

## WHO IS DEPENDENT, THIRD OR FIRST WORLD, WOMEN OR MEN? SALIENT FEATURES OF DEPENDENCY AND INTERDEPENDENCY

Matsa Winniefridah

Department of Gender Studies, Midlands State University, Gweru, Zimbabwe

### ABSTRACT

Issues of poverty and dependency cannot be discussed outside sustainable development. The world summit on sustainable development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa 2002 was convened against a backdrop of increasing poverty and growing inequality in the distribution of resources among other factors. Global poverty and dependency are socially constructed by those who benefit from such arrangements, so is women's poverty and dependency. This article draws a parallel between global poverty and dependency of Third world countries with that of women in this part of the globe. It traces the situation of Third world countries' dependency and that of women from colonial right up to neo-colonialism. The paper also analyses the interlocking role of capitalism and patriarchy in the construction and perpetuation of women's poverty and dependency. Both capitalism and patriarchy benefit from poverty of women just as they benefit from that of Third world countries. The article further explores new forms of dependency in form of Aid which instead of breaking the cycle of poverty and dependency, perpetuate and deepen these. For example, the aid projects mostly those guided by women in Development approach (WID) in the 1980s and 90s tended to further integrate women into poverty and dependency. There has been little or no change in the last two decades; 1990-2010 hence sustainability of aid projects is also discussed. The paper critically analyses issues of dependency by posing a question; who is dependent, the First world or Third world? Men or women? It also delves into effects of categorisation, ranking, labeling, self-fulfilling prophecy and internalisation of the above by Third world people especially women. The paper takes an epistemological approach that combines constructionism, critical theory and structuralism. Dependency theory, socialist feminist theory and the Third world feminist political economy approach serve as both theoretical base and perspectives for explaining the situation of Third World women. Ideologies of patriarchy, capitalism, and culture are also discussed as explanations for construction and perpetuation of poverty and dependency of both Third world countries and women. The paper suggests critical analysis of dependency of women in relation to global dependency. Bottom up approaches are recommended for deconstruction of dependency. Women need to be treated as a differentiated category if aid is to assist them. Women in the Third world are differentiated by race, class, culture, ethnicity, religion, education, employment, location (rural or urban) among others. Gender aware policies, gender analysis and gender empowerment should be taken into consideration before aid is introduced. For sustainable development to be achieved there is need for participation and commitment by all developmental levels and groups in society.

**Keywords:** Dependency, Poverty, Sustainable Development, Sustainability, Patriarchy

## **INTRODUCTION**

We can not afford to analyse women s' issues as independent from global and sustainable development issues. Sustainable development (SD) has come to the top of the international and domestic policy agendas. Women s' poverty and dependence have to do with universal capitalist and patriarchal systems. Third world women s' position and subordination are largely a result of the above 'twin evils'. Poverty is a major threat to sustainable development and dependency undermines countries' ability to achieve sustainable development (UNDP, 2004). Sustainable development is defined by Goldin and Winters (1995:1) as "Development that meets the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs". Women s' poverty and dependency date back to pre-capitalism and can be explained by the patriarchal ideology that favour male access and control of reproductive resources at the expense of females. Capitalism intensified the exploitation of women s' labour through .male control of the means of production rendering women to be vulnerable to poverty and dependency. Third world countries s' exploitation was also intensified during merchant capitalism, colonialism and neo- colonialism. The forms of exploitation and dependency for both Third world countries and women have been changing over years. International Aid, (official and voluntary) instead of breaking the cycle of poverty and dependency in recent years, these are further entrenched. Dependency and poverty for both women and Third world countries is external rather than internally induced. Third world countries are poor because of the international capitalism and for women, it is the combination of capitalism and patriarchy. The two systems permeate from the international, regional, national right down to the family level. The First world benefits from Third world poverty, subordination and dependency just as men benefit from women's poverty and subordination. Poverty and dependency are socially constructed to benefit the First world and the patriarchy. Both foreign and local aid perpetuates Third world and women's poverty and dependency thereby negatively affecting sustainable development.

According to Hornby (1980) being dependent is being reliant or supported by. The one who is dependent cannot survive without the assistant of whom he relies on. Do Santos in Hulmes and Turner (1990:48) define dependency as " a situation in which a certain group of countries have their economies conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which their own is subjected...". It is the stronger economy that conditions the weaker one. Expansion is a result of a causal relationship and the same applies for the lack of expansion or recession.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Dependency Theory**

The theory is an outgrowth of neo-Marxist thinking which was used to analyse the economies of neo- colonial societies. These neo-Marxists were mostly Latin American scholars like Andre-Gunnar Frank and Theotonio dos Santos of the 1960s(Hulmes and Turner,1990).These argue that the Third world countries or neo-colonial societies are caught up in dominant and unequal relationship with richer countries. The term Third world referred to under developed or developing nations of Asia, Latin America and Africa. Today the term is no longer accurate after the collapse of communist China, Soviet Union and the Eastern Block who were referred to as the second world. In this paper the terms developing, underdeveloped, third and former Third world will be used interchangeable depending on historical context and period being

discussed. The relationship that exist between developed and former Third world countries make the later to be dependent on richer countries politically, economically and institutionally. The unequal relationship is a result of the international capitalist system of the rich that translate to unequal economic power relations. The richer countries intentionally or unintentionally exploit poor countries economically. This is made possible by the existence of institutions and agents, for example landlords, entrepreneurs, military rulers, merchants, salaried public officials and trade union leaders who knowingly or unknowingly perpetuate international capitalist system of inequality and conformity (Todaro, 1997; Steve and Steve, 2006). The richer countries impoverish Third world countries through exploitation of resources, labour and markets. This has unfolded in three historic epochs, that, pre-colonial ,where merchant capitalist exploited raw materials (metals and non- metals), wild resources (ivory) and labour through slave trade (Hoogvelt, 1985). During the colonial period, colonial invaders expropriated lands , exported cash crops and minerals through use of cheap labour from colonies. In neo-colonialism, the richer countries used the method of monopolistic control over production, peripheral markets and export produce where they dictate the terms of trade. Third world countries continue to supply but the sharing of profits is unequal. They are still very much at the mercy of the dictates and fate of the capitalist economic system. By so doing economies of Third world countries are made to be dependent on the West through trade, labour, extraction of raw materials, imported technologies for manufacturing and recently through Aid. For sustainable development to take place, economic growth and practices should preserve natural resources. The needs of the present generation should be satisfied without endangering the future generations' capacity to satisfy their own. However, the needs of one society might exclude the needs of other societies, for example the lifestyle and consumer behavior of developed nations exclude the needs of developing nations (Redclift in Desai and Potter, 2002). Betterment of one group should not be at the expense of other groups or generations. There is tendency to value the present above the future and rate of extraction of resources follow the rules of survival of the fittest making it difficult for the poor especially women to benefit from the fruits of sustainable development.

### **Socialist-Feminist Theory: Interlocking Role of Patriarchy and Capitalism in the exploitation of women**

Bryson (1992) argues that male supremacy within the home is not a matter of patriarchal oppression only, but is embedded in economic structures. Patriarchal man in a capitalist society has economic advantages over women even in the home. He owns and controls both the traditional and the modern reproductive forces like cattle, land, labour (from women), home , simple tools, capital, technology and transport. During the colonial rule in Africa, registration of such property was in male names (Hoogvelt, 1985; Sweetman, 1999) .Moyo cited by Izumi in Sweetman (1999) reveals that in Zimbabwe in 1997 75% registered land owners were males. Though the situation has changed in the 1980s and 1990s with new laws relating to ownership of resources, cultural, patriarchal and administrative structures continue to sideline women in most land tenure systems (Mgugu and Chimonyo, 2004; UNDP and FAO, 1994). Men are capitalist and both men and capitalism benefit from such economic arrangements. Socialist feminists like Heidi Hartman in Bryson, 1992 and Beasley, 1999 refer to this as the dual system of capitalist patriarchy. The two systems are mutually reinforcing. Women provide their labour power and reproduce the next generation of workers for the benefit of the capitalist and patriarchy. Drawing women into wage labour market represent an increase in the exploitation of women s' unpaid labour. However, wife role is as strategically important in the home as it is at factory work .In both the home and the workplace, the woman has no economic power .Economic power and decision making lies with the capitalist employer and the patriarchal capitalist man in the home. There is a

symbiosis relationship between capitalism and patriarchy. If third world countries want to own or manufacture, they need capital, financial credits and technology from richer countries without which they cannot produce. This means more dependence on exports and the West for such goods. The same scenario applies to women producers in the public and private sphere. They depend on men for the above. Whatever, poor countries and poor women try to do to break from the poverty cycle and trap, the more they are entrenched deeper into poverty and dependency (Goldthorpe, 1999).

### **Categorisation, Ranking, Labeling and Self-Fulfilling Prophecy**

Countries of the world are categorized, ranked and labeled. The richer countries are ranked as the first world, categorized as the rich, superior and developed while the poor are ranked as Third world, categorized as poor, inferior underdeveloped, less developed or developing. Manuel Castell in Beasley(2006) notes that ranking has gone further to the Fourth world which is made of parts of the world viewed as irrelevant to the global economy with insignificant raw materials and unskilled labour. These are parts of Africa, Asia and L. America falling further in economic development. They are viewed as featuring as sources of drugs, criminal gangs, arms sales and political instability. Similarly women are viewed negatively, as men's appendage, Adam's rib, Eves, weaker sex, weaker vessels, inferior, dependent and the poorest of the poor. According to Charles Cooley and Hebert Mead in Schaefer (2006), labeling determines how you are viewed by others and how you view yourself. Labeling can lead to self-fulfilling prophecy which is; according to Mead, is accepting judgments and prophecies which others make about you. Cooley talks of the looking glass self where people view themselves from the perspectives of others. Because of labeling developing countries and women can end up viewing themselves as weak, inferior, dependent and the poorest of the poor. Labeling also determines how one is treated and how one responds in the interaction process. Hafkin and Bay in Allen and Williams (1982) notes that in most African societies there are strong biases towards male supremacy. Both men and women have internalized these anti-female attitudes. Such attitudes are contrary to Atkinson, Dietz and Niemeyer (2007)'s views that sustainable development has to take into account societal and human well being and respect for others.

### **Social construction of dependency**

The dependency of Third world countries on the West was socially constructed. This was done through the impoverishment of third world countries. The colonisers invaded the colonies and took control of their lands and Resources (Hoogvelt, 1985). One strategy of making someone dependent is to make the person poor through disposition. The other strategy is to disempower the person. The colonisers weakened and destroyed all forms of power that existed in colonies be it military, political, economic or religious power. The aim was to create a helpless and vulnerable people who could easily accept aid. Aid was to come in form of military, economic, political and religious power which is not from within but external. Even to date poverty in Third world countries is more of external inducement than internal constraints like education, skills, insufficient savings and investment as the First world would like to make us believe (Marcus and Ducklin, 1995). Spicker, Leguizamon and Gordon (2007) note that poverty is a direct consequence of exclusion and that developing countries are characterized by absolute poverty. Absolute poverty is defined by The Copenhagen Declaration of the World Summit Spicker et al (2007:7) as "a condition characterised by extreme poverty and severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, shelter, education, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health and information. Extreme poverty has to do

with denial of basic needs, entitlement and exclusion. All these have serious implications to sustainable development which has to do with meeting needs of the present generation. (Marcus and Ducklin, 1985).Dependency still exists even after political independences of Third world countries. It is only the form of dependency that has changed. Third world countries are now exploited through multinational corporations, financial institutions (World Bank and International Monetary fund), national and bilateral (official aid) and recently through voluntary aid from Governments, development agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOS).There is a parallel between women and Third world countries' dependency and poverty. Hamm and Muttagi (1998) point out that western imported technology, skills, capital and top down projects run by foreign professionals are not sustainable. This is because these destroy self-reliance, efficient and equitable distribution of goods and services. Above all they destroy local traditional knowledge for women which are sustainable to women.

### **Women's dependency and poverty**

Women's dependency and poverty are socially constructed. Women, especially in the Third world are exploited of their resources and labour. They lack access and control of critical resources. Sustainability of food and agriculture depend on access and control of land, infrastructure, technologies, energy sources and other support services. Their dependency and poverty are a result of the combination of unequal capitalist relations and unequal power relations in a patriarchal societies (Heidi Hartman in Bryson, 1992 and Beasley, 1999).Hartman and other Marxist-feminists argue that both capitalism and patriarchy exploit women's' labour and resources. The modern society is both capitalist and patriarchal. In the Third world, women lack economic control. They do not own land, the main resource base, cattle, labour, technology, time and capital. Their access to these is shaped by gender determined power relations that exist across a range of institutions. Impoverishing women in patriarchal societies is a way of disempowering them.

"The state, market forces and patriarchal traditions may interact or cooperate in order to protect and strengthen existing power structures which constrain women s' access to land rights" (Sweetman, 1999:15).

Third world political economy theorists argue that Third world women (TWW) are subordinated in different ways more than men. They suffer more than males as third world people, a black race, as a class of proletariats and as a gender (women).Cultural, patriarchal, religious and capitalist ideologies are used to maintain women's subordination, poverty exploitation and dependency. Women depend on males as bread winners, for finance and technology. For success of their endeavors, they also depend on religious, cultural and patriarchal support. Production and technical services are always headed by males (Hardenberg in Sweetman, 1999).Achieving sustainable development depends on the broader participation of all levels of society. Target 4 of the Millennium Goals, aims at eliminating gender disparity at all levels of society by 2015 through women empowerment and increase in decision making in all sectors. Without the above sustainable development is far from being achieved.

### **Feminisation of poverty and dependency**

Poverty is viewed as having a distinctive face that affects mainly women and the elderly thereby negatively affecting sustainable development in many developing countries (UNDP in UNIFEM, 2004).Out of 1,3billion people living in poverty, 70 percent are women. Women s' income in every country where data is available, it is only a fraction of male

income. Feminisation of poverty means that, “women have a higher incidence of poverty than men and that women’s poverty is more severe than that of men. Poorer women are even poorer on average than poor men . . .” (UNDP in UNIFEM, 2004:28). Payne in Pilcker et al (2007) also note that women have traditionally been poorer than men. Women’s poverty in developing nations is evident in both rural and urban settings. In rural areas women are concentrated on agricultural labour force with low income levels. Women grow more than three quarters of all the food consumed but have no access land on which food sustainability depends. Sub Saharan Africa especially, has larger agricultural than industrial workforce and of these 60-80% are women (Marcus and Ducklin, 1998; Sardenberg in Sweetman, 1999). As poor farmers, they use primitive technology, poorly organized and limited physical and human capital. Women resort to their vast indigenous knowledge because they lack technical knowledge (Sweetman, 1999). When extension officers go to the fields; they do not reach for women in their homes. The assumption is that women do not need technical knowledge. Even land tenure systems favour males. Where women do agriculture or are involved in exchange economy, its for petty produce and sell of items relating to domestic work and subsistence agriculture producing beans, round ,ground nuts, food stuffs among others (Mackintosh in Allen and Williams, 1982). This contributes to women’s poverty and dependency on male capital, skills, technological know-how, credits, markets and banking services.

In urban areas again women’s poverty is linked to the disadvantages in the labour market (International Labour Organization (ILO) in UNIFEM, 2004). Women tend to concentrate on economic activities with low earnings which are irregular and insecure with little protection from labour laws. Steve and Steve (2006) refer to this as feminisation of labour where sectors of employment previously monopolized by men come to be dominated by women, for example clerical work and teaching. Society views women’s primary role as that of fulfilling reproductive and domestic functions (Fiedrich and Jellema, 2003). Ideas of feminist and the private sphere continue to be impressed upon women with no change in gender roles and relations. Such views and practices restrict women’s access to education, training, land and other productive assets like income and high paying jobs. It also limits women’s choice of income earning activities and time for paid productive work (Elson in UNIFEM, 2004). Where educated women venture into occupations that demand skills, they tend to take up stereotypical ones like nursing, teaching, secretarial and catering which are lowly paid traditional occupations associated with domesticity. Women do unpaid care work in the public (workplace) and the private (home) (Bryson, 1992; UNIFEM, 2004; Friedrich and Jellema, 2003). This is not defined as work in the home because there is no or little remuneration for it. The terms ‘unpaid’ stresses that the activity has no wage, ‘care’, the activity serve people and their well being and ‘work’ stress that the activity has a cost in terms of time and energy (Elson in UNIFEM, 2004). If any activity has a cost in terms of time and energy, then it has to be remunerated according to the cost of time and energy. However, women work 24 hours in the private sphere and the same number of hours as men in the public, but the gender division of labour in the home and the stereotypical occupations in the public sphere are a disadvantage in earnings. Women are trapped in dependency and poverty. Males are assumed to be bread winners. Low pay for women enforces them to be economically dependent within marriage and the economic necessity of finding a husband becomes paramount. Also assumed dependency on a male as a bread winner depresses their wages (Townsend in Ducklin, 1998). Mackintosh in Allen and Williams (1982; 46) further asserts that, “Rigidity of sexual division of labour in domestic tasks is visibly the source of women’s greater oppression within the sphere of wage and non-wage work”.

Women are not viewed as workers hence their labour and earnings are invisible in the world of work. Their contribution to economic development is invisible, just as the contribution of Third world countries to the economies of the first world is not recognized. Third world countries and women are made poor by capitalist in the first world and women by capitalist patriarchy. Marcus and Ducklin (1998; 478) note that “75% of the world’s population lives in poor countries which collectively hold about 17% of the world’s wealth, 10% of the world’s manufacturing industry and 20% of the world trade and investment.” The situation of women’s poverty is worse and parallels that of Third world countries. United States AID statistics in Mukhopadya et al (1999:22) reveals that “women perform 2/3 of the world’s work, earn 1/10 of the world’s income, make 2/3 of the world’s illiterate and own less than 1% of the world’s property”. This goes against goals 3 and 7 of the MDGS which called for elimination of gender disparity and reduction of people without sustainable access to resources that generate wealth (UNDP, 2004).

### **Culture of deprivation and the cycle of poverty**

The poor women constitute a distinctive culture of poverty and deprivation where experiences, attitudes and values of the poor are generated among the poor and passed from one generation to the other in a never ending cycle (Marcus and Ducklin, 1998). Women are trapped in dependency and culture of deprivation right from childhood where they are socialized into culture of helplessness and inferiority. Steve and Steve (2006) define deprivation as the act of taking something away and Pilker (2007) views it as lack of welfare in terms of material goods and resources which are desirable. Girls tend to encounter the kind of socialisation that is characterised by material deprivation. Boys have access to material resources and a culture that support them in their accumulation of wealth. Women’s cultural deprivation leads either to poor achievement, unemployment or poorly paid work thus further trapping them into poverty and dependency. Sir Keith Joseph in Marcus and Ducklin, (1998:404) in his theory of deprivation advanced that;

‘...Inadequate parents tend to rear inadequate children’. The same goes for women. It is unlikely that the poor, especially women can raise adequate girls who can break the cycle of poverty and deprivation.

### **Familial mode of production and the labour market: Impact on women**

Though types of families have changed with the changing modes of production, familial mode of production still exists though not largely visible especially in urban areas (Goldthorpe, 1996). In both rural and urban areas the work is largely distributed, directed and supervised by men. Rewards are also assigned to the family members by the patriarchal men. Men make decisions and give orders, that is, fathers to sons and daughters, elders to younger brothers and husbands to wives. In the labour market, individuals are employed, directed, supervised and rewarded by capitalist organisations outside the family. Caldwell in Goldthorpe (1996) found that in Africa, adults work harder especially sons, but women work longer hours than men although their work is consistently down graded. However, Caldwell’s research revealed that, the most hard working members of the family were daughters in law (wives). Women did a lot of work that is uncounted, undercounted, unpaid and

underpaid( UNIFEM,2004). Uncounting and undercounting of work takes four different ways, for example, subsistence production ,informal paid work, domestic production and volunteer work(Beneria inUNIFEM,2004).This kind of work is either not paid for or is underpaid. The time activity matrix and the time diary methods of research revealed that the above work is largely done by women for the benefit of families or communities and they take longer hours in these activities .However, findings by Caldwell in Goldthorpe (1996) revealed that resources were not shared according to work but according to gender and age. Older males were served first with food, got more money, clothes, house space and access to transport .The older men chose the type of work, how much of it and have a right to domestic services offered by women .Such a mode of production benefits the patriarchy. Marriages had 5-10 year gap in favour of males to ensure male dominance.It also meant that males benefited because of patriarchy and age.This scenerio is still evident in many African societies. Halfkin and Bay in Allen and Williams (1982) pointed out that women in Sub- Saharan Africa are under the authority of husbands and fathers in everything. This is also echoed by Mvududu and McFadden (2001) who note that the family in Southern Africa is characterized by male dominance. However, there are those that have varying degrees of economic independence but it is a matter of privileges than necessity and this varies according to class, race, ethnicity, historical era and geographical setting. Men and women in the labour market have separate income with clearly defined financial obligations to their children, spouses and spouse s 'lineage. The Zimbabwe Millennium Goals stress the need to address those imbalances driven by customary practices at different levels of society .There should also be implementation of broad based economic growth strategy that is pro-poor and pro-women empowerment to promote equitable distribution of income and other forms of wealth for economic sustainability (UNDP, 2004).

## **DUALISM**

According to Todaro (1997) dualism is a system representing existence and persistence of increasing divergence between the rich and the poor, superior and inferior, co-existence of modern and traditional methods of production in rural and urban sectors and highly educated elite versus illiterate people. The co- existence of wealth and poverty is necessary for capitalism. The superior capitalist do nothing to uplift or pull up the inferior, at the same time there is no trickling down of the riches. Where the rich claim to help the poor, they make them even poorer through exploitation of their resources and labour. Exploitation is contrary to sustainable development where meeting the needs of the present generation is not supposed to affect negatively the needs of future generations. In an exploitative relationship, the resources benefit the rich and the powerful. This kind of divergence exists between men and women even among women themselves in developing countries. Men are wealthy, educated and are viewed as superior while women are poor, illiterate and inferior. Urban women are relatively richer, educated and superior than rural women. This dualism benefits both the capitalist and the patriarchal family because it makes exploitation inevitable. The poor men and women are forced to sell their labour and resources cheaply to the rich, educated and superior. Class and gender inequality is an impediment to sustainable development. The dominant model of economic growth is based on the fundamental principles of inequality and exploitation that are simply not sustainable (Lotz-Sisitka, Olvitt, Gumede and Pesanai, 2006).Alternative equitable and more sustainable development approach must be found.



### **Who is dependent: Dependency or Interdependency?**

The first world was and is still depending on the developing countries' cheap raw materials, markets for manufactured goods and cheap wage labour to ensure economic survival. However, economic arrangements are in such a way that it appears as if its developing countries that depend on the West for economic survival. The contribution of developing economies to those of the West is deliberately not made visible. The same applies to women; men depend on women for cheap labour, sexuality, household chores, community work and socialisation of children. Men also benefit from women's services like caring and nursing (Moser, 1993). Women perform just as men if not more than men in productive roles, community roles and reproductive roles in both rural and urban areas. Women like Third World countries were made to be dependent on males materially, for example, means of production, productive forces, finance, technology, education, skills so that their critical contribution to the survival of the men and his family is invisible.

### **What is the measure of dependency?**

Dependence is difficult to measure. If both Third World countries or men and women benefit from existing relations, is it dependence or interdependence? If it is the ability of being able to live without the other-then dependence does not come out clearly. If it's richer countries and richer women who depend, the biggest question is; 'if poor countries were to sink in the sea ... would the poor countries be better or worse?' (Paul Streeten in Goldthorpe, 1996:109). The opposite of the question needs to be applied to poor countries and poor women; If poor countries and poor women were to sink into the sea, would the first world and patriarchal men be better or worse. A gendered and class analyses reveals that there is a symbioses relationship between the developed and developing nations and between men and women. They all cannot survive without the support of the other, so it is a question of interdependence. However, levels of dependency may differ depending on individual countries or women and men.

### **New form of Dependency (AID)**

Developing countries in neo-colonialism depend on aid and transnational corporation's financial institutions like the World Bank (WB) and international monetary Fund (IMF). Aid is a new form of dependency for both developing countries and women. Aid is that part of total flows of resources from the rich to poor countries which is made available by governments, agencies or voluntary organisations to promote economic development and welfare (Pearson commission in Goldthorpe, 1975). Aid can be in form of loans, gifts, grants, projects, food, technical and financial assistance among others. Reasons for aid range from the moral obligation to help the poor, as well as an attempt to preserve economic and political interests of the capitalist system in the Third world. Hyter in Goldthorpe (1975:1) notes that 'It may... help to sustain within Third world countries, a class which is dependent on the continued existence of aid'. The above reveals that aid is not solely for the benefit of the receiving country but also the donor. Aid makes it difficult to break the dependency cycle. Sustainability of total flows depend on distributive policy issues, for, example social institutions that govern use of resources, ownership and control of resources and systems of tenure that dictate ownership and management (Redclift in Desai and Potter, 2002). Transnational corporations control over 33% of the world's productive assets. Their flows may be withdrawn or withheld if conditions change. At the same time non-renewable resources may be used at the rate that exceeds that at which they can be

substituted by sustainable renewable resources. Human beings are already consuming more resources than the earth can renew and the bulk of consumption is enjoyed by only 20% of the world's population who consume 80% of the resources. Lotz-Sisitka et al (2006), note that if all human beings would aspire to live like the 20%, five planets would be needed to provide adequate resources. The UNDP report in Lotz-Sisitka et al (2006) also indicates that the consumption of goods and services in 1997 was twice that in 1975 and six times more than in 1950. This is clear evidence of lack of sustainability in consumption of resources.

### **Womens' dependency on aid**

Any aid is linked to poverty, dependency, and acceptance of the label of poverty. Tungodden, Stern and Koltad (2004) note that the target beneficiaries of aid are the poor micro-economic institutions, enterprises, households and individuals. Klasen in Tungodden et al (2004) refer to policies that help these poor as pro-poor policies that are meant to give the poor more access to economic opportunities. This means target group has to be first categorized as the poor. In such a scenario both developing countries and women are unlikely to reject aid because of poverty. It must also be noted that in most cases if not all, aid policies are for service delivery through top down rather than bottom up approaches (Longwe in Rowan-Campbell, 1999). The poor, women being part, have no decision making in policy formulation and planning. Research by UNICEF in Nepal revealed that water projects continued to bypass women in planning, designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes despite the fact that women use more water than males for domestic consumption. Exclusion of women in decision making lead to women's lack of interesting projects therefore affecting their participation (Regmi and Fawcett in Sweetman, 1998). Sardenberg, Costa and Passos in Sweetman (1999) also found that in the Eagle river project in Brazil the four regions were staffed by male agronomist co coordinators and agricultural technicians. There were few women at top decision making level and the final decisions always came from a man at the top. The balance of power was even more skewed at local level where most women were social workers or field staff. This applied whether the project was funded by national governments, development agencies or donor organisations. As a result Campbell (1999) argues that such policies and projects tend to evaporate in a patriarchal pot or make women lose interest and participation.

There is a tendency of aid through projects not getting to the grassroots women but to the elite in the peripheries. The core and periphery model applies in many instances where the rich benefit at the expense of the poor (Sardenberg, Costa and Passos in Sweetman, 1999). Males also benefits at the expense of females as well as urban people at the expense of the rural. In Zimbabwe most rural projects are co-ordinated and supervised by elite urban men and women who are not in touch with the situation on the ground. In the end urban men and women benefit instead. The poor women participate through labour supply and their contribution is invisible if they work alongside males or the rich (UNDP and FAO, 1994). Empowering women without questioning unequal relations of gender and class further integrate women into the exploitative capitalist economic and patriarchal systems. Klasen in Tungodden et al (2004) point out that policy impact on poverty depends to a greater extent on initial inequality. Neglect of social inequalities hinders poverty reduction, and economic sustainability. Spicker et al (2007) also point out that dependency is characterised by super exploitation of labour and that poverty is a direct consequence of exclusion. Poverty reduction is one of the issues affecting the economic pillar of sustainable development (UNDP, 2004).

The Third world countries' political approach to development highlights that third world women should be understood as a separate category, different from western women. The situation of women needs to be analysed before women are subjected to foreign and national aid. Todaro (1997) noted that Third world aid is accompanied by inappropriate and faulty advice provided by uninformed, biased and ethnocentric international expert advisors from assistance agencies and multinational donor organisations. Where aid involves technical assistance, sometimes there is a dilemma because of lack understanding of the situation of women in developing countries. Sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists and economists who might have deeper understanding of the nature of societies to be aided either lack the financial muscle or are not given the opportunity because of the top down nature of aid and the conditions associated with it. The women in Development approach(WID) from the 1950s to date tends to be integrationist, that is ,incorporating women into existing structures (Moser,1993;Macdonald, Sprenger and Dubel,1997).The policies and projects help to improve the conditions(standard of living) and not their positions(subordination). They are characterized by neglect of economic and social inequalities of class and gender.Regmi et al in Sweetman, (1999) note that both Third world countries and women projects tend to focus on practical gender needs (PGN).Workshops, vocational, and occupational training confine them to domesticity that is, working as petty traders, food sellers, agricultural producers, secretaries, tailoring, hair dressing and beauty care instead of mainstreaming them into macro-economic agendas. This is just an extension of home activities characterised by poor remuneration which is unable to change their positions. Income generating projects by NGOS concentrate on the provision of goods and services, an extension of traditional female roles. Such programmes do not challenge existing patriarchal structures of property rights, labour relations and legal systems that maintain the rich and men in positions of power, subordinating women.

### **Gendered Bureaucratic Organisation**

Organisations the world over are gendered just as societies are .Men predominate in decision making in both the public and the private spheres. Gendered organisation is where' values, systems,structures,cultures,practices,accountability and incentives mean differently for men and women'(MacDonald et al,1997:27).Organisations also follow the Weberian style of policy formulation and implementation where top down rational rules and procedures are observed(Longwe in Campell,1999).In bureaucratic organisations there is overt(seen) and covert(unseen) patriarchy. Overt bureaucracy follow rules and procedures that are legal and rational while covert one has its own interests that may be opposed to those of the organisation.If organisational policies threaten the interests of covert patriarchy, gender policies are likely to be subverted and evaporated by the patriarchal pot. This is subversion of female interests to maintain gender inequality and traditional male domination. The top structures of the bureaucratic systems are a male preserve and are maintained by recruitment policies, conditions of service and promotion. Recruitment of women to top positions is a threat. There is what Beasley (1999) calls 'culture of alliance' between patriarchy and bureaucracy. Governments, NGOS, or international agencies can delay, subvert or ignore policies that threaten the privileges of a class, race or gender. This can be done through the giving of Third world women or people resources that are not key for changing their subordinate status ,for example, simple tools, inputs, food and clothing for PGN instead of land,technology,capital,skills, education and training for SGN.It is SGN that can help women to come out of poverty and dependency syndrome. Moseley and Logan in Lotz-Sisitka et al (2006) point out that

sustainable development should focus on the local, national and international power structures that underpin and maintain poverty. Without this it would be impossible to achieve any form of sustainable development.

### **Gender and Donor Policies**

Donors hold purse strings and do not usually analyse or criticize their own power and its effects on others, deliberate or unintended, positive or negative (MacDonald et al, 1997). Decisions or policies are imposed on the counter part as conditions for receiving assistance. Donors assume that they can and have the right to change other people or to stimulate them to change by offering or withholding resources. This has led receiving counter part organisations to pay lip service to secure funding. They tend to accept ideas but ignore them in practice. False promises are made to get financial power. Aiding Third world women in practice by the elite is secondary. MacDonald et al (1997:88) assert that ‘conditionality is inherent in all aid...the very process of preparing a project according to the guidelines set by the donor is an exercise in meeting conditions.’ This perpetuates unjust and unequal structures. After securing funds, questions of whom to empower? How to empower? How to choose those to be empowered and who are the stake holders remain problematic? There may be contradictions between the donor and the counter part (receiver) and the target groups. Conditions of donors may not go well with the receiving country. Interests of the receiving country or organisation maybe opposed to the needs of the target group. Gender interventions do not exist in a vacuum but in an economic, political, cultural and patriarchal environment. Because of the above foreign aid has failed to reduce poverty of women and that of developing countries despite that it has seen a fundamental shift from macro to micro-economic level where it targets particular groups ,for example small enterprises ,pro-poor women and individuals.

### **CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD**

The paper reveals that there is interdependency between men and women and also between Third world and the First world. However unequal power relations make it appear as if the less powerful are the ones that are dependent that is, women and the developing countries. Ranking, categorizing, and labeling have negative effects on both developing countries and women. Inequalities, poverty and dependency negatively affect sustainable development. Ideologies of patriarchy, capitalism and culture perpetuate poverty, dependency and subordination of women and developing countries. Aid further integrates women and developing countries into global structures of subordination and dependency through top down policies and projects that are in line with WID approach to development. Women are in the same predicament with developing countries when it comes to poverty, dependency and subordination. International aid has negative effects on both. The paper suggests a critical analysis of issues of dependency and poverty as they relate to global subordination within the framework of sustainable development. One of the slogans of a provincial workshop for the framework for action to fight poverty through sustainable development in Zimbabwe read “Think globally and act locally” (UNDP, 2004:2). There should be deconstruction of dependency through aid policies that are bottom up approaches rather than top down delivery services. Third world Governments should offer aid themselves to their poor people rather than wait for outside aid. Poverty and dependency are linked to underdevelopment and should be alleviated by development initiatives (Spicker et al, 2007). Development initiatives should take into account the three pillars of sustainable development, namely, environmental, social and economic. The majority of the poor depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. Equitable distribution of wealth creating resources is

key to sustainability. Women should be seen and treated as a differentiated category of white, educated, rural, urban, working and non-working and of different religious and ethnic backgrounds. Aid should take the above into consideration in order to serve the interests of these various groups. To achieve sustainable development it is important to meet the needs of all and the participation of all in all development levels of society. UNDP (2004) reveals that stakeholder ownership and involvement in decision making is one of the most critical factors in achieving sustainable development. Women should be afforded decision making at all stage of policies, programmes and projects, that is, their formulation, planning, implementation and evaluation to allow bottom up approaches. Grassroots women should also make decisions. Formulation of gender aware policies that take into consideration the interests of men and women in policies and programmes is also important. These should be distributive to address linkages between poverty and inequality. Education and empowerment that recognises differences between men and women, and between women themselves, is crucial for capacity building to achieve sustainable development. Global and gender analysis of women's contribution in terms of work, income, education and property ownership are of paramount importance in understanding issues of gender inequality, dependency and poverty.

## REFERENCES

- Beasley, C. (1999). *What is Feminism: An introduction To Feminist Theory*. London: SAGE publications.
- Bryson, V. (1992). *Feminist Political Theory*. Basingtoke: The MacMillan press Ltd.
- Desai, V. & Potter, R.B. (Eds.). (2002). *The Companion To Development Studies*. Hodder Headline Group: London.
- Fredrich, M. & Jellema, A. (2003). *Literacy, Gender and Social Agency: Adventures In Empowerment Action Aid*. London: DFID.
- Goldin, I. & Winters, L.A. (Eds.) (1995). *The Economics Of Sustainable Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goldthorpe, J.E. (1975). *The Sociology Of The Third World*. Cambridge: OUP.
- Goldthorpe, J.E. (1996). *The Sociology Of Post-Colonial societies: Economic Disparity, Cultural Diversity and Development*. Cambridge University press: Cambridge.
- Hafkin, N. & Bay, E. (1982). Colonialism and Women's Roles. In C. Allen and W. William, (Eds.). *Sociology Of Developing Societies: Sub-Saharan Africa* (pp 43-46). London & Basingtoke: The MacMillan Press.
- Hamm, B. & Muttagi, P.K. (Eds.). (1998). *Sustainable Development and Future Of Cities*. London: UNESCO.
- Hoogvelt, A.M.M. (1985). *The Sociology Of Developing Societies*. Houndmills: MacMillan publications Ltd.
- Hornby, A.S. (1982). *Oxford Advanced Dictionary Of English*. Oxford University press: Oxford.
- Hulmes, D. & Turner, M.M. (1990). *Sociology Of Development: Theories, Policies and Practices*. New-York: Harvester Wheat Sheaf.
- Izumi, K. (1999). Liberalisation, Gender and The Land Question In Sub-Saharan Africa. In C. Sweetman (Ed) *Women, Land and Agriculture* (PP 9-18). Oxford: Oxfam.
- Longwe, S.H. (1999). The Evaporation Of Gender Policies In The Patriarchal Cooking Pot. In Rown-Campbell, D. (Ed.). *Development With Women* (pp 11-31). Oxford: Oxfam publications.

- MacDonald, M., Sprenger, E. & Dube, I. (1997). *Gender and Organizational Change: Bridging The Gap Between Policy and Practice*. Amsterdam: Royal tropical Institute.
- Mackintosh, M. (1982). Domestic labour; Production and Reproduction. In C. Allen, & W. William. (Eds.). *Sociology Of Developing Societies: Sub-Saharan Africa* (PP 46-52). London & Basingstoke: Macmillan press Ltd.
- Marcus, M. & Ducklin, A. (1998). *Success In Sociology*. London: John Murray Publications.
- Mgugu, A. & Chimonyo, R. (2004). Land reform and Gender in Zimbabwe. In M. Masiwa (Ed.), *Post Independence Land Reform in Zimbabwe: Controversies and Impact On The Economy* (pp.147-160). Harare: UZ.
- Moser, C. (1993). *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Praining*. London: Routledge.
- Mukhopadhyay, M. (2001). Women Property, Women As Property. In "Gender and Development: Gender Perspectives On Property Inheritance". Amsterdam: Kit publishers.
- Mvududu, S. & McFadden, P. (2001). *Reconceptualising The Family In A Changing Southern African Environment*. Harare: WLSA.
- Redclift, M. (Ed.). (2000). *Sustainability: Life Chances and Livelihood*. New-York & London: Routledge.
- Regmi, S.C. & Fawcett, B. (1999). Integrating Gender Needs Into Drinking Water Projects In Nepal. In C. Sweetman. (Ed.). *Women, Land and Agriculture*. Oxford: Oxfam.
- Sardenberg, C., Costa, A.A. & Passos, E. (1999) Rural Development In Brazil: Are We Practicing Feminism or Gender? In C. Sweetman. (Ed.). *Women Land and Agriculture* (PP 28-38). Oxford: Oxfam.
- Schaefer, R.T. (2006). *Sociology: Brief Introduction*. New-York: McGraw Hill.
- Spicker, P., Leguizamon, S.A. & Gordon, D. (2007). *Poverty: An International Glossary*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Steve, B. & Steve, Y. (2006). *The SAGE Dictionary Of Sociology*. London: SAGE publishing limited.
- Sweetman, C. (1999). *Women, Land and Agriculture*. Oxford: Oxfam.
- Todaro, M.P. (1997). *Economic Development*. London and New-York: Longman.
- Tungodden, B., Stern, N. & Koltad, I. (Eds.) (2004). *Toward Pro-poor Policies: Aid, Institutions and Globalization*. New-York: World Bank and Oxford University press.
- UNDP. (2004). Zimbabwe National Sustainable Development Strategies. Harare: WSSD.
- UNDP & FAO. (1994). *Gender Issues, Constraints and Potentials In Agritex: An Overview*. Harare: UNDP and FAO.
- UNIFEM. (2004). *Why Should We Care About Paid Work?* Harare: Frontline Electronic publishing.
- UN. (2004). *Zimbabwe Millennium Development Goals: Progress Report*. Harare: Government printers.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHORS:**

Matsa Winniefridah is a lecturer in the Department of Gender Studies, Midlands State University, Gweru, Zimbabwe.