4 | The Harvard Framework

Introduction

The Harvard Framework was one of the earliest attempts to apply gender analysis in a structured way to development activities. It was developed at the Harvard Institute for International Development in the USA, working in collaboration with the WID office at USAID. It is fully explained in Overholt *et al.* (1985) *Gender Roles in Development Projects*. This framework belongs to the earliest phase of interest in gender, which concentrated on increasing the recognition of women's role in economic development by focusing on efficiency considerations. Not surprisingly, therefore, it emphasises women's productive role.

Basic principles

The focus of the framework is on access to and control of resources, emphasising the importance of economic considerations in working towards gender equity. It allows planners and development workers to map the range of **activities** engaged in by men and women, to assess their respective **access and control** of the resources needed for these activities, and to identify **influencing factors**. There is also a **project cycle analysis**, consisting of a checklist of questions to use when assessing proposals or interventions in terms of their sensitivity to gender issues.

The framework should be used as a starting point for a detailed analysis of the ways in which the formulation and interpretation of policy, the design of a project or programme, or daily organisational practices (both formal and informal) can lead to and reinforce gender discrimination and stereotyping. The four components of the framework are the activity profile, the access and control profile, the set of influencing factors, and the project cycle analysis. Although the opportunity to modify the categories of analysis is important, it should be remembered that the framework can never capture the full complexity of the circumstances to which it is applied; it merely helps to clarify the differentiated impacts and implications for women and men and girls and boys.

In the following sections, the Harvard framework is presented first with the original categories from Overholt *et al.*,[5] and then with two examples of how it can be adapted, the first looking at an activity profile and an access and control profile of staff and students in a teachers' college, the second at an access and control profile of staff in BRAC schools in Bangladesh as contrasted with those in government schools.

Activity profile

In its original form, the Harvard Framework identified activities as either productive or reproductive. As explained in chapter 2, Caroline Moser (1993) later added a third category: community activity. She divided this into community management (largely female) and community politics (largely male). Subsequently, the term 'triple role' for women became common.

Completing the matrix shown in Table 4.1 allows for the identification of all relevant productive, reproductive, and community tasks carried out by women and men separately, and answers the question: Who does what? The categories 'men' and 'women' can be broken down into male child, female child, or into further sub-categories based on ethnicity, age, or class, for example, or by location, such as home, school, or community. The first case study below modifies these categories to suit the context being analysed (college, home, and community) but other categories may be appropriate, for example, relevant categorisations in a school setting may be formal and informal roles of teachers or pupils, or classroom and other (extra-curricular) roles of teachers, or management and teaching staff roles.

Table 4.1 Activity Profile

	Women / girls	Men / Boys
Productive		
Reproductive		
Community		

Adapted from March *et al.* 1999: 33

Table 4.2 Access and Control Profile

	Access		Control	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Resources				
Land				
Equipment				
Labour				
Production				
Reproduction				
Capital				
Education / training				
Benefits				
Outside income				
Assets ownership				
In-kind goods (food, clothing, shelter, etc.)				
Education				
Political power / prestige				
Other				

Source: Overholt 1985:12

Access and control profile

The access and control profile is divided into two categories: resources and benefits. It allows for the detailed listing of the resources available to men and women, and identifies who has access to them, who controls them, and who controls the benefits that arise from their use. This is a helpful distinction because all too often projects have focused only on ensuring access for women or marginalised groups, and have ignored the issue of who controls them (and the subsequent outputs).

Table 4.3 Influencing factors

Influencing factors	Constraints	Opportunities
Community norms, cultural beliefs, economic factors, organisational practices, etc.	Lack of mobility, early marriage, poverty, lack of political will, etc.	Government priorities, lobbying by women's groups, externally funded projects, etc.

Adapted from March *et al.* 1999: 35

Influencing factors

This allows for the identification of factors which influence who has access to and control of resources.

By identifying constraints, we are better able to look for opportunities which will facilitate a more equal sharing of resources and more involvement in development projects, and perhaps in this way increase income and well-being. An example of this in an educational context is provided in Table 4.8.

The concept of practical and strategic gender needs can easily be mapped onto the above profiles, as is done in Table 4.4 with the activity profile.

Table 4.4 Activity profile and gender needs

Roles	Women	Men	Gender needs met	Gender needs met
Productive				
Reproductive				
Community				

Project cycle analysis

This consists of a series of questions designed to help examine a project proposal or intervention using sex-disaggregated data and capturing the different effects of social change on men and women. The full version is not provided here but is available in its original form in Overholt *et al.* (1985) and in *A Guide to Gender-Analysis Frameworks* (pp. 36–8).

In an educational context, this may be of use with projects designed to improve some aspect of the educational system, for example, to increase the number of female head teachers in schools, or to increase community involvement in local schools (and ways in which women's involvement can be assured).

Table 4.5 Key topics for questions on project intentions
Women's dimension in project identification
Assessing women's needs
Defining general project objectives
Identifying possible negative effects
Women's dimension in project design
Project impact on women's activities
Project impact on women's access and control
Women's dimension in project implementation
Personnel
Organisational structures
Operations and logistics
Finances
Flexibility
Women's dimension in project evaluation
Data requirements
Data collection and analysis

Source: Overholt *et al.* 1985: 13–15

Applications to educational settings

The Harvard Framework can be modified to facilitate the gender analysis of structures and practices within educational organisations. As the following case study from Nigeria shows, it can reveal discrimination and stereotyping which exists either in formally sanctioned procedures or in routine daily practices. Both limit access and control of resources (including decision making) by different groups. It is therefore a tool that contributes to gender mainstreaming and to supporting equal opportunities and staff-development policies.

Application of the Harvard Framework to an organisational setting allows for a deeper understanding of the gendered nature of the organisation than can be revealed by basic statistics. It can, if done in collaboration with staff, lead to awareness raising, discussion of the causes and consequences of the under-representation of women, and possible changes in policy or practice.

The first case study is an analysis of a teacher training college in Nigeria. It uses an activity profile (examining the division of roles and responsibilities of both staff and students in the college), an access and control profile (for staff only), and a chart detailing the factors which are likely to have contributed to differentiated staff activity and access and control, together with the constraints and opportunities for change. It has been compiled with information gathered for a Ph.D. thesis. Although not included as part of the original research design, the researcher has used it to clarify key concepts and uses.

The second case study is taken from the BRAC Non Formal Education Programme (NFPE) in Bangladesh, with an access and control profile for teachers in BRAC NFPE schools being compared with that of teachers in the government school system. The same comparison could be done for pupils. This comparative dimension provides an illuminating analysis of the extent to which BRAC does in fact provide a girl-friendly environment compared with government schools. The actual categories chosen for the analysis are dependent on a group's (or team's) particular aims for the analysis and the context within which they are engaged.

Case Study 1: a Nigerian teacher training college

This is a case study of a teacher training college in Nigeria. In 2002, it had more than 4000 full-time students, 48 per cent of whom were female. The college is divided into Schools, each headed by a Dean. It is run by a senior management team headed by the Provost. It has a Governing Council which oversees policy in the college, and an Academic Board, which is the decision-making body for academic affairs. All teaching and administrative posts are appointed by the Provost (with the exception of the Deans who are usually elected).

Even a superficial glance reveals a highly gendered organisation: female students and female staff are in the majority, but men hold almost all positions of responsibility. Most of the female staff (approximately 65 per cent of the total) work in secretarial, support, and junior teaching roles. Female lecturers are clustered in a few subjects, in particular home economics, fine arts, and education. This general impression suggests that a structured gender analysis of activities and roles among both staff and students would be very illuminating. Given that the gendered nature of organisations stems from behaviour that is informal, unofficial, and largely not commented on verbally or in documentation, it is important here to distinguish between formal and informal roles and responsibilities. The following activity profile is therefore divided into formal and informal roles and responsibilities of staff and students.

Activity profile

This should be divided into appropriate categories: here into male and female staff and students. If the purpose or focus of the gender analysis was different, the categories might also have been different: for example, academic staff and administrative staff, or management and teaching staff.

Formal roles and responsibilities

Staff: the Governing Council consists of eleven members, of whom only two are women. The senior management team responsible for policy, finance, personnel, and administration is all male. Only one of the Deans is female, and she found herself in this position by default, as no alternative (male) candidate was available. She heads the School of Vocational Education, which offers agriculture, home economics, fine arts, and business studies. Out of more than 30 Heads of Department, only six are female. Most of the administrative staff, who work to the orders of senior staff, are female. In addition to their teaching role, female lecturers serve as matrons in the student hostels. For men, the main additional role to teaching is chairing committees. Only two of the Standing Committees – those concerned with student discipline and advice – are headed by women, but almost all have female secretaries.

Students: within the student body, presidents of the Students' Union have traditionally been male and their vice-presidents female. The financial secretary and the treasurer have also usually been female; it seems that they are trusted more by the student body. Most student clubs and committees are headed by men.

Informal roles and responsibilities

Staff: in the daily life of the college, outside their formal teaching role, women carry out duties that are primarily an extension of their domestic and caring functions in the home, that is, those that involve the servicing of men. In staff meetings, the secretaries are always women, and women staff serve the refreshments, even when junior male staff are present and could carry out this duty. The chairpersons are always men. Women staff act *in loco parentis* with regard to students, offering advice and counselling. The newly established counselling centre is headed by a woman.

Male members of staff play sports: football, basketball, and volleyball. Only two female staff members play sports regularly (volleyball and handball). Male staff are much more likely to have opportunities to interact and network in ways which give them an advantage over women in terms of informal access to information and to those in positions of authority. This may come about because they are able to spend more time on the college campus than women, whose day may be tightly organised around domestic duties.

Students: outside their studies, male students usually play sport or engage in income generating activities; alternatively they are involved in family matters, for example, receiving guests, settling disputes, disciplining juniors. Again, male students may spend time sharing information in the student cafeteria after classes, while female students are obliged to return home.

These gender-specific roles and responsibilities can be captured in a Harvard **activity chart** (Table 4.6). This has been modified to distinguish between organisational (productive) roles, home (both reproductive and productive), and community roles, as it is clear that in the Nigerian context for both women and men their roles in the home and the community are related to the roles that they take on, or are given, in the workplace. As explained above, it may be that other categorisations are more relevant in other settings. Before and after the college day, women usually have to cook, do domestic work, and take care of children. After work, they may have to take their children to the hospital or do some farming. Some male staff give private tutorials for extra money after the college day (and sometimes also during working hours), or farm, engage in local politics, or sit on local government committees. Activities and responsibilities outside the college have an impact on what women and men do during college hours.

Table 4.6 Activity profile of staff and student roles in the college

	Female staff	Male staff	Female students	Male students
College roles	Teaching Taking minutes of meetings, acting as committee secretaries Some heads of department, secretaries, and cleaners	Teaching Chairing committees Senior management Most heads of department	Serving refreshments and entertaining guests at special occasions (graduation, etc.)	Chairing student committees and clubs Representing students in the Students' Union and as class representatives
Home roles	Domestic duties, caring for children Farming	Private tutoring Farming Running businesses such as 'business centres' and shops	Helping with domestic chores Some help in farming and marketing	Engaging in income generating activities Disciplining juniors Farming
Community roles	Organising / supporting social events (births, weddings, funerals)	Visiting friends Political activity Leisure activities	Limited public role Obedient and respectful attitudes to the community	Help in maintaining law and order

Table 4.7 Access and control profile for college staff

	Access		Control	
Resources	**Female staff**	**Male staff**	**Female staff**	**Male staff**
Capital	No (only for top management)	Yes (top management)	No	Yes (if top management)
Budgets	Only for heads of dept. and dean	Only for heads of dept. and above		Yes (if head of dept or above)
Equipment (vehicles, telephones, etc.)	Very limited (senior management only)	For senior management	Very limited	Yes (if senior management)
Training / staff development (conferences, courses, etc.)	Yes (but less likely to secure funds)	Yes	Limited by family obligations (not free to travel)	Yes
Time	Limited by domestic responsibilities	Yes	Limited by domestic responsibilities	Yes
Curriculum	Less choice of which courses to teach	Given first choice of which courses to teach	Only if head of dept. (but males may still insist)	Head of dept. and above
Support (secretarial, etc.)	Limited (only heads of depts. and above)	If in senior position	Limited (only if senior management)	Yes (if senior management)
Benefits				
Loans (for car, housing, furniture)	Limited, dependent on rank	Yes	No	Yes
External income (tutoring, etc.)	Limited opportunity	Yes	No	Yes
Political power / prestige	Very limited (men are closer to senior management)	Yes	No	Yes
Promotion	Severely constrained by opportunity; vulnerable to discrimination	Yes	No	Yes
Perks, legal or illegal (e.g. bonus payments, sexual favours from students)	Not close enough to senior management for trips and discretionary payments	Yes	No	Yes

Access and control profile

Leading on from the activity profile, the access and control profile shown in Table 4.7 covers staff only in the college, but a similar one could be done for students. The same categories of resources and benefits have been kept as in the original framework, but the sub-categories have been altered by the researcher to suit the college context. If the Harvard framework was being used in a participatory mode, a brainstorming session could be used to identify the most relevant sub-categories for analysis.

Resources

It can be seen from Table 4.7 that the lack of representation of women in senior positions in a male-dominated organisation has a considerable impact on both their access to and control of resources. Women staff may have access to resources in principle (scholarships, for example) and hence to the benefits, but they are not in control of these resources, and therefore the extent to which they enjoy the benefits is likely to be limited by comparison with men.

Behind the formal display of resources and benefits as revealed in the chart, other informal forces are at work: the more subtle aspects of the 'glass ceiling' that prevents women from moving upward. These are not easily portrayed in a table, but the table itself can be used as a tool to stimulate discussion of the issues in greater depth. Discussion among staff based on the activity and access and control profiles will bring a greater understanding of the barriers that women face, and perhaps generate a willingness by senior management to introduce mechanisms to reduce these. For example, in the case of promotion, female lecturers usually have to do more than men if they are to succeed (to publish more, to sit on more committees, for example). In some cases their promotion or appointment to a senior position is blocked on some excuse. The male senior management knows that women are less likely than men to protest or be difficult if their application for promotion is not successful. The male-dominated culture means that senior management prefers to promote men, so that their meetings can be conducted more at ease.

Even men in junior positions are better placed than women to lobby for resources or preferential treatment. They are more likely to be given access to senior management and will be more confident about confronting them on issues. Female lecturers who complain about unfair treatment may find their way forward blocked. Although clear procedures exist on promotions, the Provost (always a man) can manipulate them with ease. It is worth noting that this college is also subject to much ethnic tension, as is the state of Nigeria currently. Gender is not seen as problematic in the same way as ethnicity, so decisions may be taken to accommodate ethnic sensitivities rather than gender sensitivities. This is an example of where ethnicity cuts across gender and therefore needs to be incorporated into the analysis, if a comprehensive and accurate picture of the gender dynamics of the organisation is to be provided.

Benefits

A category of benefit that emerged from the gender analysis was 'perks'. While some perks may be official, (*per diems*, travel allowances, etc.) they may not be given out equitably. Others perks are unofficial. These unofficial benefits were only included in the chart because the researcher had investigated informal as well as formal activities and roles in the college. As a result, the further sub-category of 'perks' was added to capture those socially unacceptable and hidden features which may not emerge from a superficial overview, and which may be an embarrassment for participants in a workshop setting to talk about openly. In this college, a particular hidden 'benefit' for male lecturers and male students is access to female students (and possibly also male students). Sexual harassment is rife, and female students are often coerced into relationships with male lecturers, or give in to sexual advances because once under a lecturer's 'protection', other male lecturers and students will leave her alone. There have been incidents in the college of male students beating, and sometimes raping, female students, and of male lecturers demanding sexual favours of female students, sometimes using violence or the threat of violence. In the case of female students entering into sexual relationships with male lecturers (in a cultural environment where female sexual activity outside marriage poses great risk and can even lead to the death penalty), they do so not for money but for protection, as some lecturers use their position of power to intimidate female students with the threat that they will fail them in their exams if they do not give in. A female student who rejects a male lecturer's advances may be victimised with a rigged exam result or may even be prevented from sitting an exam. A student who makes an accusation against a lecturer will be expelled if the case is not proven, so complaints are few. There are increasing cases of lecturers marrying their students, but it is not clear whether coercion or the threat of victimisation plays a part in this.

Table 4.8 identifies some of the factors influencing gender relations in the college. From these, opportunities can be identified, which in turn can lead to the creation of a set of strategies and an action plan. Naila Kabeer's Social Relations Approach (chapter 7) could also be used effectively here.

An action plan could be produced by the group involved in doing the analysis shown in Table 4.8, taking one or more items listed in the four boxes. Using an example of a participatory tool that is featured in chapter 9, the female lecturers could decide to take action to address one of the most blatant sources of sex discrimination: academic promotion. This is listed as a 'political' influencing factor in the 'constraints' column. At a meeting of all interested female faculty, they could discuss and agree on how to tackle this inequity (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.8 Influencing factors, constraints, and opportunities

Influencing factors	Constraints	Opportunities
Socio-economic	Limited access to education for girls Early marriage Male exploitation of staff and students affected by poverty Gender specific roles / structuring Men can spend more time on college tasks; women have domestic and household tasks	Drive for UPE Awareness raising Pressure from international community for gender mainstreaming in all education policies and programmes Pressure to produce sex-disaggregated statistics on educational and economic participation Recent research into gender and education
Political	Men block women's access to power; senior management is all male Discriminatory promotions practice Limited participation of women in decision-making hierarchy Lack of gender oriented policies or equal-opportunities policy in college	Laws exist but need to be enforced College exposure to international scrutiny via funding programmes Government exposed to international pressure to implement gender equality goals Pressure for more women staff in senior positions More successful women in public life and business Human rights agenda Women's advocacy organisations
Cultural	Women's place is in the home Women's role is to serve men Early marriage Men not women are leaders Women seen as inferior / less intelligent Reinforcement of male domination through college Religious beliefs Women as mothers and carers Limited interaction between women and men	NGO involvement in education Increased education Greater acceptance of women in economic role Curriculum reform Research on institutional bias and stereotyping has raised awareness

Table 4.9 Women academics' action plan

Identified objective	Desired outcome	Agreed actions	Who organises	Resources required	Timescale	Who monitors
To pursue equality in academic promotions	Equal or greater numbers of females promoted than males	1 Write to senior management 2 Lobby the females on the Governing Council and Staff Union for support 3 Ask the female Dean to take up their cause 4 Speak out at academic meetings 5 Seek advice on how best to complete their applications 6 If refused promotion, ask for written reasons why 7 If more junior men promoted, ask on what criteria	Elected spokes-persons or a committee or working group	Time Some travel expenses	Until next promotion round	Committee or working group

Case Study 2: BRAC in Bangladesh[6]

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is an internationally renowned NGO. Its mission statement as shown on its website is as follows:

> *BRAC works with people whose lives are dominated by extreme poverty, illiteracy, disease and other handicaps. With multifaceted development interventions, BRAC strives to bring about positive change in the quality of life of the poor people of Bangladesh. BRAC firmly believes and is actively involved in promoting human rights, dignity and gender equity through poor people's social, economic, political and human capacity building.*

BRAC works through the provision of financial services to the landless poor and marginal farmers, education and training, healthcare and family planning, and community organizing. The main vehicle of its education programme has been the Non Formal Education Programme (NFPE) for eight to ten year-old children, followed later by the Kishor Kishori schools for 11–14 year-olds. BRAC currently has 34,000 schools, mostly in rural areas, which enrol 1.1m children. The NFPE offers a three or sometimes four-year programme. Seventy per cent of pupils in BRAC schools are girls, and 97 per cent of teachers are female; this in a country where the enrolment rate of girls in government primary schools is only 50 per cent, and only 19 per cent of female primary school teachers are female. Eighty-five per cent of rural women are illiterate. At least 90 per cent of children who attend BRAC schools complete the course, compared with 35 per cent in government schools. The number of children who have already graduated from BRAC schools is 2.4m.

The 1997 BRAC annual report refers to four kinds of gender transformation through BRAC schools:

- changes taking place in students as part of a gender-sensitive curriculum and co-curricular activities;
- changes taking place in female staff as a result of values within the BRAC organisation;
- changes taking place among teachers by virtue of their new social roles;
- and those among mothers who come to parents' meetings.

One of its stated aims is to alter the relationship between men and women so that it is more equitable, and to empower women to negotiate their gender needs with men. Engaging in a gender analysis of the NFPE programme will allow us to see whether this aim is being met.

There is insufficient information in the documentation available to complete an activity profile following the Harvard Framework. However, such an exercise based on information from those involved in the programme would provide invaluable insights into, for example, the way in which boys and girls interact with each other in the school, the extent to which the teacher raises awareness of gender issues among pupils, and how parents participate

in school meetings (especially as it is usually mothers who attend). Both the activity profile and the access and control profile can also be applied to the administration of BRAC, to establish the extent to which the organisation itself is gender-sensitive. Zeeshan Rahman (1998) suggests that this has not been an easy process: despite considerable efforts and fast-tracking of promising young women into management positions, senior positions are occupied mainly by men and there is a male management culture which de-motivates many female staff.

Access and control profile

The chart shown in Table 4.10 provides a gender-sensitive access and control profile only for teachers in BRAC schools and government primary schools. The categories under 'resources' and 'benefits' are not the same as those selected for the previous case study; they are based on the information provided in the documentation. Again, in a participatory mode they could be identified through a brainstorming process.

This exercise is useful for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of both the BRAC and the government school programme. There are strengths in each, but on the whole for women, BRAC provides a more supportive working environment, with good quality materials and regular training. For women, in particular in rural areas, it provides a source of income and status not usually available. The one-teacher school also offers a friendly and conducive environment for girls. However, the limited training available, the isolation of the teacher from other professionals, and the narrow curriculum present some disadvantages of the BRAC model. So, despite the poor professionalism and accountability which characterises government schools, most female as well as male teachers would prefer to work there, for the higher and more secure salary and the higher status.

Sara Longwe's framework (see chapter 5) could also be used effectively here to determine the extent to which BRAC's claims translated into practice. It would reveal increased access to good quality education for girls, increased conscientisation and participation of women, whether as mothers, teachers, or BRAC staff, and of students in terms of the increased self-esteem and self-confidence of girls and greater respect by boys.

Since 1999, BRAC has introduced a new programme: the Adolescent Peer Organized Network for Girls (APON), which provides girls with training in livelihood skills, leadership development, and raising awareness. This programme trains them in peer-education skills in addition to skills that enable them to organise and facilitate groups. The aim is to develop these girls as community leaders and role models, capable of undertaking community-level campaigns and mobilising adolescents to have a voice in their communities. Awareness raising sessions deal with issues such as abuse and exploitation, birth registration, gender discrimination, their own health, and social and environmental issues that affect them. Sara Longwe's framework could be effectively applied here too, to ascertain the extent to which this programme is leading to real empowerment of women.

Commentary

The two case studies above have shown how this framework can be the starting point for gender-sensitive organisational analysis. In the first case it was used by a researcher as part of the process of conceptualising and categorising his findings; in the second it was applied by the author of this book to a set of documents on BRAC. The framework can, however, be used by any group: by senior management, members of an academic department or a personnel office, or a group of teachers or students, for example. It can be used at the start, in the middle, or at the end of the analysis process. It can be used to assess equal opportunities for both staff and students, not only on the basis of gender but also of race, ethnicity, religion, and so on. It will be particularly effective where sex-disaggregated data are available; if such data are not available, the process of working through the framework may encourage managers to produce them.

In the Nigerian case, the researcher decided to use the categories of female and male staff, and female and male student. He could have decided to separate staff into academic or administrative, or senior management and lecturers, on the grounds that their gendered experiences would be very different. As the analysis and the key features emerged, he could have decided to engage the staff and/or students in a participatory exercise to look at these different categories. In the BRAC case, the strengths of BRAC from both the teacher and the pupil perspectives become apparent when BRAC schools are contrasted with government schools. However, a group of BRAC administrators, facilitators, or teachers might like to look for further opportunities to address gender issues either at the level of staff or of pupils, in which case they would use different categories; they might decide to examine the continuing dominance of men on senior management, for example.