pp. 467-488.

Hirschmann, David/United Nations (1985) "Women, Planning and Policy in Malawi" a United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Research Series Paper for the African Training and Research Centre for Women.

Hope Kasente Deborah (1996) "Gender Studies and Gender Training in Africa", *Development in Practice*, Vol.6, No.1, February, pp.51-54.

Human Rights Artists Club (HURAC) (1998). Policy on "Women's Rights and Rights of a Girl Child", December.

IDRC (International Development Research Centre) (1999) website: http://www.idrc.ca/institution/eprogram.html

IDS (1995) "Policy Briefing", Issue 5, *Institute of Development Studies*, August.

Jackson, Cecile (1996a) "Gender and Participation at a Project Interface", *Public Administration and Development*, Vol.16, pp. 503-511.

Jackson, Cecile (1996b) "Rescuing Gender From the Poverty Trap", *World Development*, Vol.24, No.3, pp. 489-504.

Jackson, Cecile (1993) "Doing What Comes Naturally? Women and Environment in Development" in *World Bank*, Vol.21, No.12, pp.1947-1963.

Jahan, Rounaq (1995) *The Elusive Agenda: Mainstreaming Women in Development*, London: Zed Books.

James, Rick (1998) *Demystifying Organization Development: Practical Capacity Building Experiences of African NGOs. INTRAC NGO Management and Policy Series No. 7*, Oxford: INTRAC.

Kabeer, Naila (1995) "Targeting Women or Transforming Institutions: Policy lessons from NGO anti-poverty efforts", *Development in Practice*, Vol.5, No.2, pp. 109 -116.

Kabeer, Naila. (1994) *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*, London: Verso.

Kalu, Anthonia C. (1996) "Women and the Social Construction of Gender in African Development", *Africa Today*, Vol.43, No.3, pp. 269-288.

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss and Barry A. Stein (1979) Life in Organizations: Workplaces as People Experience Them, New York: Basic Books.

Kaonga, Llosten (1999) Website: www.math.unh.edu/~llk/malawi/nyasa.html

Kardam, Nüket (1995) "Conditions of Accountability for Gender Policy: The Organizational, Political and Cognitive Contexts", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 26, No.3, pp. 11-21.

Kardam, Nüket (1998) "Making Development Organizations Accountable: The Organizational, Political and Cognitive Contexts" in Goetz (ed) *Getting Institutions Right for Women in Development*, London: Zed Books.

Kaspin, Deborah (1995) "The Politics of Ethnicity in Malawi's Democratic Transition", the Journal of Modern Africa Studies, Vol. 33, No.4, pp. 595-620.

Kinnaird, Vivian and Bala Hyma (1993) "In Search of Working Models of Gender Sensitive Participatory Research", *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, Vol.22, No.1.

Lamphere, Louise (1993) "The Domestic Sphere of Women and the Public World of Men: The Strengths and Limitations of an Anthropological Dichotomy" in Brettell and Sargent (eds), *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Lane, Jaqueline (1995) "Non-governmental organizations and participatory development: the concept in theory versus the concept in practice" in Nelson and Wright (eds) *Power and Participatory Development*, London: ITP.

Lantican, Clarita P., Christina H. Gladwin and James L. Seale, Jr. (1996) "Income and Gender Inequalities in Asia: Testing Alternative Theories in Development" *Economic Development and Cultural Change* Vol.44, No.2, January, pp. 235-261.

Lazreg, Marnia (1994) "Women's Experience and Feminist Epistemology: A Critical Neo-Rationalist Approach" in Lennon and Whitford (eds), *Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives in Epistemology*, New York: Routledge Press.

Leach, Belinda (1993) "'Flexible' Work, Precarious Future: Some Lessons from the Canadian Clothing Industry", *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol.30, No.1, February, pp. 64-82.

Leach, Melissa, Susan Joekes and Cathy Green (1995) "Gender Relations and Environmental Change", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol.26, No.1, pp.1-8.

Lee, Rebecca A. and J.C.M. Shute (1991) "An Approach to Naturalistic Evaluation", *Evaluation Review*, Vol.15, No.2, pp. 254-265.

Lele, Uma (1991) "Women, Structural Adjustment and Transformation: Some Lessons and Questions from the African Experience" in Gladwin (ed). *Structural Adjustment and African Women Farmers*, Gainesville: University of Florida Press.

Lennon, Kathleen and Margaret Whitford eds) (1994). *Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives in Epistemology*, New York: Routledge Press.

Levy, Caren (1998) "Institutionalization of Gender through Participatory Practice" in Guijt and Shah (eds) *The Myth of Community: Gender issues in participatory development*, London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Lofland, John and Lyn H. Lofland (1995) *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, Third Edition, Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Macalpine, Marion (1995) "'Sameness and 'Difference' for Women Bureaucrats: Experience From a Management Development for Women Programme", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 26, No.3, pp. 125-130).

MacKinnon, Catherine (1987) "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: Toward Feminist Jurisprudence" in Harding, Sandra (ed) *Feminism and Methodology*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Maharaj, Zarina (1995) "A Social Theory of Gender: Connell's Gender and Power", *Feminist Review*, Vol.49, Spring, pp. 49-51.

Malindi, Grace M. (1995) "Participation of Rural Women in Malawi National Rural Development Program", in Udoh James (ed) *Women and Sustainable Development in Africa*, Westport: Praeger.

Malson, Micheline R. Jean F. O'Barr, Sarah Westphal-Wihl and Mary Wyer (eds) (1989). "Introduction", *Feminist Theory in Practice and Process*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mangena, Oshadi (1994) "Against Fragmentation: The Need for Holism" in Lennon and Whitford (eds) *Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives in Epistemology*, New York: Routledge Press.

Manheim, Henry L. (1977) *Sociological Research: Philosophy and Methods*, Homewood: The Doresey Press.

Marchand, Marianne H. and Jane L. Parpart (eds) (1995). "Introduction" *Feminism, Postmodernism, Development*, London: Routledge.

Marchand, Marianne H. and Jane L. Parpart (eds) (1995) "Exploding the Canon: An Introduction/Conclusion" in *Feminism, Postmodernism, Development*, London: Routledge.

Martin, Patricia Yancey (1990) "Rethinking Feminist Organizations", *Gender and Society*, Vol. 4, No. 2, June, pp. 182-206.

Mayoux, Linda (1995) "Beyond Naivety: Women, Gender Inequality and Participatory Development", *Development and Change* 26: pp. 235-258.

Mbilinyi, Marjorie (1992) "Research Methodologies in Gender Issues" in Overview in *Gender in Southern Africa: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues, Harare: Sapes Books.*

Meena, Ruth (1995) "Women and Sustainable Development", *Voices from Africa*, (5), June.

Meena, Ruth (ed) (1992). "Gender Research/Studies in Southern Africa: An Overview in *Gender in Southern Africa: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues, Harare: Sapes Books.*

Mehra, Rehka (1993) "Gender in Community Development and Resource Management", Gay Young, Vidyamali Samarasinghe and Ken Kusterer (eds), *Women at the Centre: Development Issues and Practices for the 1990s*, West Hartford: Kumarian Press, pp. 145-161

Mies, Maria and Vandana Shiva (1993) *Ecofeminism*, London: Zed Books.

Mies, Maria (1986) *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale*, London: Zed Books.

Mihowa, L., R. Tiessen with S. Twea (1998) "Assessment Report of the Gender Capacity of Concern Universal", CURE.

Mihowa, L., R. Tiessen and R. Whyatt (1997) "NGO Capacity Enhancement of Gender Participation in Natural Resource Management in Malawi", CURE.

Mills, Albert J. and Peta Tancred (eds) (1992) *Gendering Organizational Analysis*, London: SAGE Publications.

Ministry of Women, Youth and Community Services (1998) "The Republic of Malawi: First Draft National Gender Policy", Government of Malawi, July.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. (1991) "Under Western Eyes" in Mohanty et al. (eds) *Third World Women and The Politics of Feminism*, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Moser, Caroline O.N. (1993). *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*, London: Routledge.

Nelson, N. and S. Wright (1995) *Power and Participatory Development*, London: ITP.

Nicholson, Linda and Steven Seidman (eds) (1995) *Social Postmodernism: Beyond Identity Politics*, Cambridge: University Press.

Nicholson, Linda and Steven Seidman(1995) "Introduction", *Social Postmodernism: Beyond Identity Politics*, Cambridge: University Press.

Nicholson, Linda (1995) "Interpreting Gender", in Nicholson and Seidman (eds) *Social Postmodernism: Beyond Identity Politics*, Cambridge: University Press.

NDI. (1995) National Democratic Institute or International Affairs Malawi Project. "Women's Empowerment in Malawi", Lilongwe.

Oakley, Ann (1998) "Science, Gender, and Women's Liberation: An Argument Against Postmodernism" *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol.21, No.2, pp.133-146.

Okeke, Philomina E. (1996) "Postmodern Feminism and Knowledge Production: The African Context", *Africa Today*, Vol.43, No.3, pp. 223-234).

Orr, Katherine (1997) "Analyzing the Links Between Gender and Democratization in Southern Africa: Limitations and Opportunities in the Case of Malawi", paper presented at the International Studies Association Conference, Toronto, March 22.

Overholt, Catherrine A., Kathleen Cloud, Mary B. Anderson, and James E. Austin (1991) "Gender Analysis Framework" In Rao, Anderson and Overholt (eds) *Gender Analysis in Development Planning*, West Hartford: Kumarian Press.

Oxfam UK and Ireland (1994) *The Oxfam Gender Training Manual*, Handout 76, Oxfam.

PAMET "Paper Making Education Trust" Fact Sheet (1998).

Pankhurst, Donna and Jenny Pearce (1996) "Feminist perspectives on democratisation in the South: engendering or adding women in Pankhurst, Helen *Gender, Development and Identity*, London: Zed Books.

Parkin, Wendy (1992) "Private Experiences in the Public Domain: Sexuality and Residential Care Organizations" in Hearn, J., D.L. Sheppard, P. Tancred-Sheriff, G. Burrell (eds) *The Sexuality of Organization*, London: Sage Publications.

Parpart, Jane, M. Patricia Connelly, Tania Murray Li, Martha MacDonald (1995) "Restructured Worlds/Restructured Debates: Globalization, Development and Gender" *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, special issue: 17-38.

Parpart, Jane (1995) "Deconstructing the Development "Expert": Gender, Development and the "Vulnerable Groups" in Marchand and Parpart (eds.) *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, London: Routledge.

Parpart, Jane L. and Kathleen A. Staudt (eds) (1989) *Women and the State in Africa*, Boulder: Lynne Reinner.

Parpart, Jane L. and Kathleen A. Staudt (1989) "Women and the State in Africa" in *Women and the State in Africa*, Boulder: Lynne Reinner.

Pateman, Carole (1989) "Feminism and Democracy" in *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism and Political Theory*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Peters, Pauline E. (1997) "Against the Odds: Matriliny, land and gender in the Shire Highlands of Malawi", *Critique of Anthropology*, Vol.17 (2).

Pettman, Jan Jindy (1996) *Worlding Women: A Feminist International Politics*, New York: Routledge Press.

Picchio, Antonella (1995) "Human Sustainable Development: economic theories, responsibilities and hopes", *Development: Journal of SID*, Vol.1, pp. 50-54.

Pohlmann, Lisa (1995) "Ambivalence About Leadership in Women's Organisations: A Look at Bangladesh", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol.26, No.3, pp.117 -.123.

Rao, Aruna and David Kelleher (1995) "Engendering Organizational Change: The BRAC Case", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 26, No.3. pp.69-77.

Rathgeber, Eva M. (1990) "WID, WAD, GAD: Trends in Research and Practice", *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 24:489-502.

Rathgeber, Eva M. (1995a) "Integrating Gender into Environmental Education in Africa", *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, Special Issue: 89-103.

Rathgeber, Eva M. (1995b) "Gender and Development in Action" in Marchand and Parpart (eds) *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*, London: Routledge.

Reinharz, Shulamit (1992) *Feminist Methods in Social Research*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Rocheleau, Dianne (1995) "Gender and Biodiversity: A Feminist Political Economy Perspective", *IDS Bulletin* Vol.26, No.1.

Rocheleau, Dianne, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Esther Wangari (eds) (1996) *Feminist Political Ecology: Global issues and local experiences*, London: Routledge.

Rocheleau, Dianne, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Esther Wangari (1996) "Gender and Environment: A feminist political ecology perspective" Ch. 1 in Rocheleau et al., *Feminist Political Ecology: Global issues and local experiences*, London: Routledge.

Rodda, Annabel(1993) *Women and the Environment*, London: Zed Books.

Rostow, W. W. (1962) *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ruccio, David F. and Lawrence H. Simon (1988) "Radical Theories of Development: Frank, the Modes of Production School, and Amin" in Charles K. Wilber (ed) *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment*, Fourth Edition, New York: Random House.

Sacks, Karen (1979) *Sisters and Wives: the Past and Future of Sexual Equality*, Westport: Greenwood Press.

Savage, Mike and Anne Witz (1992) "Theoretical Introduction: The gender of organizations" in Savage and Witz (eds) *Gender and Bureaucracy*, Cornwall: Blackwell Publishers.

SAW (Society for the Advancement of Women) (1995) "Women's Empowerment in Malawi: A Collection of Speeches and Papers from a Conference on Raising the Status of Women", Society for the Advancement of Women.

Schuurman, Frans (1993) *Beyond the Impasse: New Directions in Development Theory*, London: Zed Books.

Scott, Catherine V. (1995) *Gender and Development: Rethinking Modernization and Dependency Theory*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Sen, Gita and Caren Grown (1987) *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives*, New York: Monthly Review Press.

Shiva, Vandana (1993) "The Impoverishment of the Environment: Women and Children Last" in Mies and Shiva (eds) *Ecofeminism*, London: Zed Books.

Shiva, Vandana (1989) *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*, London: Zed Books.

Siddharth, Veena (1995) "Gender Participation: NGOs and the World Bank", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol. 26, No.3, pp.31-37.

Simukonda, H.P.M. (1992) "Creating a National NGO Council for Strengthening Social Welfare Services in Africa: some organizational and technical problems experienced in Malawi", *Public Administration and Development*, Vol.12, pp.417-431.

Smelser, Neil J. and Stephen R. Warner (1976) *Sociological Theory: Historical and Formal*, Morristown: General Learning Press.

Smith, Dorothy E. (1990) *The Conceptual Practices of Power: a feminist sociology of knowledge*, Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Staudt, Kathleen (ed) (1997) *Women, The State, and Development*, Albany: State University of New York.

Staudt, Kathleen and Kristen Timothy (1997) "Strategies for the Future" in *Women, The State, and Development*, Albany: State University of New York.

Staudt, Kathleen (1989) "The State and Gender in Colonial Africa" in Charlton et al (eds) *Women, The State, and Development*, Albany: State University of New York.

Staudt, Kathleen (1986) "Women, Development and the State: On the Theoretical Impasse", *Development and Change*, Vol.17, pp. 325-333.

Stewart, Sheelagh and Jill Taylor (1995) "Women Organizing Women – 'Doing it Backwards and in High Heels'", *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 26, No.3, pp. 79-85.

Tiessen, Rebecca (1995) "Treading Water: Survival Strategies Adopted by Smallscale Women Farmers in Zimbabwe", M.A. Thesis, University of Guelph, Guelph.

Tinker, Irene (1990) "The Making of a Field: Advocates, Practitioners and Scholars", in Tinker (ed) *Persistent Inequalities: Women and World Development*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 27-53.

Udoh James, Valentine (ed) (1995) *Women and Sustainable Development in Africa*, Westport: Praeger

UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women) (1999). Website: gopher://gopher.undp.org:70/00/uni...oli-eco/eco/susta/agenda21/agenda1

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (1999) Website: http://www.undp.org/gender/policy/policy.html

UNDP (1998) *Human Development Report*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

UNDP (1995) "The Experience of Malawi: Country Strategies for Social Development", *UNDP Series on Sustainable Human Development*, New York: UNDP, January.

UNDP (1993) "Situation Analysis of Poverty in Malawi".

United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) (1997) *Implementing Agenda 21: NGO Experiences from Around the World*, Geneva: NGLS.

USAID. (1994) "Successful Approaches to Integrating Gender in U.S. Development Assistance", USAID Malawi, April.

Venkateswaran, Sandhya (1995) *Environment, Development and the Gender Gap*, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Walby, Sylvia (ed) (1988) *Gender Segregation at Work*, Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Walby, Sylvia (1988) "Introduction" in Walby (ed) *Gender Segregation at Work*, Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Warner, M.W., R.M. Al-Hassan and J.G. Kydd (1997) "Beyond Gender Roles? Conceptualizing the Social and Economic Lives of Rural Peoples in Sub-Saharan Africa", *Development and Change* 28:143-168.

Waylen, Georgina (1996) *Gender in Third World Politics*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

WCED (1987) (World Commission on Environment and Development). *Our Common Future*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

World Bank (1997) *World Development Indicators*, Washington D.C.: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/WB.

World Bank (1995) "Malawi: Human Resources and Poverty: Profile and Priorities for Action", The World Bank Southern Africa Department (November).

Wright, Joanne (1997) "Deconstructing Development Theory: Feminism, the Public/Private Dichotomy and the Mexican Maquiladoras" *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol.34, No.1, pp. 71-91.

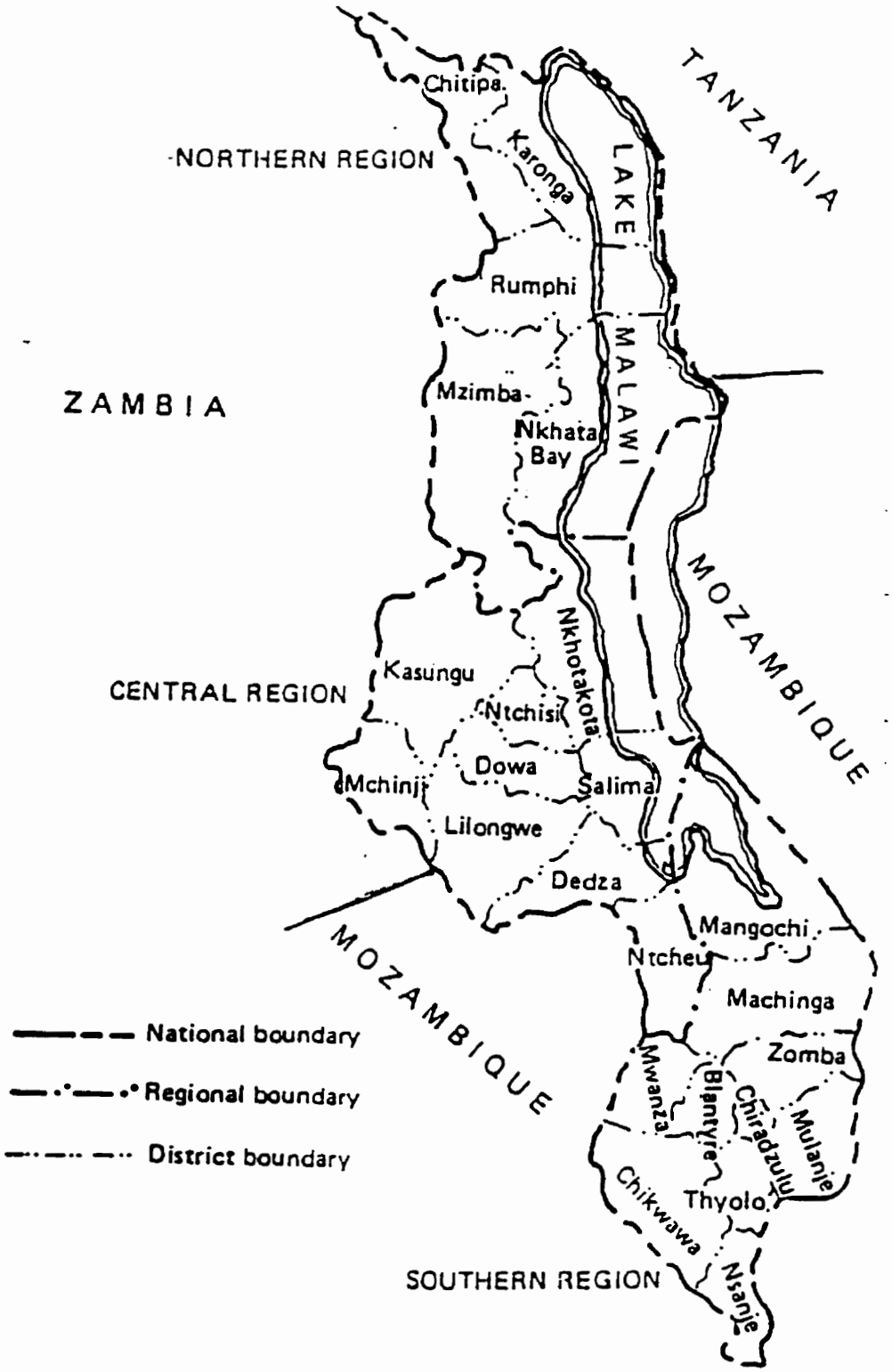
WUSC (1995) *Malawi Country Handbook*, World University Service of Canada

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Action Aid
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BAM	Beekeepers Association of Malawi
CCIC	Canadian Council for International Cooperation
CPAR	Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief
CABUNGO	Capacity Building Project
CSC	Christian Services Committee
CARD	Churches Action in Relief and Development
CBM	Community Based Management
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CCAP	Presbyterian Church
CU	Concern Universal
CAYO	Concerned Youth of Malawi
CEDAW	Convention to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women
CONGOMA	Council for NGOs in Malawi
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CU	Concern Universal
CURE	Coordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment
DAPP	Development Aid from People to People
DAWN	Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era
EDETA	Enterprise Development and Training Agency
EBC	Evangelical Baptist Church of Malawi
ELDP	Evangelical Lutheran Development Program
ENGO	Environmental Non-government Organization
FS	Sustainable Livelihoods and Food Security Programme
GAD	Gender and Development
GAM	Gender Analysis Matrix
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoM	Government of Malawi
Greenline	Greenline Movement
HAF	Harvard Analytical Framework
HELP	Health Education and Sanitation Programme
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IEF	International Eye Foundation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MFWP	Malawi Fresh Water Project
MOWCACS	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Community Services
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NPFA	National Platform for Action
NGO	Non-governmental Organization

NGOSP	Non-governmental Organization Support Programme
NRM	Natural Resource Management
Oxfam-GB	Oxfam Great Britain
OD	Organizational Development
PAMET	Paper Making Education Trust
PAR	Participatory Action Research
Plan	Plan International
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RUFA	Rural Foundation for Afforestation
Save-Malawi	Save the Children Fund - Malawi
SAW	Society for the Advancement of Women
SEDP	Small Enterprise Development Programme
SSI	Semi-structured Interviews
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities Framework
TfT	Training for Transformation
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UDF	United Democratic Front
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Women's Programme
USAID	United States Aid and International Development
VLOM	Village Level Operation and Maintenance
WAD	Women and Development
WED	Women, Environment and Development
WES	Water and Environmental Sanitation
WSM	Wildlife Society of Malawi
WID	Women in Development
WUSC	World University Service of Canada
WVI	World Vision International
YASA	Youth Action in Social Advocacy
YECE	Youth Empowerment for Civic Education

Appendix 1: Map of Malawi



Appendix 2: Survey of Gender and ENGOs in Malawi

A. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION

1. How would you classify your organization? (Circle the correct response).

International
Established Malawian NGO
Emerging Malawian NGO
Community Based Organization - CBO

2. How many years has your organization been operating in Malawi? _____

3. Approximately what percentage of your budget is donor funded? (Circle the correct answer).

100% 75% 50% 25% 0%

4. How does your organization define or understand gender?

_____
_____
_____
_____

B. STAFF

1. How many staff at your organization are: men _____ women _____ ?

2. How many staff work as field officers: men _____ women _____ ?

3. How many staff work at the support level: men _____ women _____ ?

4. How many staff at the management level: men _____ women _____ ?

5. How do you rank the following factors in terms of the problems associated with women's employment? (Circle the number on a scale of 1-5)

	very important		somewhat important		not very important
women lack the skills necessary	1	2	3	4	5
women have reduced mobility (difficult to move to other places)	1	2	3	4	5
women take time off to have children	1	2	3	4	5
women lack interest in NGO activities	1	2	3	4	5
childcare is not available at the NGO	1	2	3	4	5
cultural constraints/social pressures	1	2	3	4	5
women perform poorly	1	2	3	4	5
women lack education	1	2	3	4	5

6. Are there other reasons why there are fewer women than men working in NGOs (explain)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Do you have a gender focal point officer?

8. What are main activities carried by the gender focal point officer?

9. Is the gender focal point officer responsible for other activities in the organization aside from gender activities? Yes ____ NO ____ .

10. If yes, briefly explain some of these other activities.

C. PROGRAMMES

1. What programmes does your organization have:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. At your organization do you have the following (circle the correct response):

A. Gender Programme
B. Gender Desk
C. Gender Department
D. Other _____

3. If your organization does not currently have any of these, are you planning to development one? Yes ____ No ____

4. Is so, when do expect it will be in place? _____

D. POLICIES

1. Does your organization have a gender policy?

2. Does your organization have a mission statement or a mandate that includes gender?

3. Are you familiar with the NGO Gender Plan of Action?

4. How useful will the NGO Gender Plan of Action be in guiding your work? (Circle the correct response):

Very useful Somewhat useful Not very useful

(If your organization has a gender policy could you please include a copy of it when you return this form?)

5. Are you familiar with any other gender policies or documents?
6. Is so, list them.

_____
_____
_____
_____

E. PROJECTS

1. What projects does your organization have and in what district are they located?

PROJECT LOCATION

_____
_____
_____

2. How important do you consider gender to be in the following projects:

	very important		somewhat important		not very important
agriculture	1	2	3	4	5
forestry	1	2	3	4	5
water	1	2	3	4	5
AIDs education	1	2	3	4	5
sanitation	1	2	3	4	5
beekeeping	1	2	3	4	5
nutrition	1	2	3	4	5
construction	1	2	3	4	5
boreholes	1	2	3	4	5
combatting desertification	1	2	3	4	5
conservation of wildlife	1	2	3	4	5

3. Do your projects have a gender component?

4. Which projects have a gender component

5. How do these projects address gender?

6. Please describe briefly your interpretation/understanding of what is meant by a 'gender-sensitive project' or a 'project implemented from a gender perspective'

F. TRAINING

1. What types of training have you had? (e.g. PRA, TfT, etc.)

2. Have you ever received gender training? Yes ____ No ____

3. If yes, what type of gender training did you receive? (Circle the appropriate answer)

A. Gender Awareness
B. Gender Awareness and Analysis
C. Other _____

4. How many staff at your organization have had gender training?

5. How many of these staff are at the management level?

6. How many of these staff are at the support level?

7. How many of these staff are at the field staff level?

8. Have you ever attended a training (such as PRA) where gender was included in the sessions?

G. FURTHER ASSISTANCE

1. How can CURE assist you in your gender activities?

	very helpful		somewhat helpful		not helpful
training	1	2	3	4	5
videos	1	2	3	4	5
discussions	1	2	3	4	5
workshops	1	2	3	4	5
talks	1	2	3	4	5
policies	1	2	3	4	5
guidance in policy formation	1	2	3	4	5
project monitoring and evaluation	1	2	3	4	5

2. In order to ensure that gender is integrated into your programmes/projects, what do you consider to be important activities

	very important		somewhat important		not important
more women at management level	1	2	3	4	5
more women at field staff level	1	2	3	4	5
gender training to field staff	1	2	3	4	5
gender training to management staff	1	2	3	4	5

3. What are the main gender issues or challenges in your work?

4. What are the main gender issues or challenges in your organisation?

Appendix 3: Discussion Group Guideline Questions

1. What is your understanding of development? Define it and draw a picture of it.

2. What are some of Malawi's cultural traditions pertaining to gender?

3. Do you think that culture is changing in Malawi? How? Why?

4. What are some of the attitudes that men have about women in Malawi?

5. What are some of the attitudes that women have about men in Malawi?

6. Is gender equality important in your projects? In which projects is gender equality important?

7. What are the gender cross-cutting issues in the following areas: political, legal, social, economic, environmental, agricultural, education, and culture?

8. What is the difference between a women in development (WID) approach and a gender and development (GAD) approach? How would WID and GAD projects differ?

9. What are the advantages of being a man or being a woman in Malawi?

10. What are the disadvantages of being a man or being a woman in Malawi?

11. What kind of jobs do women traditionally perform?

12. What kind of jobs do men traditionally perform?

13. How are traditional roles of men and women reinforced through the process of socialization?

14. How will some of the negative attitudes that men and women have about each other impact on their projects?

15. What do you think is the best way to address gender issues in your organizations?

Appendix 4: Semi-structured Interview Questions

A. FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FROM THE CONGOMA SITUATION ANALYSIS

1. Are you familiar with the CONGOMA Situational Analysis on Gender that was conducted from July until September 1997?

2. Were you involved in this CONGOMA study? In what capacity? Were you interviewed? Did you attend the dissemination workshops? If so, what did you find most useful about the exercise?

3. Have you read the CONGOMA report? If so, did you find it useful?

4. If you have not read the CONGOMA report, do you think you will read it?

5. Do you know what the purpose of the CONGOMA gender situation analysis is? Do you think it applies to your organisation? Why or why not?

6. Does the report apply to your own work at this organisation? Why or why not?

B. ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

1. Some of the research that was conducted in the CONGOMA situation analysis provided information about how NGOs are structured organizationally. For example, the study indicated whether or not the NGOs had gender staff or a gender department.

2. Could you please give me an overview of how this organization is structured and the various positions that are held within this organization?

3. Does your organization have future plans of adopting a gender department and/or hiring staff to address gender concerns?

4. Do the staff members work independently or as a team on various activities? If so, what projects are conducted together as a team and which work is carried out independently? If not, what advantages and/or disadvantages do you see in working independently?

5. Are you an international or national NGO?

International NGOs:
On a scale of 1 - 5 can you indicate to me the extent to which the organization takes direction from the head office where 1 is little direction and 5 is a great deal of direction?

Can you give me some examples?

International NGOs and National NGOs:
Can you indicate the extent to which the organization takes direction from the national programme director using the scale of 1 - 5 where 1 is little direction and 5 is a great deal of direction? Can you give me some examples?

6. What is the female to male ration at your organization?

7. Why do you think there are more male staff members than female staff members?

8. What are some of the constraints that prevent women from attaining a position at your organization?

9. Are there specific positions within your organisation that are most likely to be occupied by women? Which ones?

C. PROJECT LEVEL

1. I am interested in learning about the projects you are currently carrying out at your organisation. Can you give me some background information on the types of projects your organisation is doing?

2. Which projects are you most directly involved in? What activities do you carry out in these projects?

3. Do any of your projects have a gender component? Which ones? Give examples.

4. You have listed the following projects .... that your organisation is involved in. Can you rank them according to the ones which most strongly have a gender component where 1 is the project with the most significant gender component? Why do you consider these projects to have the most significant gender components?

5. Do you think women and men participate equally in each of these projects. If so, how do you ensure that women and men participate? If not, what are some of the constraints that women or men face in the participation of projects?

6. Do women and men participate equally in all phases of the project cycle: planning, training, implementation and evaluation? If so, how do you ensure this? If not, which phases of the project cycle are women most likely to participate in? Which phases of the project cycle are men most likely to participate in? Why?

D. INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

1. Can you explain to me your understanding of gender?

2. Do you think gender concerns are relevant to organisations involved in NRM or environmental rehabilitation? Why or why not?

3. Much of the literature I have read about Malawi indicates that there are cultural barriers to gender equity. Can you explain these cultural barriers to me?

4. Have cultural norms and values been changing in Malawi? If they are changing can you offer some examples of how they are changing?

5. Are there additional changes that must be made in the way development is viewed to incorporate gender concerns. Why or why not? What are some of the changes that you think need to be made?

E. POLICY LEVEL

1. Does your organisation have a gender mandate?

2. If so, is gender indicated in your organisation's guiding principles? In your organisation's mission statement? In project proposals? In project reports?

3. Do you think that incorporating gender into you policies will have an impact on how projects are carried out? Why or why not?

4. Can you give me an example of how gender policies will translate into improved gender participation at the community level?

5. Can you give me an example of how gender policies will not have an impact on gender participation at the community level?

6. CONGOMA's situational analysis on gender is partly intended to facilitate the creation of a Gender Plan of Action for Malawi. Do you think this Plan of Action will have an impact on how your organisation is structured and/or how projects are carried out? Why or why not?

7. Who do you feel is most likely to benefit from a Gender Plan of Action: the NGOs themselves? NGO staff? Community members? Can you rank them according to who will benefit most from this Gender Plan of Action whereby 1 is the most likely to benefit.

8. Can you give me an example of how the Gender Plan of Action will facilitate greater gender equity at the NGO level and as well at the community level?

9. Overall, do you consider policies to be important for guiding your work? Why or why not?

F. PROCESS LEVEL: TRAINING

1. Have you ever received training in participatory development?

2. If so, what type of training did you receive? PRA? Training for transformation? Other?

3. How many training workshops have you attended?

4. Who offered these training exercises?

5. Do you think that all the staff members at your organisation have received relatively the same amount of training in participatory methods? If so, why? If not, who has received the most training?

6. Have you received gender training? If so, can you tell me about it? Who organised it? How useful was it?

7. CURE will be conducting a series of workshops on participatory training and gender training for NGO staff beginning in January 1998.

8. Are you interested in receiving more training in participatory methods and/or gender sensitisation? Which training do you desire the most?

9. What information do you intend to gain from participatory training? What are your specific needs?

10. What information would you like to gain from gender training?

11. How do you feel participatory and/or gender training will affect your work? What skills do you foresee this training offering you to conduct your work?

12. Is there any specific information you would like me to bring back to CURE to indicate your concerns or needs regarding participatory and gender training?

13. Would you be interested in CURE assisting in programme and project development with this NGO regarding gender sensitisation? In what programmes and projects specifically?

14. Are you interested in having CURE evaluate your projects in order to assist in the development of a gender-sensitive programme and project framework? In what specific programmes and projects?

15. What actions do you feel are necessary to improve gender participation in CBNRM

projects? Can you prioritise these actions for me?

16. What role do you individually feel you can play in gender sensitisation at the NGO level?

17. What role do you feel you can play in encouraging greater gender participation in CBNRM?

18. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make now that we have concluded the semi-structured interview questions?

CONCLUSION

Thank you for participating in this interview. The information gained here today will remain anonymous. Your name will not be used in any of the reports written unless your permission is first obtained. This information will be used to provide feedback to CONGOMA regarding the Gender Situation Analysis and to CURE for planning of training sessions. The data I am collecting for these interviews will be used for my Ph.D. dissertation and a summary of the findings will be submitted to all organisations that participated in the process. It is expected that this information will improve capacity building of NGOs and CBOs to address gender concerns in Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) projects. Your time is greatly appreciated.

Appendix 5: Schedule of Research Activities

ACTIVITY	DATE	LOCATION
Preliminary Visit to Malawi (document review, meet with contact organization	June 1996 - Dec. 1996	Malawi
Literature Review	April - July 1997	University of Guelph
Preparation for field work, preparation of methodology and methods	July - Sept. 1997	University of Guelph
Field work (SSI)	Sept.1997 - June 1998	Malawi
Field work (Participant Observation)	Sept.1997 - Sept.1998	Malawi
Field work (Document Review)	Sept.1997 - Sept.1998	Malawi
Analysis of Findings	July - Nov. 1998	Malawi and University of Guelph
Additional Literature Review	Nov. - Dec. 1998	University of Guelph
Summary of Findings	December 1998	University of Guelph
First Draft	December 1998	University of Guelph
Second Draft	April 1999	University of Guelph
Final Write-up	May - June 1999	University of Guelph
Final Committee Review	June - July 1999	University of Guelph
Defence	August 1999	University of Guelph

Appendix 6: Ranking Exercises

I. GENDER-RELATED PROJECTS

Which of the following projects has the most significant gender component. Please rank the following projects/activities based on what you think has the most important gender component where **1 has the most important gender component and 10 has the least important gender component.**

A. borehole drilling _____
B. soil conservation _____
C. nutrition _____
D. beekeeping _____
E. sanitation _____
F. poultry keeping _____
G. brick making _____
H. agriculture _____
I. AIDS education _____
J. tree nurseries _____

Appendix 7: Documents Reviewed

Examples of National Action Plans included:

1. The Government of Malawi Gender Plan of Action, and
2. The NGO Gender Plan of Action.

Additional documents reviewed included:

1. CURE Gender Awareness and Analysis Training Reports,
2. CURE In-House Gender Session Reports, CURE Gender Directory 1996,
3. CURE Gender Directory 1998,
4. CURE Directory of NGOs involved in NRM in Malawi 1997,
5. CURE Assessment Report of Gender Issues in Community Participation in NRM Activities,
6. CURE report on the Results of a S.W.O.T (Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities Framework), Analysis and a Presentation of Community/Village Action Plans, and CURE's Report on NGO Capacity Enhancement of Gender Participation in NRM in Malawi, 1997.

Documents reviewed from the Co-ordinating body for all NGOs in Malawi (CONGOMA) included:

1. Gender Situation Analysis Among NGOs in Malawi Report (1997), and
2. CONGOMA Three Year Gender and Development Programme for NGOs in Malawi Project Proposal (1997).

Documents provided from other ENGOs in Malawi included:

1. Save the Children Fund's Report on the Efforts in Reducing the Gender Gap in Science and Technology, and
2. World Vision International's Report on Gender and Development: A Critical Reflection on WVM Efforts in Integrating Women in Development for the Past 10 years, 1993.

Four ENGOs provided copies of the Gender Policies which were also reviewed. ENGO Gender Policies were received from:

1. Christian Service Committee of the Churches of Malawi (CSC),
2. Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief (CPAR),
3. Human Rights Artists Club (HURAC), and
4. World Vision International.

Appendix 8: NGOs Involved in Discussion Groups

- Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief (CPAR),
- Youth Empowerment for Civic Education (YECE),
- Malawi Foundation,
- Youth Development and Advancement Organization,
- Youth Action in Social Advocacy (YASA),
- Rights Consciousness Youth Organization,
- Youth-Watch Society,
- Concerned Youth of Malawi (CAYO),
- Children's Development,
- Action Aid (AA),
- Malawi Fresh Water Project (MFWP),
- Environmental Concern,
- Paper Making Education Trust (PAMET),
- Save the Children - Malawi,
- Nkhomano Centre for Development,
- Greenline Movement,
- Co-ordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment (CURE), and
- Association for Progressive Women (APW).