

# Gender Sensitivity in the Design and Implementation of the Habitat Shelter Project: the Case of RTU Extension Service

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**Abstract** - The Rizal Technological University (RTU) – Gender and Development Office and College of Engineering and Industrial Technology have embarked its focus in the recognition of women in extension services in linkage with Habitat for Humanity Philippines, Inc. (HFHPI). Accordingly, women are the primary “consumers of shelter” yet they are “in an advantaged position with respect to acquiring shelter.”

The study made use of the descriptive methods of research. Further inferential analysis had been derived to identify the differences among female and male in terms of their perceptions in some of the dimensions and concerns being raised during the implementation of the project. It has been revealed that the female were more gender sensitive than male in terms of their representations, supports in facilities and services during the stages in the project execution.

The only issue with regard to gender and development in housing project is the absence of emphasis on documentation of gender programs in the different stages of the project. Nevertheless, the overall assessment of the housing project is found to be gender sensitive.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Many issues on gender sensitivity are now arising with regard to housing projects such as the Habitat Shelter Project - the extension service of the Rizal Technological University (RTU). This concern gave interest to RTU Gender and Development Office under the Office of the Vice President for Research and Extension Services which is now embarking its focus on the recognition of women in the University workforce, research development and extension services.

Thus, in the year 2012 the RTU-College of Engineering and Industrial Technology, Department of Civil Engineering has also expanded its research and extension services in linkage with Habitat for Humanity Philippines, Inc. (HFHPI) for house construction at Bistek Ville – 1 Payatas, Quezon City. The project is a joint undertaking of the local government of Quezon City, Department of Education (DepED), HFHPI and Pag-ibig Housing (PAG-IBIG) Program for teachers and informal settler families. The house unit has an area of at least 30 square meters with the necessary facilities for average family income dwellers. The project was implemented through funding from the different funding sponsors of the HHPFI under their funding scheme for the construction of the building. The funds are solely for the materials and

payment for the engineers, contractors, technology experts and paid laborers. The land was donated by the local government of Quezon City.

However, the program focuses its services more in spirit of volunteerism which various local and international schools, other agencies and individuals are coming in as part of their services, and for others as part of their humanitarian service.

In this case, the faculty and students were properly mobilized through character building and development activities; assist in the provision of simple, decent and affordable shelter to the economically depressed population especially re-settlers; and to recognize the role of women in shelter development. Accordingly, women are the primary “consumers of shelter” yet they are “in a disadvantaged position with respect to acquiring shelter” (Sorock et al, 2013)[7].

Gender division of labor and gender needs in housing project have been given consideration now a days especially women’s involvement in various stages of the project and their participation in designing the house and the settlement. Reduce women’s time spent on reproductive activities or enhance women’s productive activities living in low-cost housing project. Design of house provides women with adequate space and facilities as well as lighting for home-based income-generating activities; strategic location of electrical outlets for the possible use of electrical appliances later; and layout of the house that allows women to keep an eye on young children while doing other tasks. The location of the house should provide women better access to water and sanitation facilities, transport, and security. Thus, this study evolves in assessing the gender sensitivity of the housing project considering these factors.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The International Agreements on Housing and Gender pronounced during the United Nation-Habitat [9][10] II Conference in Istanbul in 1996 were still the guiding principle in the development of Habitat human settlement, as quoted below:

### 2.1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care

and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

## 2.2. Gender Sensitivity

Habitat is committed to the goal of gender equality in human settlements development. They further commit by:

(a) Integrating gender perspectives in human settlements related legislation, policies, programs and projects through the application of gender-sensitive analysis;

(b) Developing conceptual and practical methodologies for incorporating gender perspectives in human settlements planning, development and evaluation, including the development of indicators;

(c) Collecting, analyzing and disseminating gender-disaggregated data and information on human settlements issues, including statistical means that recognize and make visible the unremunerated work of women, for use in policy and program planning and implementation;

(d) Integrating a gender perspective in the design and implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable resource management mechanisms, production techniques and infrastructure development in rural and urban areas;

(e) Formulating and strengthening policies and practices to promote the full and equal participation of women in human settlements planning and decision-making.

## 2.3. Adequate Shelter for All

Habitat reaffirms their commitment to the full and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing, as provided for in international instruments. In this context, they recognize an obligation by Governments to enable people to obtain shelter and to protect and improve dwellings and neighborhoods. They commit to the goal of improving living and working conditions on an equitable and sustainable basis, so that everyone will have adequate shelter that is healthy, safe, secure, accessible and affordable and that includes basic services, facilities and amenities, and will enjoy freedom from discrimination in housing and legal security of tenure.

## 2.4. Sustainable Human Settlements

Habitat commits to the goal of sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world by developing societies that will make efficient use of resources within the carrying capacity of ecosystems and take into account the precautionary principle approach, and by providing all people, in particular those belonging to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, with equal opportunities for a healthy, safe and productive life in harmony with nature and their cultural heritage and spiritual and cultural values, and which ensures economic and social development and

environmental protection, thereby contributing to the achievement of national sustainable development goals.

As quoted by Chant (2013)[1], in her study, gender and urban development are intimately interrelated, and the politics of space are never far from the picture. Recognition that space and the built environment are constituted by, as well as constitutive of gender, has long been established in feminist analyses of the city, even if the 'private' space of the household has tended to be somewhat neglected in mainstream theory. Furthermore, from their study entitled "Cities as Spaces for Women? Demographic Dimensions," one of the key demographic processes pertinent to the contemporary gender dynamics of cities is that women are increasingly forming the majority of urban populations across the Global South. This is especially so in Latin America where strongly feminized sex ratios bear witness to female-selective migration over several decades.

This complex assemblage of gender disparities requires a nuanced consideration of women's disadvantage from a multidimensional perspective which takes into consideration the politics of space at different and interrelated scales from the household, to the neighborhood, to cities at large (Chant and Datu, 2011)[2].

Khosla (2009)[4] stated that awareness of intra-spatial heterogeneity is also paramount: even poor homes and neighborhoods, for instance, vary in terms of location (central, inner-city, peripheral), tenure (rental/de jure or de facto ownership), and character (slum/non-slum; consolidated/precarious; serviced/un- or semi-serviced). As such, women living in peri-urban slums devoid of services and infrastructure, residing in low quality shelter, and constrained in their ability to connect with the rest of the city may be more challenged than their counterparts living in similarly marginalized but more centrally-situated neighborhoods.

The traditional lower levels of female-selective rural-urban migration in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia owe to deep intertwined spatial and social processes such as physical and moral restrictions on independent female movement. It includes poor employment opportunities for women, and encouragement of young men to gain experience in the city as a form of masculine 'rite of passage' (McIlwaine, 2013)[5].

Despite evidence that women in both of these regions are now gaining ground in urban labor markets, increases in female migration are also driven by rural women's cumulative disadvantage in land acquisition and inheritance coupled with economic deterioration in the countryside and the pressures on households to spread risk (Tacoli, 2010)[8]. Additional factors responsible for women's urban drift in countries such as Tanzania include the need for HIV-positive women to obtain medical treatment, as well as to avoid stigma in close-knit rural communities (Hughes and Wickeri, 2011)[3].

## 2.5 Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines

In 2004[6], formerly Secretary Ralph G. Recto and Chairperson Myrna T. Yao of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino, the National

Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) formulated the *Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (See Annex) for Project Development, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation*, in collaboration with the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) and the Official Development Assistance-Gender and Development (ODA-GAD) Network, with funding support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The set of guidelines serves as a common instrument among the NEDA, proponent/implementing agencies and donor organizations for ensuring the gender responsiveness of programs and projects in their various stages.

Lessons learned from the conduct of training and from the actual utilization of the Guidelines paved the way for the revision and expansion of the original set of guidelines and the printing of its Second Edition in 2007. The Second Edition introduced sector checklists for justice, information and communication technologies, and microfinance projects, in addition to the original checklists for agriculture and agrarian reform, natural resource management, infrastructure, private sector development, education, health, housing and settlement, and women and peace projects.

Utilizing the Guidelines, the NEDA was able to prepare the 2006, 2007 and 2008 reports on the gender responsiveness of ODA programs and projects based on data provided by donor institutions. In 2009, NEDA made a major milestone in its gender and development work with the introduction of the Guidelines in assessing the gender responsiveness of programs and projects under the 17th ODA Portfolio Review.

The Guidelines has been widely disseminated, and with the growing awareness and appreciation of its usefulness, there have been continuous requests for orientation, training, and coaching on the use of the tool. All these necessitated the reprinting of the Guidelines. This reprint of the Second Edition offers new sector checklists developed by the International Labor Organization-Philippine Office for labor and employment, child labor, and migration.

They expressed their gratitude to the Australian Agency for International Development for financially supporting the reprinting of the Second Edition of the Guidelines.

Once again, they emphasized the use of the Guidelines continuously and advocate for its utilization in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects. Hopefully, our endeavor toward gender-responsive programs and projects will contribute to the protection and fulfillment of women's rights, the promotion of gender equality, and the improvement the quality of lives of both women and men.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Research Method

The researchers' made use of the descriptive research method in relation to the stakeholders' perceptions on gender sensitivity vis-à-vis the used of the causal

comparative design among the stakeholders in the identification, planning, design and implementation of housing project, likewise, to identify priority livelihood projects for the sustainability of the shelter project.

#### 3.2. Participants in the Study

The respondents totalling to 95 were the group samples' representatives which are stakeholders/beneficiaries of the study. They are the teachers and informal family settlers in Payatas who are the official beneficiaries of the housing project. Other stakeholders are from the officials of the local government units of Quezon City and HFHPI. While the other stakeholder were the faculty and student volunteers from RTU who conducted extension services in the construction of the project. Table 1 presents the percentage distribution of respondents per stakeholders.

Table 1  
Percentage Distribution of Respondents

Stakeholders	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
DepEd (Teachers) / Leaders / Informal Family Settlers Beneficiaries	30	31.58
HFHPI (Habitat)	02	02.10
Local Government of Quezon City	05	05.26
Concerned RTU Faculty Volunteers	08	08.42
Student Volunteers	50	52.63
Total	95	100.00

The respondents of the study were described according to the frequency and percentage distribution by age, gender, and civil status.

#### 3.2.1. Age

Table 2 illustrates the percentage and frequency distribution of respondents by age.

Table 2  
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
30 years old and below	51	53.68
31-40 years old	11	11.58
41-50 years old	18	18.95
51 and above	15	15.79
Total	95	100

The table shows that most of the respondents represent the 30 years old and below years of age bracket as shown by the frequency of 51 with an equivalent percentage of 53.68. Those who belong to 41- 50 years of age group are second in rank with 18.95 percent. Third, is the group of the respondents with age range from 51 and above years old with 15 percent, and the smallest group is the group age range from 31 - 40 years old with an equivalent of 11.58 percent.

### 3.2.2. Gender

Table 3 illustrates the percentage and frequency distribution of respondents by gender.

Table 3  
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	37	39.00
Female	58	61.00
Total	95	100

Majority of the respondents are females as exhibited by a frequency of 58 or 61.00 percent and only 37 respondents or 39.00 percent are males. This shows that most females represent the respondents of the study.

### 3.2.3. Civil Status

Table 4 illustrates the percentage and frequency distribution of respondents by civil status.

Table 4  
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Civil Status

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	50	52.63
Married	41	43.16
Separated	01	01.05
Widow/Widower	03	03.16
Total	95	100

It is observed that majority of the respondents are single with a frequency of 50 equivalent to 52.63 percent. Next in rank are the respondents who are married with 43.16 percent, followed by respondents who are widow/widower with 3.16 percent, and the least are those who are separated from their spouses with a percentage of 1.05.

### 3.3. Instrument

The researchers utilized the modified questionnaire in the study which was patterned from the assessment material used by NEDA, Asian Development Bank and World Bank in evaluating gender sensitivity of housing projects.

### 3.4. Research Procedure

Before the distribution of questionnaires, courtesy calls from each stakeholder were conducted by the researchers to formally seek permission to undertake the study. Questionnaires were then administered to the identified sample respondents of each unit.

With regard to the distribution of questionnaires, research assistants were hired to facilitate the gathering of information for the immediate retrieval of the questionnaires. The research assistants were also provided with the general orientation relative to the intention of the study.

Majority of the data used in the study were gathered through interview, desk research and mapping inventory from pertinent websites. The researchers' made survey questionnaire based on Gender and Development Checklist for Housing and Settlement Projects were

distributed to the family- beneficiaries and other stakeholders to solicit information related to family status and gender sensitivity of the housing project.

### 3.5. Data Analysis

The data and information gathered were classified, tallied and tabulated. The tabulated data were analyzed and interpreted using the following statistical tools:

**Frequency Count and Percentage.** Frequency count and percentage were used to describe the distribution of the respondents by groups.

**Weighted Mean.** Used in getting the average scores of respondents responses in the Gender and Development (GAD) elements for housing project.

**Three-Point Rating Scale.** The World Bank (WB) and National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) Three-Point Rating Scale for GAD element for housing project was used in scoring and interpreting the responses of the respondents.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following covers the analysis, results and discussions of the information gathered relative to the gender sensitivity of Bistekville – 1 Habitat Housing Project at Payatas, Quezon City.

The result of the perceptions of the respondents as to the gender sensitivity in the project identification and planning of the housing project revealed the strong participation of women, women's group from the community such as from the local government of Quezon City, DepED teachers, Barangay officials and officials from HFHPI. Also, women's inputs as to the design of the housing project have been considered. Women and men have worked together as stakeholders and partners in the conceptualization of the housing project in order to contribute change in the life of the beneficiaries.

Thus the participation of women and men in the aspect of project identification is fully complied with the requirements of involving female and male officials, and consulting other stakeholders regarding the project including women and men that may be affected positively or negatively.

As to the collection of sex-disaggregated data and gender-related information prior to project design revealed that some information has been classified by sex but may not be the key to helping identify key gender issues that a planned project must address. This was evidenced by the different forms or documents presented by the beneficiaries such as application forms for the acquisition of the housing unit. Furthermore, there was a superficial or partial analysis done in terms of gender sensitivity which focus only to one or two of the concerns on gender roles, needs, perspectives, or access to and control of resources.

The following shows the result of the perceptions of the stakeholders as to the gender sensitivity on the design and implementation of the housing project. In terms of gender equality goals, outcomes, and outputs it showed that the project objectives explicitly refer to women and

men as partners or beneficiaries of the project and that the project have gender equality outputs or outcomes.

It was further revealed that project strategies did not match much the gender issues and gender equality goals identified such as activities or interventions that reduce gender gaps and inequalities. Political leadership where women were given an opportunity to lead the community without any gender issues to address.

The gender analysis of the designed project was exercised such as the needs of both women and men especially to reduce women's reproductive time or enhance their productive time; provision of equal opportunities; women were trained or employed in the construction of houses or in the operation and maintenance of facilities in the settlement. However, the project does not include full measures to mitigate the adverse effects on women's access to resources.

The housing design and common facilities were socially and culturally acceptable and accessible to woman. Also, the project offers facilities and services that support both women's and men's participation in different stages of the project with designed measures to address constraints to equal participation and benefits by women and men. This means that constraints on the participation of the women and men in the design and implementation of the project were addressed accordingly.

Based on the study, the housing project provides gender equality targets and indicators for welfare, access, consciousness raising, participation and control as evidenced by equal opportunities in the ownership of the housing units as revealed in the property documents, satisfied with the housing design and layout and its prospects for progress and development, have equal participation in membership and leadership in homeowners' association, training, project activities and livelihood undertakings.

However, the collection of sex-disaggregated data is partly included in the project monitoring framework or plan as revealed by the data as just part of the documents such as the housing application, but not as a major data for monitoring of the participation of women and men in the design and implementation of the housing project. It revealed also that the allotted budget for the project is insufficient to promote or integrate gender equality because the budget was focus more on the infrastructure aspect. However, experts are enough to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. But in terms of the overall resources, it is enough to serve as start up for the housing project. The project have the expertise from different government and Non-Government Organizations (NGO) who are willing to integrate GAD or promote gender equality and women's empowerment and committed to investing project staff time in building capacity for integrating GAD or promoting gender equality for the project.

The housing project strengthened agency/government's commitment to the advancement of women and build on the initiatives or actions of other organizations in the area such as NGOs. However, plans are not enough to ensure the sustainability of GAD efforts and benefits. Nonetheless, the relationship with agency's GAD efforts was fully complied as revealed by strong linkage with DepEd and HFHPI and other NGOs.

The overall gender sensitivity of the project has been realized during the project identification and planning, design and implementation, except for aggregated data which were not given emphasis as basis for GAD perspectives in human settlements.

Statistically, it revealed that there are no significant differences on the perceptions of the female and male respondents as to the gender sensitivity in most of the dimensions during planning, design and implementation, and operation of the housing project. However, there are significant differences in the perceptions of the female and male respondents in terms of tapping sex-disaggregated data and gender-related information from secondary and primary sources at the project identification stage or in the project document of sex-disaggregated and gender information; in terms of facilities and services that will support both women's and men's participation in different stages of the project; also, in terms of project monitoring framework or plan that include the collection of sex-disaggregated data; and in terms of exit plan of the project that will ensure the sustainability of GAD efforts and benefits. Further, in as much as that female has the greater mean as compare to male, therefore they signify greater gender sensitivity in the above mentioned activities and concerns during the execution of the project.

However, there are no significant differences in the perceptions of female respondents with the male respondents in terms of the specified dimensions namely; that the project as low-cost housing unit is designed to reduce women's reproductive time or enhance their productive time; that the project provide equal opportunities for women and men to own a house; that women were trained or employed in the construction of houses or in the operation and maintenance of facilities in the settlement; that the budget allotted by the project is sufficient for gender equality promotion or integration; that the project build on or strengthen the agency/gov'ts commitment to the advancement of women; and that the project build on the initiatives or actions of other organizations in the area.

#### *Priority GAD Projects/Activities*

The following are the priority projects of women and men in the Bistekvill 1 Subdivision in order to address issues on gender development for the sustainability of the housing projects.

Project/Activity	Participating Gender	Rank
Livelihood training	Women/Men	1
Establishment of GAD data-base	Women/Men	2
Food manufacturing/marketing	Women/Men	3
CHB Production	Men	4
Waste Management (RFM)/Recycling	Women/Men	5
Entrepreneurship/Small scale business	Women/Men	6
Urban Gardening	Women/Men	7
Dressmaking/tailoring	Women/Men	8
Rag Making	Women	9
Cooperative	Women/Men	10

### 5.0. CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the findings, the researchers hereby concluded that gender sensitivity is not actually the priority focus of the housing project as evidenced by lack of documents on sex-disaggregated data and gender-related information which should be the very basis for gender development of the project. It is further concluded that the participation of women in the project came naturally brought about by the traditional culture of the Filipinos in building houses where “bayanihan” among men and women were practiced. Furthermore, women have the desire to help their families and communities to improve their quality of life.

### 6.0. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are being put forward:

For the stakeholders to assess the project identification and planning done for the housing project to improve its sustainability most especially in terms of program focus. GAD should have been given major attention since the conceptualization of the project most especially the collection of disaggregated database that will help facilitate gender issues, and corresponding solutions that will contribute to the success of the project.

Likewise, the beneficiaries and other stakeholders should have given priority for GAD in the evaluation of the house design and its implementation in order to contribute to the proper maintenance of the project.

For the GAD to be address in the re-planning and implementation of priority activities/programs identified in coordination with the concerned LGUs in their area, sponsors, NGOs and other private sectors who are willing to support and assist the beneficiaries vis-à-vis sustainability of the housing project.

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