

*Aruna Rao and Michelle Friedman*

## **Transforming institutions: history and challenges An international perspective**

Over the past few decades, many people -- both women and men -- have worked to develop and implement gender-equitable policies for sustainable development and societal transformation. Sites for these struggles have included a variety of organizational settings such as public administration, political parties, multilateral and bilateral agencies, many private organizations, and local decision-making bodies both within governments and within communities. Why there has been such limited success in these endeavours and what might help to deepen existing practices have been the subject of a number of recent reflections.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter offers our perspectives on what has shaped the connections between gender justice and organizational/institutional transformation debates, the visions that are developing and some of the current salient concerns. It draws particularly on the key insights emerging from the international conference 'Transformation for Gender Justice and Organizational Change' organized by the Association for Women in Development (AWID), the African Gender Institute (AGI) and partners,<sup>2</sup> held in South Africa in 1998. Firstly, we assess some key learnings from development interventions aiming at gender equity over the past 30 years. Secondly, we outline the objectives of organizational transformation and how to begin a process of change. We then examine some of the questions and issues that organizations need to consider as they attempt to move towards gender equality.<sup>3</sup> Finally, we highlight some dilemmas that organizations face in this process of transformation.

The issues discussed in this chapter draw on our own experiences and writings as well as those of our colleagues working in various contexts. It is important to acknowledge that the particular significance of these issues will depend on local histories, contexts and conditions. It is nevertheless hoped that by identifying important linkages in different contexts we can deepen our understanding and articulate new questions to further the process that has begun.

### **Historical influences: what have we learned?**

While the past 30 years have brought progress towards gender equality and equity in the world, there is still a long way to go to achieve this goal. From the recent history of development interventions and political struggles aimed at gender equality and women's empowerment a number of important lessons have been learned from a variety of different contexts.

#### ***The link between gender equality and social justice***

It is clear that the achievement of gender justice is not going to be possible while other forms of social injustice continue. International women's movements have demanded fundamental changes in our conception of development -- more explicit changes in power relations between women and men, between classes, between the North and the South, and greater environmental and social sustainability. This demand is important; however, any action taken will be heavily influenced by context. At the end of the AWID--AGI conference held in South Africa, Gloria Bonder described how for the Latin American situation:

*The historical approach is very much the way we relate to the possibility of organizational change.... The struggle for gender equity is very related to the struggle for social justice and democratization. Social justice in the seventies, democratization in the eighties and nineties are very tied. It also gives us our approach to any work we do concerning gender justice -- we call it gender equity -- which is highly politicized. (Bonder, 1998 -- final session)*

On the other hand, Syed Hashemi of the Grameen Trust in Bangladesh explained how contextual constraints have led to specific limited but still useful actions. 'What has not worked are strong left movements wanting to smash the state and conscientize poor people towards claiming their rights. NGO activity is for -- not of -- the proletariat, so one either gives up the struggle, or finds a way to work with the state. There have been some real benefits in that' (Hashemi, 1998 -- session on interventions into local government institutions and service delivery). However, he also illustrated how at the household level, for instance, increasing women's access to credit does not necessarily change power dynamics within the family:

*At the moment some six million women are receiving credit through NGO activity in Bangladesh. There are problems, of course, but it has brought them out of the household into the public sphere. But, it is not enough for women to have some economic power... in terms of ideology and legal superstructure, there has been no change. A woman could be earning the same money as a man, but does not have access to other structures of power. For example, she could be cut off from her inheritance or have her children taken away, legally. Something needs to be done at local level about the distribution of power.*

### ***Institutional transformation is central to development***

A second lesson from the recent past emerges from countries in transition from liberation struggles to governance and reconstruction for equitable and sustainable development. Putting gender equality on the political agenda has been part of the ongoing struggle in relatively newly independent countries or countries moving from totalitarian regimes to more democratic ones. The transformation of institutions is central to the goal of translating this vision of development into concrete policies, programmes and practices. South Africa is a good example of the latter experience.

Since the historic first democratic election in South Africa in 1994, 'institutional transformation' has become almost a household word. Once the majority political party succeeded in gaining access to the state, it quickly became obvious that democratic agendas would have to be implemented via the channels of existing institutional infrastructures. For institutions and organizations constructed under the apartheid regime to deliver goods and services to new clients or to 'old' clients in more respectful ways, they would have to transform. As the mediating bodies through which a new political agenda would have to be translated into practical reality, these organizations and institutions are crucially important to realizing the vision of the 'new South Africa'. Inequities based on a colonial heritage and associated systems of 'race' privilege, class exploitation and gender oppression are all fairly obvious and visible in this context. The political struggle succeeded in transforming the representation of political party representatives in Parliament, which is now majority black with one of the highest percentages of women in the world. The face of leadership in South Africa is certainly changing. Boards of directors have and are being changed; senior managers, executive officers and director-generals

who are not white men, are being hired. Affirmative action is high on the agenda. Numbers are most certainly important. But is it enough to change the numbers?

Government has gone a long way in developing various policy documents to guide its practice in the direction of greater social equity. However, changing people's values and ways of behaving and entrenched institutional cultures is not so easy. At the AWID--AGI international conference held in South Africa, Pregs Govender, the South African Member of Parliament (MP) who opened the conference remarked:

*We have entered institutions which have existed for decades and which have long established and consolidated their priorities and hierarchies, their culture and their power. Often it is easier to accept these constraints and work within their limitations than to challenge them. Those who choose to grapple with the challenge of transforming these institutions are in a better position to ensure that they do not continue to be guided by the old vested interests. (Govender, 1998 -- opening session)*

In other words, for institutions to support and be guided by the interests of poor and marginal groups of people, the newly elected bodies and faces need to transform institutional cultures from those that were based on 'old vested interests'. Those people who refuse to accept the existing constraints and are prepared to 'challenge the normal' may be in a better position to promote different interests.

### ***Need for a deeper examination of institutions***

The third lesson that we wish to reflect upon in this chapter derives from experiences that have focused on and attempted to work specifically on organizations themselves. From various contexts, it has been learned that to move organizations towards greater gender equality, strategies and activities focused on a single layer of an organization may be necessary but are seldom sufficient. For instance, efforts that have concentrated on policy development, affirmative action, training or project/programme analysis with less emphasis on organizational and institutional cultures, rules, procedures, budgets and practices have had limited success. Organizational change practitioners have been forced to look at what Joan Acker calls 'the institutional principles that underlie organizational forms' (Acker, 1992). The basic building blocks of many of our institutions are gendered in ways that are quite invisible from the surface and prevent gender equality and social transformation. We need to challenge and change the 'deep structures' of the organizations in which we work and the organizational systems and processes that are built on those foundations.<sup>4</sup>

By way of illustration, let us consider some of the efforts aimed at single layers of organizations. In the 1970s, for example, the international women's lobby working with the United Nations Decade for Women carved a place within the growing attention to social objectives, particularly targeted approaches to poverty alleviation. Poor women were identified as a target group along with others to whom, it was argued, resources must be specially targeted. Within organizations, professional women pushed for and pulled any lever of change that would reallocate resources. This approach ultimately resulted in a variety of marginal and under-funded programme interventions that primarily focused on welfare issues and women's role as mothers. Mainstream interventions turned a blind eye to poor women's productive roles and steered productive resources towards men. Another example is the history of developing gender policies in organizations. By the end of the 1980s, while most development organizations had a policy on

women in development or gender equity, few had incentives to operationalize that policy. Often those policies sat on shelves and gathered dust, used mainly by those who were already advocates for women. Another case in point is affirmative action policy, which is a necessary starting point but is not sufficient. The actual number of women in an organization is less important than how they think and what they do.

Gender training has faced a similar fate. During the 1980s, 'gender training' developed as a popular response to the need for change. Reflecting the experience of a decade, the first international conference on gender training and development planning held in Bergen, Norway, in May 1991 concluded that the effect of gender training is limited and impermanent when pursued alone -- that is, divorced from other policy, institutional and advocacy interventions aimed at bringing about organizational transformation. Systemic intervention in the form of incentives and disincentives for certain kinds of bureaucratic behaviour is also necessary (Rao et al., 1991).

Different practitioners have walked different paths towards recognizing a need for a deeper examination of organizations. For some, the confluence of the above experiences has led to a deeper examination of institutions. For others, preparation for implementing the political agenda forced better acquaintance with organizations and how they work. For all of us though, there is a need to think more deeply about organizations themselves. Just as you don't 'add the idea that the world is round to the idea that the world is flat -- rather, you go back and rethink the whole matter' (Minnich, 1995) -- trying to 'add gender' into the structure and work of organizations is not enough. We need to understand and re-conceptualize what an organization is, and then we need to re-invent organizations and institutions of all kinds in all our societies to better address our vision of gender justice and racial equality, integrated with sustainable development. For organizations to champion this path, we must change them to fit new and more appropriate values, evolving cultures and ways of working.

### **Organizational transformation as a means to societal transformation**

Institutional and organizational transformation do not exist in a vacuum. At least part of the point of working towards such transformation is that it would contribute towards a more equitable society. In her keynote address at the AWID--AGI conference, Pregs Govender offered some deceptively simple-sounding thoughts on a vision for such a society -- one where:

*...the basic necessities of meaningful work, shelter, food, education, health and leisure are facilitated so that every human being can develop to the fullest of their creative potential. This vision translates into developing political, economic and social rights and choices for all women and men. It must move our society away from the existing extremes of wealth and poverty towards equality, and towards respect and healthy sharing of power and responsibility, in our homes and in our society. (Govender, 1998 -- opening session)*

Transformation is aimed not only at an 'end' but also at the means. The vision consists not only of 'what' but also 'how' -- a process. It means building an accountability context -- accountability of organizations to their political and environmental context, to the international women's movement, domestic constituencies and to their own members and primary stakeholders. It also means trying to build towards organizations based not on 19th century Newtonian principles of materialism and reductionism but rather on 20th century science that

values holism, understanding the system as a system and gives primary value to relationships that exist between seemingly discrete parts. In the quantum world, for example, relationships are everything. The implication for organizations is that power is the capacity generated by relationships. Thus, facilitating processes that engage people, that look for order instead of control, that energize people's creative abilities and empower rather than coerce -- all these will define organizations that usefully survive the 20th century (Wheatley, 1992).

It became clear at an international conference held in Canada in 1996 on gender and organizations that what is being aimed at is neither organizational development nor organizational change but rather organizational transformation. In the report of that conference, Kelleher et al. note:

*In the case of development organizations, this means including women as architects and designers of programmes, and as agents, managers, and beneficiaries; and re-shaping social institutions and organizations to include different men and women's varied perspectives. The long-term aim is to move organizations in a direction that can accommodate, cherish and foster the creativity and the productivity of women, men, young, old, people of colour, people of differing ability. We are aiming at organizations which can incorporate goals and values that are life-affirming, human-centered, and justice-oriented. For this to come about constraining gender roles and ideologies that influence organizational structures, values and behaviours must be changed. (1996)*

And as Joan Scott asserts, we must challenge power from the basis of difference (Scott, 1991). To do this, we need to think about organizations in a more holistic way. Stimulating questions about the assumptions at the heart of institutions is one way of reaching a deeper understanding. Helping organizations to examine ways in which those assumptions and values inhibit gender equality and equity often highlights how organizations' ability to effectively pursue a social transformation agenda is in turn affected. This can happen in two key ways.

Firstly, organizational values that derive from value-biased ideologies including those of gender-biased ideologies, resource distribution systems and cultural traditions can inhibit marginalized women's and men's equal access to and participation in all levels of organizational systems and processes. A concern with gender equality within public systems and social change organizations is not only an end in itself but, more importantly, is its instrumental link with achieving gender equality and equity in the work of those organizations with poor women and men.

Secondly, other aspects of traditional organizations that are not necessarily or obviously gendered, such as hierarchical power, control over information, and decision-making by a few at the top (who are often exclusively men) may make it harder both to work towards gender equality and equity within the organization and to make real gains in women's empowerment and poverty alleviation on the ground. In other words, organizations that allow little entry for alternate, more gender-equitable methods in their structure, their visions and the way they operate may be far less effective in addressing gender ideologies and power imbalances in their programmatic work.

### **Gender, justice and organizational transformation: questions and issues**

In the past few years, a number of in-depth gender and organizational transformation interventions have been carried out in a variety of settings around the world. For example,<sup>5</sup> in the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), a Bangladeshi development organization

working with poor rural women, the work focused on strengthening BRAC's ability to improve its programmes and its internal organizational quality by making links between structure and outcomes, quantity and quality, and internal gender equality change and external gender equality outcomes.

Colleagues at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) have used collaborative action research to deepen understanding of the scope and complexity of gender issues in the workplace and to test and develop approaches for working in this area. Researchers worked with members of the organization from the beginning to set goals, frame the inquiry and analysis, interpret the findings and design change interventions. They identified aspects of the work environment that have differential impacts on different groups of women and men in terms of productivity, job satisfaction and retention, and have worked to create work environments that support women and men, in both the international (global) and national (Mexican) contexts.

Others have worked in profit-making corporations focusing on the balance between work and family to challenge work practices and intervene to make changes that would benefit the organization and legitimate employee's work/family issues.<sup>6</sup> In South Africa, some organizational transformation efforts are attempting to place issues of gender justice at the heart of processes such as that being undertaken with magistrates in the South African justice system (Olckers, 1998) or with the supply of rural credit in the South African Land Bank (Dolny and Masekela, 1998).

There are many questions and issues emerging from recent work on gender and organizational transformation. They cluster around five main topics:

- **Context** (Where and why does transformation take place?)
- **Vision** (What is our vision of gender justice within transformed organizations? In keeping with the vision of society we are working towards, what are the characteristics of transformed organizations?)
- **Changing agents**<sup>7</sup> (Who will act as changing agent? As changing agents, we come with our own values and biases. If we are helping organizational staff to become more open to different ways of being and doing, how do we manage this in ourselves as changing agents?)
- **Transformation** (How do we transform organizations and build gender justice? What are the factors we need to consider?)
- **Progress and sustainability** (How do we monitor progress and ensure sustainability?)

### *Context*

- What are the contextual imperatives -- political, moral or economic -- that support and shape transformation initiatives and/or possibilities?
- How do we situate this change effort in the light of macroeconomic realities?
- How do we adapt our strategies to particular cultural and social contexts -- for example, what is different/the same about work in South Africa and in Bangladesh?
- How do we adapt our strategies to types of organizations (e.g. profit-making/non-profit/government/institutions, large/small) and particular organizational cultures?
- What role does an external constituency play in pressing for organizational accountability? Pressure for or against the desired change? Should we as change agents build the ability of this constituency to hold organizations accountable?

### *Vision*

- Women and men represented in equal numbers at all levels and in all functions?
- Equal benefits and, where necessary, re-distribution across gender, class and race in resource allocation within and outside organizations?
- Organizations with social justice and environmental sustainability goals and delivery capacities?
- Community- and client-centric organizations that work towards women's empowerment and transformations in gender relations?
- Balanced productive and reproductive division of labour -- ending the split between work, home and community?
- Better valuing of reproductive labour (e.g. paid, included in Gross National Product)?
- Decrease of hierarchy and instrumentality in organizations?
- Greater inclusion of marginal voices in decision-making processes?
- Empowerment and accountability at all levels in organizations?
- Race, ethnic origin, age, class and sexual orientation cease to be causes of discrimination in organizations?
- Organizations that value different perspectives (e.g. in the boardroom)?
- An end to gender-based violence including sexual harassment?

### *Changing agents*

- How do we ourselves come to model the different ways of being and doing that we are advocating?
- How do we decide on the optimal insider/outsider mix for change efforts in a particular situation?
- How do we build 'change teams'?

### *Transformation*

- How do changes inside the organization (e.g. gender equity/equality, relationships, how the work is done) affect the organization's ability to 'deliver' goods and services?
- What is the relationship between individual change, group change and systemic change in an organization? Where should change agents put their energy? How? Why?
- What is the relationship between politically motivated changes, constituency pressure and organizational transformation? Are there different roles for changing agents?
- Can we keep the focus on gender justice and improving the organization's effectiveness simultaneously? Can we keep the focus on gender justice within broader transformation efforts? Why do we lose the focus on gender justice in these processes?
- Can or should we subsume gender and racial equality work within seemingly more palatable organizational change processes, such as organizational development or management training?
- What is the role of policy (e.g. affirmative action), training, focus on analysing and changing work practice? How do we link these in a strategy?
- How do we understand and use power and leadership in this work -- both positively and negatively?
- What are our implicit beliefs about how transformation occurs? (For example, what are our assumptions about the role of prominent internal 'champions' or 'change entrepreneurs' in a variety of positions, or about whether change occurs first in the head, the heart, or the body 'doing' in new ways?)
- How effective are change processes that rely on negotiations and dialogic processes in transforming unequal structures of power? How does dialogue mask difficult issues? How do you strategize around struggle in this process? How do you deal with emerging conflict?
- How does women's empowerment link up with gender justice and vice versa? Can this be a negative link as well as a positive one?
- How do we keep ourselves and others from simplistic either/or thinking and stereotyping, and instead ensure learning? How do we instill a culture of questioning our own way of thinking -- 'thinking against ourselves'?

### *Progress and sustainability*

- What do we do to ensure the sustainability of the intervention?
- How do we build ownership and drivers?
- How do we monitor and evaluate progress? What are feasible and measurable indicators of success?

### **Dilemmas and paradoxes**

In working towards organizational transformation, some of the most interesting issues are paradoxes or dilemmas that are extremely complex and offer no clear pathways. Three that we would like to highlight centre around power and hierarchy in institutions, instrumentality, and how gender issues may be lost when there is a dual agenda.

#### *Power and hierarchy*

Experiences of trying to work in transformative ways with the dynamics of power and hierarchy are proving how much more complex these issues are than was originally thought. A key dilemma is that power (thought of as control or the ability to influence the behaviour of others) without accountability and transparency can easily lead to abuse. At the same time, positional power and authority can open the door to new ideas in the organization and push forward progressive change. A number of serious transformation efforts would never have happened without the strong support of the key organizational leadership -- the BRAC Gender programme, for example, would never have happened without the support of BRAC's Executive Director. Similarly, two large-scale transformation processes in South Africa were centrally supported by a government minister (Department of Water Affairs) and a chief executive officer (Land Bank). While the concentration of power at the top of hierarchies and the abuse of power have been well documented, it is also becoming clear that when power is diffuse so that everyone has a little but there is no leadership, things don't get done. The latter situation, too, can thwart a gender justice and transformation agenda.

Power has both positive and negative aspects, but more than that, there are many conceptualizations of power. Conventionally, power is perceived as a limited commodity -- like a cake: if I have a bigger slice, you will necessarily have a smaller one. Other views see power as a source of energy that is not only a scarce resource but also one that can be multiplied if it is shared. In addition, there are many ways in which power can manifest itself. For instance, via influence, ability to set agendas and in the unquestioned assumptions we make about the way things are or ought to be. There is no good or bad and the aim is not to demolish one type of power simply to build another in a similar form -- there is no linear path. We do, however, need to be much more aware of how we think about and exercise power -- the implications it has in its myriad forms for structure, for process and for our ultimate goals.

#### *Instrumentality*

Vandana Shiva (1993) has written about the monoculture of the mind that prevents us from seeing alternatives. Similarly, organizations suffer from valuing instrumentality -- a narrow focus

on the accomplishment of quantitative goals -- and rationality above all else. In one sense, to say that organizations should not be goal focused sounds absurd! But we are learning that for most organizations, instrumentality and over-valuing efficiency militates against gender equity and equality and much else. Below, we outline a number of ways in which this happens:

- The narrow focus on objectives or targets (which in development organizations are usually related only to inputs and not to impact on the lives of women and poor families) means that an organization can lose sight of its larger mission as it pursues targets. For example, in BRAC, one of the goals is women's empowerment. They do this primarily by lending women small amounts of money to finance microenterprises. BRAC managers are trained to be constantly concerned with meeting their targets for loan disbursement and repayment. While this is critical, it can overwhelm interest in any other activity that may contribute even more directly to women's empowerment.
- Instrumentality and a focus on efficiency can lead organizations to focus on 'business as it is' and not to take time and resources to explore new ways of working that may benefit the organization in the longer run.
- In non-profit and government organizations, a belief in instrumentality can lead (sensibly enough) to the implementation of performance- or results-based management systems that include quantitative targets by which the managers (and the organization) are held accountable. The focus on quantitative measures often leads to a devaluing of qualitative aspects of the work, and the work itself is likely to have less focus on 'soft' activities, such as building teams or building agreement and partnerships.
- Organizations that are overly instrumental may put short-term goals ahead of their concern for the wellbeing of their staff.

All of these results of instrumentality may be seen as learning blocks. They prevent the organization from responding to a changing environment. These learning blocks certainly prevent the organization from evolving more gender-equitable ways of operating. As intervenors, we argue that to accomplish the long-term mission of the organization, it is important to consider issues not strictly related to short-term, measurable outputs. The strategy should be one of dialogue, negotiation, education and organizational experimentation. Paradoxically, it may be said that, for strategic purposes, the intervenor uses the instrumentality of the organization to argue for a less instrumental approach.

### ***The dual agenda and losing gender***

We have learned that the feminist goals of social transformation need to be linked to the values of the organization. Positive change will not come about if there is no direct connection between poor women's empowerment, gender transformation and the explicit values of the organization. In the South African and other similar contexts, where 'race' and 'class' are major issues, gender justice concerns cannot be pursued in isolation. Yet, again and again, experience of gender and organizational transformation interventions has shown that when we pursue a dual agenda -- either gender and social justice more broadly or gender justice and organizational effectiveness -- the gender dimension easily gets lost. Why?

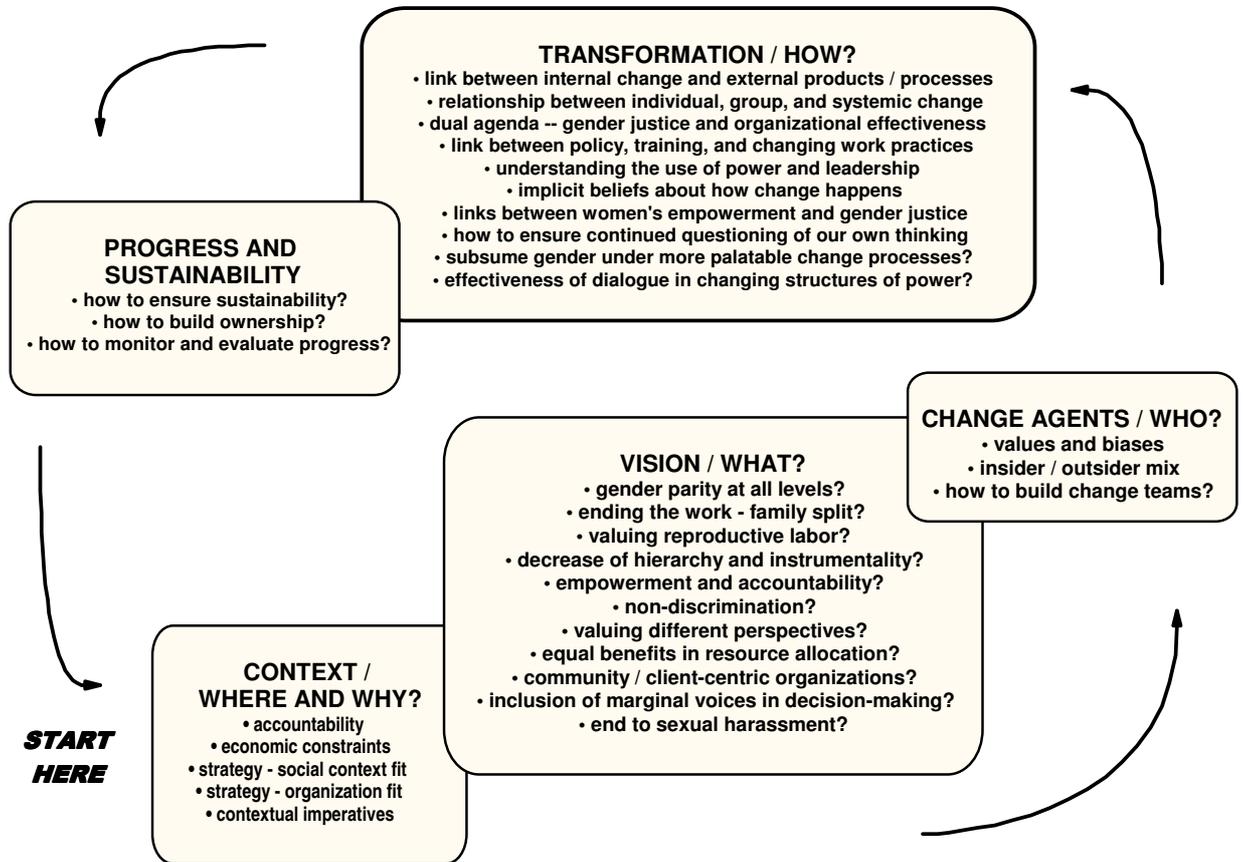
In the first scenario (gender and social justice), gender justice concerns often get sidelined to 'race' concerns.<sup>8</sup> Given colonial histories and, in South Africa, the apartheid legacy, unless gender justice concerns are continuously articulated and struggled for, they can be lost. At any rate, they cannot be fought for on their own, separately from other glaring and dominant social inequities. In the second scenario (gender justice and organizational effectiveness), aspects of organizations that are related to the gender justice agenda but are not necessarily obviously gendered -- such as hierarchy, top-down decision-making, control over information, lack of a climate of respect and collegiality -- are often as or more important to many who work in those organizations than gender issues. Also, the power of organizational instrumentality can co-opt what start out as gender-related interventions to existing short-term objectives. In addition, when the process we engage in starts with where people currently stand and proceeds through dialogue and negotiation, it tries to engage the power structure in organizations to be part of a process that dismantles their own power and challenges their deeply held gender biases. Such challenges can sometimes be too threatening and painful. So gender justice gets sidelined and what often remains are the managerial aspects of interventions. Holding onto gender justice and, as changing agents working from different locations, building constituencies of support and accountability to keep gender justice at the centre are challenges that have to be met.

## **Conclusion**

Douglas North (1999) defines institutions as the 'structures that humans impose on human interaction'. He refers to formal rules of the game, informal constraints, such as norms of behaviour and codes of conduct, and the degree to which both the formal and the informal rules can be enforced. Which issues get on the global development, human rights and governance agendas and how they get there, the effectiveness of organizations to produce equitable, including gender-equitable, outcomes, and our ability to build an accountability context for positive results -- these all depend on the formal rules but perhaps more so on the intangible, complex and sometimes hidden but highly powerful terrain of the informal ones, namely the institutional values, norms, structures and processes that underlie and shape human interaction. We can see them and we can feel them, we know a little about them but we know very little about how to change those deeply held institutional principles, many of which hinder our agendas. We know even less about how to enforce change.

This is both a humbling and sobering recognition and much work lies ahead to further develop knowledge in the field, make synergistic linkages with new thinking in other fields, share understanding and experiences to move us further along, and apply our learning on the ground. Our commitment to poverty eradication and justice and equality must propel us to build alliances so that we can learn from each other and work together.

**GENDER, JUSTICE AND ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION:  
QUESTIONS AND ISSUES**



**Notes**

1 See, for example, David Kelleher, Aruna Rao, Rieky Stuart and Kirsten Moore, 'Building a Global Network for Gender and Organizational Change': Montreal conference report, 1996; conference on 'Gender Justice and Organizational Change/Institutional Transformation', sponsored by the AGI, GETNET and PandDM at the University of Witwatersrand, March 1988, South Africa; AWID--AGI seminar on 'Transformation for Gender Justice and Organizational Change', June 1998, Cape Town, South Africa.

2 The South African planning committee included the Gender Education and Training Network (GETNET), the School for Public Administration and Management at the University of the Witwatersrand, MBM Change Agents and Pregs Govender (MP).

3 When we use the words 'gender equity' and 'gender equality', we are suggesting equality based not on sameness but on difference.

4 In 'Getting institutions right for women in development' (1997), Anne Marie Goetz provided a useful discussion on the distinction between institutions and organizations, which is pertinent here. While both terms are often used synonymously, institutions are best understood as Douglas North describes as 'frameworks for socially constructed rules and norms which function to limit choice' or as the rules of the game. Therefore, Goetz suggests that 'the project for gender-sensitive institutional change is...to routinize gender-equitable forms of social interaction and to challenge the legitimacy of forms of social organization which discriminate against women'.

5 For some other examples, see cases presented at the AWID--AGI meeting in Cape Town by Dolny and Masekela on the South African Land Bank, Syed on the changes to the Shalish, local government system in Bangladesh, Oyegun on a tertiary education institution in South Africa.

6 By and large, gender and organizational work in profit-making organizations focuses on the dual agenda of the work/family balance and organizational effectiveness in meeting stated goals. This in contrast to some of the ongoing efforts with public institutions and social development organizations in the South, where at least in theory, if not yet in practice, a much larger transformation is aimed for in institutional principles and in the vision of society, in which a variety of organizations play a part.

7 The term 'changing agents' was born at the 1996 Canada conference on Gender and Organizational Change. It recognizes that change agents doing gender and organizational transformation work engage themselves as well as others in a profoundly challenging process in which the biases, fears, beliefs and values of all concerned come under discussion. We, as change agents, need to be clear that we too are speaking in our own voices and that aspects of deep structure are embedded in our own unconscious, perhaps those very aspects we are trying to change. Thus, we need to recognize that in trying to effect change, we cannot remain untouched. (See Kelleher, D. et al., op. cit., pp. 43--45)

8 In the current context, class concerns are hardly being dealt with at all as part of organizational change processes.

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