

GENDERING AGRICULTURAL AID

An Analysis of Whether International Development Assistance Targets Women and Gender

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Gender-based inequalities constrain women's ability to participate in efforts to enhance agricultural production and reduce poverty and food insecurity. To resolve this, development organizations have targeted women and more recently "mainstreamed" gender within their agricultural aid programs. Through an analysis of agricultural-related development aid, we examine whether funded agricultural projects have increasingly targeted women and/or gender. Our results show that the number of agricultural aid projects and the dollar amounts targeting women/gender increased between 1978 and 2003. However, the increase was modest and, as a percentage of all agricultural development aid, has declined since the late 1990s. Significantly, this decline occurs at a time when there are an increasing number of women engaged in agriculture. Our findings suggest that the rhetoric of gender mainstreaming outstrips efforts to develop projects aimed at women and gender inequality and that the concept may be being used to legitimize a decline in focusing explicitly on women.

Keywords: *development; poverty; practice/applied/policy*

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After two decades of declining foreign aid to agriculture in developing countries, there is a renewed impetus among governments and international bodies to support international development aid for agriculture (Mehra and Rojas 2008; World Bank 2007). The renewed interest in how food is produced and distributed is, in part, a response to the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). One of the eight MDGs is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015 by increasing incomes, particularly among women. In addition, many of the gains made over the past decade against hunger and poverty in developing countries were reversed during the second half of the 2000s due to market instability and food and financial crises. These crises are forcing policy makers and aid donors to reconsider the key role that agricultural aid plays in addressing problems of poverty and food insecurity (Mehra and Rojas 2008; World Bank, FAO, and International Fund for Agricultural Development 2009).

At the same time, gender-based inequalities constrain women's ability to fully participate in efforts to enhance agricultural production and reduce poverty and food insecurity (World Bank, FAO, and International Fund for Agricultural Development 2009). Agricultural development policies have long failed to recognize gender-based patterns—the roles and functions performed by both men and women—and instead assumed male dominance in agricultural communities. The roles of women in agriculture largely went unacknowledged until the 1970s. Since then, feminist researchers have demonstrated that women's paid and unpaid labor in the production of food and fiber is critical (Boserup 1970; Carr 2008; Momsen 2004). Women not only “grow food, sell food, buy food, prepare food” (Bunch and Mehra 2008, 2), but are also increasingly involved in agricultural businesses that contribute to the broader agricultural economy of developing countries and the global world of commercial agriculture (Momsen 2004). It is estimated that women are responsible for producing half of the world's food and the majority—between 60 to 80 percent—of food crops in developing countries (FAO n.d.). Yet, women often lack access to, or control over, key agricultural resources, such as land and credit, and are overlooked in agricultural development projects (Carr 2008; Hurni and Osman-Elasha 2009; Sachs 1996).

In an effort to reduce poverty and improve food security, development organizations—under pressure from feminists—began in the 1970s to target women within their agricultural aid policies and programs and from the late 1980s to “mainstream” gender. Yet, critics argue that mainstreaming has been turned into a public management strategy by development bureaucracies focused on processes rather than results. That is, bureaucracies are willing to implement mainstreaming at the rhetorical and procedural level

but not at the practical level, which would have more radical implications for gender relations. Moreover, some feminists are concerned that the concept of gender mainstreaming has encouraged development organizations to discard projects and programs aimed specifically at women.

This raises a series of questions: Have agricultural aid projects in fact increasingly targeted women over the past three decades? Have agricultural aid projects increasingly focused on gender? Have the types of agricultural aid projects targeting women and/or gender changed over time? This article addresses these questions through an analysis of agricultural-related aid contained in the AidData data set, the most comprehensive aid data currently available for official development assistance (ODA).

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

The landscape of development assistance is made up of a wide range of actors, including governments and intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private investors. Historically, the foundation of development has been ODA, defined as “flows of official financing administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as the main objective” (IMF 2003, 263). ODA has predominately been distributed via two avenues. The first is bilateral aid, whereby a donor country gives money directly to a developing country, and the second is multilateral aid, whereby wealthy donor countries give money to an organization that distributes funds to developing countries. ODA grew from an estimated US\$41.3 billion in 1974 to over US\$100 billion in 2005 (Kharas 2007).

In more recent years, there has also been an increase in private aid to developing countries from private foundations, nongovernmental organizations, universities, corporations, and religious groups. Since there is no mechanism for tracking private aid, estimates are extremely speculative, but Kharas (2007) estimates private aid at around US\$50 billion in 2005. In part private aid, particularly by NGOs, has grown in conjunction with the increasing popularity of so-called bottom-up approaches to development, that is, projects that purportedly integrate the needs and interests of local communities and governments, as opposed to top-down approaches associated with bilateral and multilateral aid. Development discourse and practice is now “awash with such terms as empowerment, decentralisation, [and] participatory development” (Kalipeni and Zulu 2002, 119). The growth in NGO involvement in aid also coincides with numerous countries adopting

neoliberal reforms, where the objective is a “reduction in state size and spending, a greater reliance on market mechanisms, and an increase in the role of civil society to provide social goods” (Noonan 2002, 220). The neoliberal turn, combined with an interest in bottom-up development strategies, has contributed to an increase in the number of NGOs receiving money from bilateral and multilateral donors over the past decade (Kharas 2007). The shift toward neoliberalism and the expansion of global capitalism has had a profound impact on the organization of agriculture globally, including the types of agricultural activities in which women are engaged throughout the world.

Women and Gender in Development

The 1970s proved to be a critical decade for changing the theory and practice of development programs. Women in development (WID) scholars pushed to have women included within the existing structures and paradigms of development assistance (Buvinić 1998; Cornwall 2003). Boserup’s (1970) classic study drew attention to the invisibility of women and the failure of national governments and international development agencies to incorporate women into their development initiatives. Boserup argued that foreign assistance was biased toward men because the prevailing wisdom was that women were not involved in productive economic activities such as agriculture, but were instead confined to the production of subsistence crops and food preparation within the home. The primary objective of Boserup and other WID scholars was to reform development programs to include women so that welfare, poverty, and equity issues related to women could be addressed (Peet and Hartwich 1999).

The efforts of WID were backed by the UN, which declared 1975 as International Women’s Year (IWY) and convened a world conference on the status of women to take place in Mexico City during that year. Following IWY, the UN declared 1975-1985 the Decade for Women. Buvinić explains that the IWY:

brought to world attention the concerns of women in industrialized and developing countries, assigned legitimacy to work on women’s issues in economic development, and enticed small but critical budget allocations from international development agencies with which to undertake work on the subject. (1998, 347)

After the conference in Mexico City there was a veritable explosion in women’s organizing and efforts by these women to set new political agendas

(Staudt 1997). In response, the UN and national governments, together with key development organizations, such as the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), sought to develop machineries that would integrate women into their development processes (Staudt 1997; World Bank, FAO, and International Fund for Agricultural Development 2009).

During the 1980s, however, the WID approach to development came under fire from scholars working within a gender and development (GAD) framework. GAD was a manifestation of both the rise of socialist feminism in the developed world and postcolonial feminism, which had emerged out of the dramatic growth of a Third World women's movement in the 1980s (Baden and Goetz 1997; Jaquette and Staudt 2006). These scholars rejected the "add women and stir" approach that targeted only women and focused solely on integrating women into the development process (Cornwall 2003, 1338). WID's universalist approach, they argued, ignored differences among women and failed to recognize that the goal of equality necessitated an approach that addressed the unequal power relationships between women *and* men (Jaquette and Staudt 2006; Prügl and Lustgarten 2006). To achieve equality, GAD asserted that gender relations should be the analytical and practical focus of development, with the objective of analyzing the socially assigned roles and responsibilities of women and men, the social relations between them, and the opportunities offered to each (Peet and Hartwich 1999; Rathgeber 1995).

In addition, GAD feminists critiqued the WID approach as merely a "Band-aid" that treated "the symptom (women's poverty) but not the illness (capitalist development)" (Jaquette and Staudt 2006, 25). The very premise of incorporating women into existing patriarchal and capitalist projects is viewed by GAD as inadequate since it fails to address the structural foundations of gender inequality and does little to empower women. In contrast, GAD's approach to development seeks to reexamine and challenge social, political, and economic structures problematizing the very global economic system that it believes subordinates women in its efforts to accumulate capital (Peet and Hartwich 1999).

Mainstreaming Gender but Losing Women?

A core part of what GAD began to advocate from 1985 forward was gender "mainstreaming." GAD proponents argued that projects aimed at women had failed to significantly influence policy—or politically and economically empower women—largely because such efforts had been "ghettoized" within women's units that were small, powerless, and underfunded (Jaquette and

Staudt 2006; Staudt 1997). With mainstreaming, the purpose was to have gender issues diffused throughout government and development bureaucracies, with gender integrated throughout all policies, programs, and practices.

The concept of “gender mainstreaming” became part of the development lexicon when it was officially adopted by the UN at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (Mehra and Gupta 2008). Mainstreaming was now viewed as the primary means to promote gender equality, and the Beijing Platform for Action provided the mandate to integrate a gender perspective throughout its policies and programs (Prügl and Lustgarten 2006). Within the UN system, gender mainstreaming is defined as:

a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (1997, 2)

Over the subsequent decade, governments and most major development institutions adopted the language of gender mainstreaming and gender equality (Moser and Moser 2005). It is now broadly recognized among donor agencies that to maximize the impact of development strategies, including agricultural strategies, on reducing poverty and improving food security, initiatives must be gender sensitive (Molyneux 2007; World Bank, FAO, and International Fund for Agricultural Development 2009).

Since the process of gender mainstreaming began, three major feminist critiques have emerged, leading some to argue that mainstreaming has at best met with limited success and at worst failed. First, some feminists argue that gender mainstreaming has been co-opted and efforts to institutionalize the concept turned a radical idea into a public management strategy (Prügl and Lustgarten 2006). Co-optation occurred because in order to facilitate its implementation and ensure its acceptance, the concept of gender had to be depoliticized and its radical content diluted (Baden and Goetz 1997). Subsequently, within the technocratic discourse, donors, policy makers, and consultants use the concept of gender in a descriptive manner with little effort to engage in an analysis of power relationships (Baden and Goetz 1997).

Second, feminists argue that the rhetoric of gender mainstreaming far outstrips action. Guidelines on gender equality in practice are frequently advisory, with few, if any, penalties for noncompliance. Therefore, from Molyneux’s (2007) perspective, the gap between policy and practice is unsurprising. Baden and Goetz (1997, 5) argue that this focus on process rather than ends is problematic because bureaucracies have become preoccupied

“with the minutiae of procedures at all levels, rather than clarity or direction about goals.” Since Beijing, evaluations and reports from Third World women indicate that processes continue to be prioritized over results. Furthermore, numerous studies, including from the European Commission, demonstrate that while most development institutions are cognizant of the importance of incorporating a gender perspective within their policies, this obligation is not always reflected in the allocation of resources and practices (Baden and Goetz 1997; Prügl and Lustgarten 2006; Wangui 2008).

Third, while a focus on gender does not inherently preclude initiatives targeted directly at women, some feminists argue that women’s interests are once again becoming invisible. GAD’s call to “bring back men” has allowed development institutions to shift their analytical focus away from women and in some cases even to deny the specific disadvantages faced by women and therefore “the radical policy implications of overcoming their disprivilege” (Razavi and Miller 1995, 41). Moreover, a key myth among development agencies and donors is that their task of establishing “gender awareness” is complete (Molyneux 2007). In other words, gender has been so thoroughly mainstreamed that there is little need for projects, programs, or policy units aimed at women. In fact, in many instances development agencies no longer want something to be viewed as a “women’s project” since such initiatives suggest that their efforts at mainstreaming have failed (Mukhopadhyay 2007).

Unfortunately, there are considerable obstacles to addressing these critiques. The very content and structure of bureaucratic organizations’ projects and policies are gendered in a manner that entails privileging men and disadvantaging women. For example, while gender constructs do change over time, they continue to reflect past legacies where instruments of power and privilege, such as property or political representation, were controlled by men rather than women (Staudt 1997). Within this institutional context, organizational analysts have demonstrated that the tendency is for bureaucrats to reproduce rather than transform gendered constructs (Staudt 1997). In addition, development bureaucracies, such as the World Bank, have their own macroeconomic and political priorities that make it consistently difficult for feminists to raise their concerns about women (Jaquette and Staudt 2006). Complicating this picture is the more recent trend discussed previously where private sector aid has dramatically increased, which can reduce coordinated efforts to incorporate gender equity initiatives in development.

Significantly too, as WID and GAD advocates become part of these bureaucratic structures, the tendency is for women and women’s organizations to become co-opted rather than empowered (Jaquette and Staudt 2006). Moreover, GAD feminists and postmodernists have critiqued “development”

and “women” as categories that are too totalizing and essentializing. Some feminists argue that these GAD and postmodern critiques have made it more difficult to advocate for policies on behalf of women, thereby contributing to a decline in development projects that explicitly target women.

Women in Agriculture

Today, the agriculture sector is complex, ranging from subsistence farmers eking out a living to multinational agribusinesses growing and marketing value-added products for local, national, and international markets (Bunch and Mehra 2008). Not surprisingly, the activities of women within this complex sector are also diverse. While a large proportion of smallholders and subsistence farmers are women, particularly in Africa, parts of Asia, and the Caribbean, women work as commercial farmers, traders, and rural entrepreneurs, as well as in agro-processing facilities and as wage and non-wage farm workers (Bock and Shortall 2006; Mehra and Rojas 2008; Momsen 2004; World Bank, FAO, and International Fund for Agricultural Development 2009).

Recent official statistics reveal an increase in women’s involvement in agriculture, from 39 percent in 1950 to 41 percent in 2007 (FAO 2007), with women making up a larger percentage of agricultural laborers than men in some regions. Specifically, in the Middle East (31 percent of women vs. 12.5 percent of men), South Asia (60.5 percent of women vs. 42.9 percent of men), and Sub-Saharan Africa (67.9 percent of women vs. 62.4 percent of men), women are the majority of agricultural laborers (World Bank, FAO, and International Fund for Agricultural Development 2009). The increase of women’s involvement also reflects the feminization of agriculture (FAO 2004). In part, the feminization of agriculture is due to a relative increase in the number of women overseeing small-scale agriculture in some areas (i.e., Africa, Southeast Asia, Mexico) as men increasingly migrate out of rural areas in search of better paying work (Bock and Shortall 2006; Chambers and Momsen 2007; Hurni and Osman-Elasha 2009). Hurni and Osman-Elasha (2009, 46) make the important point that “feminization does not represent an equalization of opportunities, but rather a further marginalization of small-scale farms, since many female heads of household are younger and less educated than male heads of household, have less land, less capital and less access to credit.” The feminization of agriculture is also the product of the pursuit of exports of nontraditional crops (e.g., vegetables, fruits, flowers) as a development strategy. The new jobs that have opened up in the fields and in the processing plants have disproportionately gone to women

(Momsen 2004). Thus, there is an increase in absolute terms in the number of women laboring in the agricultural export sector of developing countries.

METHOD

The data for this analysis are drawn from the AidData data set.¹ AidData is a Web-accessible database on development finance that includes a compilation of project-level information from all major bilateral and multilateral donors for the years 1973 to 2008. The data in this article include development assistance funded by bilateral and multilateral donors and implemented by NGOs. Our data set does not include private assistance. For each project, the data set includes, but is not limited to, donor and recipient countries, amount of money committed for the project, project title and description, and the year. A first step for this analysis was to obtain a subset of all agricultural development aid projects contained within AidData.²

Once this was accomplished, we selected a representative set of years for further coding and analysis. We chose specific years to correspond with key events, for example, UN's International Year of Women (1975), Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), and shifts in the academic literature (e.g., a shift from WID to GAD).³ In total, within the category of targeted vulnerable populations, we coded 5,834 projects from 10 years worth of agricultural development aid projects, spanning 1978 to 2003.⁴ We selected data from the years 1978, 1979, 1984, 1985, 1990, 1991, 1996, 1997, 2002, and 2003 and coded agricultural aid projects to identify which projects explicitly targeted populations of people that have been deemed vulnerable. We defined vulnerability as a high degree of exposure to risk, shocks, and stress and proneness to food insecurity (Ellis 2000). The categories within *targeted populations* are: disaster victims (e.g., flood, droughts, displaced populations), smallholders/farmers, women, marginalized populations (e.g., indigenous, landless), farmers, farm workers, other (e.g., children), and a category for all other projects that did not focus on a vulnerable population.⁵

We also coded projects for the *type of agricultural aid*. In particular, we created categories to capture concerns by scholars that agricultural aid has moved away from focusing on so-called first-generation problems (e.g., funding for infrastructure, research) to focusing on second-generation problems (e.g., rural poverty, environmental degradation) (see Eicher and Staatz 1998). Similarly, a finance category was included to be sensitive to concerns by gender scholars over the availability of credit or loans to women in agriculture (see Sachs 1996). Thus, the categories within *type of agricultural*

aid include: research/education/training (e.g., human capacity building), infrastructure (e.g., construction of roads, dams, irrigation), technology transfer or infusion, environment (e.g., deforestation), commodity production (e.g., cassava, fish), finance (e.g., credit and loans), and other, which captured any projects that did not fit within one of the preexisting variables.

Focusing on the project titles and project descriptions, we had two coders code every agriculture aid project for *targeted populations* and *type of agricultural aid*. If the codes assigned by the two coders were not in agreement, then the project was flagged for arbitration, at which time a third coder made a final decision regarding the most appropriate codes for the project. In addition, we conducted a qualitative analysis of all the project titles and descriptions that we identified as targeting women/gender. We coded these titles and descriptions as either directly or indirectly targeting women/gender. We defined directly targeted projects as focusing explicitly on women or gender, with the goal to empower women or modify gender relationships within agricultural aid projects. For example, “to expand a credit program benefiting women . . . who are engaged in agricultural and handicraft production and marketing” was one project description that we coded as directly targeting women/gender. We defined indirect projects as project descriptions that have a stated goal that can be accomplished without attention to gender/women, but generally these projects mention incorporating gender or women as a secondary goal. For example, “to increase the output of small-scale agriculture and the fishing sector through income generating activities and introduction of appropriate technologies, especially ensuring gender equality” was one project description that we coded as indirectly targeting women/gender. In this case, the project prioritizes an increase in small-scale agricultural output, with gender equality presented in the project description as a secondary goal.

We coded projects as “direct” versus “indirect” in an effort to evaluate how much women and/or gender issues, particularly as it relates to power and structured inequality, have been incorporated into agricultural development projects. Although it cannot be assumed that projects that we coded as indirect are less beneficial than projects that we coded as direct, the coding categories do allow for an evaluation of aid projects in terms of their relationship to existing literature and debates surrounding women, power, and inequality in agricultural communities.

RESULTS

Over the past 25 years there has been an increase in the number of agricultural aid projects that have targeted women or gender (see Table 1).

However, utilizing the term *increase* might be an overstatement, as there were only 300 projects that targeted women/gender out of a possible 5,834 projects, or 5.1 percent. Nonetheless, it is revealing that only one project focused on women/gender from the two coded years in the 1970s, and only 14 projects did so in the 1980s; almost all projects focused on women/gender occurred in the 1990s and 2000s. Because of the small number of projects in each year, it is more illustrative to discuss the results based on a two year average of consecutive years. The four coded years of data for the 1990s have the highest percentage of projects focusing on women/gender. The combined years of 1990 and 1991 have the highest percentage of projects targeting women/gender (8.1 percent) and the combined years of 1996 and 1997 are the second highest (7.8 percent). The 2000s saw a continued increase in the number of projects (over 70 projects each year) targeting women/gender, but as a percentage of all agricultural aid projects, there was a decline when compared to the 1990s.

We next examined the use of the term *women* versus the term *gender*. We found that only 41 project descriptions out of the 300 utilized the term *gender*, 10 of which referenced both women and gender within the project titles or descriptions. Almost all references to gender occurred in the 2000s, with only four references made in 1996 and 1997, and there are no gender references made pre-1996. Thus, most of the 300 agricultural aid project titles and/or descriptions make reference only to women, not to gender (see Figure 1).

We found that 45 percent, or 135 of the possible 300 projects, directly target women/gender. Notably, of the possible 41 projects that utilize the term *gender* (10 of which use both *gender* and *women* in their project titles/descriptions), only 13 directly target women/gender. Of these 13 projects, we identified eight projects that explicitly mentioned “gender” and “women” in their project description and that directly target women/gender issues. In other words, our data show that projects that utilize only the term *gender* were disproportionately those projects that indirectly target women/gender issues. This supports some of the recent critiques in the literature that suggests utilizing the concept of gender mainstreaming in development discourse and practice has actually allowed for a shift away from focusing explicitly on gender inequality and women.

Moving to an analysis of women/gender projects in comparison to other vulnerable populations (see Table 2), only disaster victims ($n = 111$), farm workers ($n = 22$), and an “other” category, that primarily included youth, were targeted fewer times than women/gender. Slightly more projects targeted farmers ($n = 477$), smallholders ($n = 444$), and marginalized populations ($n = 324$). Similarly, this order holds even when the amount of committed

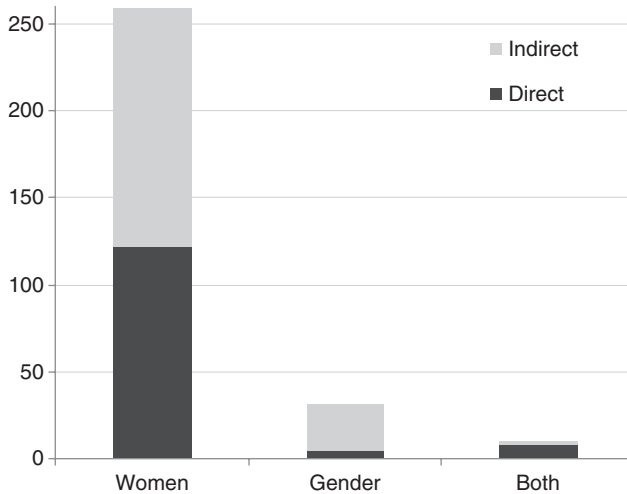


FIGURE 1: Projects Utilizing the Term *Women* or *Gender* or *Both* and the Number of Projects Directly Versus Indirectly Targeting Women

financial assistance is taken into account. As a percentage of all agricultural financial assistance committed, farmers (11.4 percent), marginalized populations (11.2 percent), and smallholder producers (9.8 percent) are mentioned in projects that receive roughly three to four times more financial assistance than projects that mention women/gender (3.7 percent). Nonetheless, more than half of committed financial assistance went to agricultural aid projects that did not directly target any vulnerable population of people.

Focusing on only those projects that targeted vulnerable populations ($n = 1,559$), it becomes even more apparent that women/gender did receive increased attention in agricultural aid projects (see Table 3). As a percentage of projects within targeted populations, the 1990s had the largest proportion of projects (32.9 percent for 1990/1991 and 25.8 percent for 1996/1997) targeting women/gender. The proportion wanes to 20 percent in 2002 and 2003.

Table 4 shows that over \$3.68 billion was committed to the 300 projects that targeted women/gender. Over time, the percentage of money committed to women/gender-related agricultural projects out of the total amount committed to all agricultural projects increases from 0.2 percent in 1978-1979 to 5.1 percent in 2002-2003. (All project money is presented in US 2000 constant dollars.) There is an increase in the 1990s followed by a decline in

TABLE 2: Total Number of Cases^a Focused on Vulnerable Populations

| | <i>Total Number of Vulnerable Populations Identified</i> | <i>As a Percentage of All Cases</i> | <i>Committed Aid in Constant \$US</i> | <i>Percentage of Aid</i> |
|---|--|---|---|------------------------------|
| Farmers | 477 | 7.7 | 11,192,734,161 | 11.4 |
| Smallholders | 444 | 7.2 | 9,700,748,238 | 9.8 |
| Marginalized (e.g., landless, poor) | 324 | 5.3 | 11,018,324,876 | 11.2 |
| Women | 300 | 4.9 | 3,688,927,463 | 3.7 |
| Other (e.g. youth) | 199 | 3.2 | 2,394,435,103 | 2.4 |
| Disaster victims | 111 | 1.8 | 1,378,310,031 | 1.4 |
| Farm workers | 22 | 0.4 | 114,361,759 | 0.1 |
| Not targeted | 4,284 | 69.5 | 59,046,104,592 | 59.9 |
| Total | 6,161 | 100.0 | 98,533,946,223 | 100.0 |

a. A single project can target more than one vulnerable population. Each vulnerable population is identified as a separate case. Therefore, totals in this table are greater than the totals in Tables 1, 3, and 4.

the percentage of constant dollars committed in 2002-2003. While 1990-1991 has the highest percentage of money committed (7.6 percent), 1997 has the highest raw dollar amount (\$920 million). This corresponds with 1997 being the year with the highest amount of money committed to agricultural-related aid projects of all the years in the data set, with approximately \$14.5 billion committed.

Finally, we analyzed whether the type of agricultural aid projects that target women/gender have changed over time. As discussed in the Method section, each agricultural aid project was coded for the type of agricultural aid targeted. Our categories included: research/education/training (RET), infrastructure, financial, technology transfer or infusion, commodity production, environment, and finally an "other" category (not pictured in Figure 2).

All projects could be assigned more than one category if the project title or description indicated that the project would fall across several categories. For example, a project focused on increasing the output of smallholder agriculture and the fishing sector through the introduction of appropriate technologies would be coded in two categories, "commodity production" and "technology transfer/infusion." Due to the identification of one project falling within more than one category of type of agricultural aid, on average every project was identified as falling within two different types of agricultural aid.

TABLE 3: Percentage of Women/Gender Projects of All Vulnerable Populations (VP)

| | 1978 | 1979 | 1984 | 1985 | 1990 | 1991 | 1996 | 1997 | 2002 | 2003 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------|
| Total number of VP projects | 78 | 101 | 78 | 67 | 75 | 68 | 146 | 191 | 347 | 408 |
| Women/gender (W/G) focus | 1 | 0 | 7 | 7 | 24 | 23 | 29 | 58 | 71 | 80 |
| Percentage W/G of all VP projects | 1.3 | 0.0 | 9.0 | 10.4 | 32.0 | 33.8 | 19.9 | 30.4 | 20.5 | 19.6 |
| Two year average | | 0.6 | | 9.7 | | 32.9 | | 25.8 | | 20.0% |
| | | | | | | | | | | 1,559 |
| | | | | | | | | | | 300 |
| | | | | | | | | | | 19.2% |

TABLE 4: Amount of Money Committed to Women/Gender-Focused Projects and Percentage of Total Amount of \$US Committed by Year

| | <i>Gender-Focused Projects</i> | <i>Committed \$US^a for Gender-Related Agricultural Projects</i> | <i>Committed \$US for All Agricultural Projects</i> | <i>Percentage \$US for Gender-Related Projects of Total Amount Committed</i> | <i>Two Year Average (%)</i> |
|-------|--------------------------------|--|---|--|-----------------------------|
| 1978 | 1 | 44,898,773 | 8,591,504,199 | 0.5 | 0.2 |
| 1979 | 0 | 0 | 10,938,879,319 | 0.0 | |
| 1984 | 7 | 65,548,702 | 7,174,547,154 | 0.9 | 1.4 |
| 1985 | 7 | 126,645,418 | 6,873,085,211 | 1.8 | |
| 1990 | 24 | 899,024,566 | 7,693,060,575 | 11.7 | 7.6 |
| 1991 | 23 | 365,647,053 | 8,871,809,139 | 4.1 | |
| 1996 | 29 | 586,622,168 | 12,642,116,109 | 4.6 | 5.5 |
| 1997 | 58 | 920,355,101 | 14,597,786,180 | 6.3 | |
| 2002 | 71 | 378,866,465 | 6,230,499,631 | 6.1 | 5.1 |
| 2003 | 80 | 301,319,217 | 7,070,737,874 | 4.3 | |
| Total | 300 | 3,688,927,463 | \$90,684,025,391 | 4.1 | |

a. Committed in 2000 United States constant dollars.

Figure 2 shows two series of data that illustrate the emphasis placed on the type of agricultural aid (white columns) and on women/gender-targeted projects (gray columns). For example, focusing on the first panel (RET), the white columns reveal that roughly one-third of all agricultural projects were related to RET for the 10 coded years. The gray columns show the percentage of cases that target women/gender within a particular year for a specific type of aid. For example, when looking at the second panel and the coded year of 1997, 141 cases were oriented toward infrastructure, and of these, 25, or 18 percent, focused on women/gender. Combining the two data series allows for a more refined look at the types of agricultural aid and the focus of these projects on women/gender over time. For example, of all agricultural projects, the percentage that emphasizes infrastructure declines over time. Conversely, the percent of projects within infrastructure that targets women/gender increases.

The only other agricultural category that experienced a sizeable increase in the percentage of cases that incorporate women/gender is the financial category. In three out of the four years in the 1990s, we see a dramatic increase in the percentage of financial cases that include women/gender. Specifically, in 1997, 28 percent of all cases that focused on finances targeted women/gender. Within

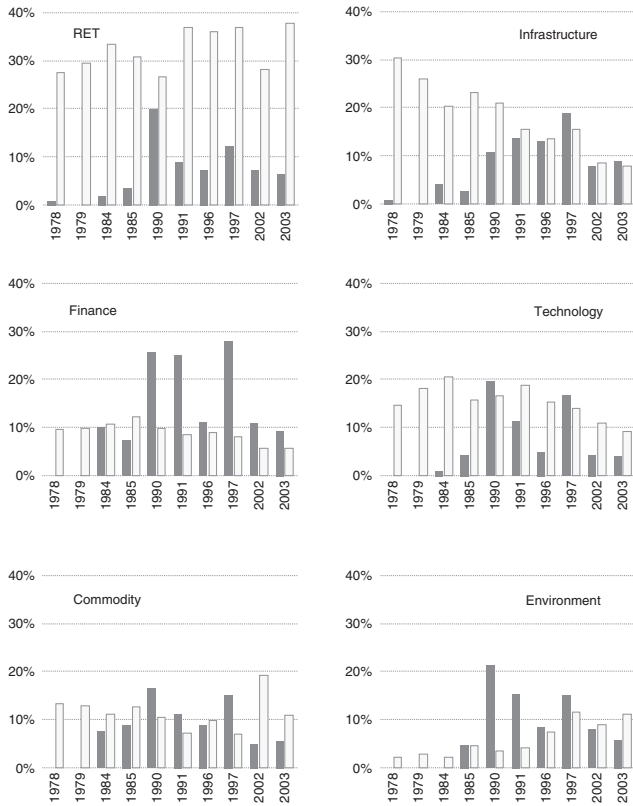


FIGURE 2: Percentage of Cases by Type of Agricultural Aid (white columns) and Percentages of Cases within Each Category that Target Women/Gender (gray columns)

the technology, commodity, and environment categories, there are only three years in each category that women/gender are incorporated for more than 10 percent of the cases, and these all occur in the 1990s.

Notably, the only two types of agricultural aid that have seen a steady increase overall are RET and the environment. RET grew from 28 percent in 1978 to 38 percent in 2003 of all types of agricultural aid, and the environment grew from 2.3 percent to 11.3 percent over the same time period. Despite the overall growth of these two categories of aid, a troubling trend is the downward turn in all types of agricultural aid categories for women/gender in 2002 and 2003. Future coding and analysis of more recent years in the 2000s will be needed to determine if this trend holds.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

There is a long history of undercounting and undervaluing women's participation in agriculture. However, 40 years of feminist research on women, gender, and agriculture has irrefutably established the diverse and multiple roles that women play in the production of food and fiber (Chambers and Momsen 2007; Momsen 2004; Sachs 1996). Despite the diversity of women in agriculture, in practice women still tend to be viewed by development organizations as helpmates to men rather than autonomous economic actors (Bunch and Mehra 2008; Wangui 2008).

Utilizing the AidData data set, our research findings suggest that in practice, international development assistance for women/gender over a 25-year period has remained relatively small, levels of commitment uneven, and that since the end of the 1990s has declined relative to all agricultural aid. Surprisingly, this decline occurred during a time period in which we have seen an absolute and relative increase in the number of women engaged in agriculture.

Only 5.1 percent of our projects—300 out of a possible 5,834—identified women and/or gender. On the one hand, it is inappropriate to assume that only projects that explicitly identify women or gender engage with women and gender issues. On the other hand, there is an exhaustive amount of development literature that suggests that most agricultural aid targets men and is either women-neutral, or worse, unintentionally harms women (Sachs 1996). Similarly, in an audit of its own projects, the World Bank found that projects that explicitly mentioned gender-related action were much more likely to engage with gender issues than projects that did not mention gender-related actions (Murphy 1997). Finally, in a comprehensive report focused on global agriculture, Hurni and Osman-Elasha (2009) assert that agricultural development has often strengthened patterns that do not favor women. One example of the disfavor is the failure to extend credit to women, thereby reducing opportunities for agricultural investments by women. Thus, while we cannot assume that projects that say nothing about gender or women did not actually engage with women or gender issues, it is a reasonable assumption based on extant literature that the vast majority of aid projects that make no mention of women/gender did not explicitly seek to reduce gender inequality.

Our research does show a gradual increase, both in terms of number of projects and in the dollar amount committed, in agricultural aid projects that target women/gender issues, with much of the gains occurring in the 1990s. However, in 2002-2003 there is evidence of a decline in the percentage of targeted projects and funds that focus on women/gender. This subsequent decline in the 2000s suggests that while many development agencies publicly

acknowledge the importance of gender, in practice their commitment to allocating resources for women/gender issues is inconsistent and aid directed at empowering women remains precarious. Moreover, as the concept of gender became mainstreamed in the mid-1990s, the percentage of development projects focused on women and gender declined (Baden and Goetz 1997).

We did find some changes over time in the types of agricultural aid that target women/gender. All areas saw an increase in the number of cases focused on women/gender, but it was in the areas of finance and infrastructure that the biggest increases were seen. In terms of finance, the literature argues that development aid projects that are sensitive to gender inequalities regarding the availability of credit and loans to women are sorely needed. For example, while the majority of farmers in Africa are women, they receive "less than 10 percent of small farm credit" (Bunch and Mehra 2008, 4). Obstacles to women accessing financial services in the formal sector include their lower educational levels, constraints on mobility, the kinds of businesses women are involved in, and lower working capital (Bunch and Mehra 2008). A major factor is that women often cannot meet the collateral requirements demanded by lenders, especially land title, since women are less likely to own land than men, and when they do own land their landholdings are typically smaller (World Bank 2007). For example, in Africa, women own only 1 percent of the land. Yet, research has established that when women have been targeted to receive credit it has led to positive outcomes, including an increase in women's employment, income, and the number of women-owned businesses (Bunch and Mehra 2008). Our data suggest increasing financial assistance to women/gender has been a point of emphasis. It is disconcerting, however, that our findings show a decline of finance cases targeting women/gender in 2002-2003, which gives us pause in terms of making any long-term predictions regarding the institutionalization of gender-sensitive finance projects.

For agricultural infrastructure projects, there is a steady decline in aid funding, a trend that has been written about extensively (see Eicher and Staatz 1998). Also well documented in the literature is the historical failure of infrastructure projects to incorporate the interests of women and a failure to recognize the importance of conducting a gender analysis of infrastructure projects (see Nation 2010). Our results show that the proportion of infrastructure projects that have a women/gender component increased, especially during the 1990s, and then declined. In general, women are primarily responsible for labor-intensive tasks, such as collecting water or firewood, which constrain their ability to participate in income-generating opportunities, such as the production or marketing of crops for the market economy. Moreover,

women are often excluded from the building, maintenance, and decision-making process involved in infrastructure projects, such as irrigation, which is the means for users to gain rights to the scheme (Brown et al. 1995; World Bank 2007). When women have gained access to irrigated land and water and their role as irrigators and decision makers has been recognized, then researchers have found that their agricultural productivity has increased as well as their negotiating power concerning the use of water (World Bank 2007).

The environment differs from finance and infrastructure in that peak percentage of cases focused on women/gender occurred in 1990 and declined thereafter. In addition, the environment has the fewest number of cases in comparison to all other types of agricultural aid. Nonetheless, the percentage of cases that incorporate women/gender is higher (relative to the number of cases in each year) than all other types of agricultural aid except for finance. One explanation for the incorporation of women/gender into environmental agricultural development projects might be the sizable research literature that has made a connection between empowering women and development that is more sustainable and human-centered. This contrasts with "growth-centered" development of the 1960s and 1970s, which either ignored, or worse, was destructive to the environment (Pongsapich 2006; Rodda 1991).

In terms of the agricultural aid funding that has a commodity focus, we find that funding for specific commodities and the percentage of commodity cases that incorporate women/gender has remained relatively flat, at around 10 percent in both instances, with the exception of a sudden increase in funding for commodity development assistance occurring in the 2000s. Commodity production has long been a point of emphasis in agricultural development, because the production of specific commodities is one mechanism for integration of developing countries into the global economy. However, while there are exceptions to the pattern, research reveals that men disproportionately control cash crops, commodities grown for the market economy (Sachs 1996). An abundance of commodity research exists that highlights gender inequalities within commodity production systems (see Bassett 2010; Lyon, Bezaury, and Mutersbaugh 2010). For example, within the coffee industry Lyon, Bezaury, and Mutersbaugh (2010, 94) observe "women face lower pay and overt gender discrimination in the plantation settings," and patriarchal social relations, such as women being required to work in both the field and the home, shape aspects of smallholder coffee production in Latin America. With extensive documentation of gender inequality in commodity production, having less than 10 percent of commodity cases incorporating women/gender over the 25-year time period should be of concern to feminist development scholars and practitioners.

Closely linked to commodity production in development projects is agricultural technology transfer/enhancement. In our findings, we see that overall funding for agricultural technologies has steadily declined since 1984. In addition, the percentage of cases that incorporate a women/gender component was highest in 1990 and declined thereafter. The amount and types of research and technology developed, the adoption and use patterns of agricultural technologies, and the appropriateness of specific technologies to specific settings (e.g., costs, labor needs, environmental consequences) are all topics that appear extensively in the conventional and gender-specific research literatures (see Bassett 2010; Doss 2001; Eicher and Staatz 1998). Much of the gender-specific research literature reveals that the ability for women farmers to utilize agricultural technologies depends upon many of the other variables already discussed, such as access to land, credit, and labor power (Doss 2001). Studies have also revealed that women will often choose not to adopt a new technology if they believe that they and their children will disproportionately suffer negative consequences from its adoption, for example, situations where women have refused to use pesticides due to concerns over pesticide poisoning (Bassett 2010). Similar to the commodity production literature, it is abundantly clear that gender matters as it relates to agricultural technologies, but how it matters differs by time and place (Doss 2001). Within our data, the majority of technology agricultural aid cases focus on women/gender less than 10 percent of the time. Similar to the commodity category, this suggests a real failure within development assistance to recognize gender inequality as an important and relevant issue within technology transfer or adoption.

Finally, our findings show that while the overall investment in RET has increased over the past 25 years, the percentage of cases that incorporate women/gender remains modest and steadily declines after 1990. This is problematic since in many parts of the global south women have less access to formal education in general and less access to education and training in agriculture in particular (World Bank 2007). Within this context, investment in RET for women is critical. For example, since women generally have lower levels of education the role of agricultural extension agents is critical in providing information to women farmers (Brown et al. 1995). Yet, when compared with men, women farmers typically have less access to these services. Mehra and Rojas (2008, 8) argue that "extension is often provided by men agents to men farmers on the erroneous assumption that the message will trickle 'across' to women." They go on to explain that such services typically ignore "the unique workload, responsibilities, and constraints facing women farmers" (Mehra and Rojas 2008). In another example, research

shows that women farmers often equal or outperform men in the area of plant breeding. Unfortunately, agricultural scientists and extension services largely disregard the enormous expert human capital held by women farmers (Brown et al. 1995; Chambers and Momsen 2007).

There are a few limitations to our existing data that need to be discussed. First, we can only analyze the aid projects at the point of conceptualization. The data do not allow for an evaluation of the efficacy of aid programs. Future research would ideally pair this macro-level data with case-level case studies or, even better, a data set that incorporates a variable that provides a summary of specific project outcomes. Case study data have played and will continue to play an important role in calling attention to the role of women in agriculture and understanding gendered relationships, particularly in terms of the variability of gender across regions. Second, coding of data is dependent upon bilateral and multilateral donor reporting of aid projects. Until aid data reporting is viewed as a priority and/or standardized in such a way that all bilateral and multilateral donors give the same information in their reports, scholars and practitioners will always be limited by the quality of aid reporting.

Despite these data limitations, our research shows that considerable challenges remain in transforming the thinking and practices of bilateral and multilateral aid donors regarding the relationship between agriculture, gender, and food security. Our findings suggest that in practice international development assistance for women/gender has remained comparatively small and levels of commitment uneven. Coupling this with our concerns regarding a recent decline in women/gender-focused cases for all types of agricultural aid, we see a troublesome trend. Generally, far from ensuring gender mainstreaming, our data suggest a need to reengage with gender issues. Moreover, our analysis supports recent feminist critiques within the literature that the mainstreaming of gender within development discourse and practice may have had the detrimental effect of facilitating a shift away from focusing on women.

In the international development sector there is considerable discursive support for gendering development. In addition, there is a wealth of data demonstrating gender inequalities in agriculture as well as an enormous amount of actual and potential contributions made by women to agriculture. How then can we account for the continued, fundamental failure to fully integrate women or gender issues in agricultural development? The lack of resources devoted to women/gender issues suggests that women are still viewed as appendages of male relatives and not key economic agents, such as farmers, wage and non-wage farm workers, marketers, and entrepreneurs.

The failure to fully account for women's contribution and participation is due to a combination of factors including not acknowledging women's work as an economic activity, ideological resistance at the institutional and individual levels in valuing the contributions of women in agricultural production systems, gender inequitable relationships that make women an exploitable labor population, and having no enforcement mechanisms for ensuring gender equality is implemented in practice.

Based on our data and analysis, the organizing and political engagement around women and gender inequality issues that occurred in previous decades did increase the attention given to women/gender in agricultural development projects. Unfortunately, an organizational and leadership shift is again needed in order to change the dynamics within development since many organizations lack the leadership zeal necessary to prioritize gender. This lack of zeal contributes to the failure to put in place the necessary organizational structures and accountability mechanisms to ensure that policies are in fact implemented (Mehra and Rojas 2008). If the development community is serious about improving livelihoods by reducing food and nutritional insecurity at the local, national, and global levels, then confronting the ongoing challenge of gender inequality within agriculture remains imperative.

NOTES

1. Previously known as Project-Level Aid (PLAID), AidData is the product of an interdisciplinary collaboration between Brigham Young University and the College of William and Mary and is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the National Science Foundation (NSF Grant No. SES-0454384). This research is based on an analysis of cases contained in AidData/PLAID 1.6, August 2009.

2. To accomplish this, a computer-generated word list was created for all projects that had a Creditor Reporting System (CRS) agricultural code (all projects, including non-CRS projects, were assigned a CRS code by AidData/PLAID senior researchers), thereby generating a list of the most frequently used words in the project titles and descriptions. Once this list was generated and cleaned, additional keywords were added to the list in an effort to capture any projects that may be within AidData that were not initially coded with a CRS agriculture code. For example, the terms *fish* and *aquaculture* may not have been assigned an agricultural CRS code but were included in the keyword list that was used to search the entire database, thereby ensuring that projects that contained these terms in the project description or title were captured. The final number of agricultural development aid cases was 42,685 out of a total of 776,701 development aid projects in the data set, or approximately 18 percent.

3. Due to limited reporting by donor countries in the early 1970s, it was decided that the data from the late 1970s were the most reliable data in that decade. Similarly, AidData/PLAID 1.6 had fewer projects to analyze in the latter part of the 2000s, as much of that data were still being collected and compiled by the AidData/PLAID team. In addition, a subset of years were chosen to reduce the costs (time and money) related to coding an inordinate number of projects.

4. Due to insufficient information, a large number of projects could not be classified as targeting a vulnerable population. Preliminary analyses led us to conclude that the missing data (insufficient information) are random and thus allowed for the implementation of a pairwise deletion strategy to deal with the missing data. A total of 5,834 projects were deemed suitable for analysis.

5. Projects could be coded as targeting one or more vulnerable populations and/or one or more types of agricultural aid. For example, of the 300 women/gender projects, 121 also target one other population, 29 identify two other target populations, and three are coded with three other target populations. Since many smallholders are also women, we looked to see how many projects identified both women and smallholders and we found 51 projects, or 17 percent of women/gender projects, also identified smallholders in the project descriptions or titles.

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