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This issue of the *Bulletin* arises from a workshop on 'Household Arrangements as a Factor in Adjustment' held at the IDS in January 1990. It was convened as a way of furthering work within the IDS on the gender dimension in the analysis of the social impact of structural adjustment in developing countries (see Humphrey, Joekes and Kabeer, forthcoming). Most of the papers were the basis or are elaborations of presentations made at the workshop, and others are contributions from persons working in the field who were unable to attend.

The social impact of the structural adjustment programmes which have been introduced in so many developing countries, especially in Africa and Latin America, over the past decade, has become a matter of concern among sponsoring agencies and governments, in development agencies and in the wider development research community. While there has been a considerable debate on the specific gender aspects of this impact, embodying a number of different approaches, it has not yet congealed into a distinctive contribution with clear lessons for policy. Two of the most widely quoted papers on the subject, however, identify the household as an important mediating factor. Elson [1990] points to the specific nature of women's time constraint in inhibiting household supply responses to market incentives and Moser [1989] investigates household adaptations and women's coping strategies in deteriorating economic environments.

The workshop was deliberately cross-disciplinary in character. Within gender studies — itself, of course, a cross-disciplinary analytical project — a conceptual approach giving importance to the household as a context for gender relations in developing countries was strongly promoted, if not initiated, jointly by anthropologists and economists at the IDS in the mid-1970s. The household occupies a privileged position in gender analysis as a primary site of women's oppression, for social relations of gender subordination assume a particularly intense expression among small groups of people who spend their daily lives in close contact with each other. Nowadays attention to the household has an additional rationale in development studies. It is the social mechanism through which, to at least some degree, all individuals' welfare and labour allocation decisions are determined. The household is the link between macro- and meso-economic changes

and changes in personal welfare, and between price or incentive policy reforms and individuals' resource allocative behaviour. How is the household viewed today within the two disciplines of economics and social anthropology? We hoped that a state-of-the-art discussion, with experts from both parties, would illuminate the ways in which members of the two disciplines currently use the term, and show what differences there were.

We also had a special interest in the place of the household in the formulation and implementation of social and economic policy with respect to gender. There are significant efforts underway in several countries in collecting data based on household surveys as a means of monitoring the social impact of structural adjustment programmes. Are the policies which draw inspiration from the findings of these data sets properly informed by gender considerations? What use do anthropologists and economists respectively make of these data? What household level interventions are being mooted? What model of the household do they imply?

The main revelation of the IDS workshop was the distance, if not gulf, that seems to exist between economists and anthropologists in their assessment of the term's significance and operational usefulness. Perhaps because of this, the discussions were preoccupied with the analytical ground rules in defining the household, and there was in fact relatively little discussion of policy matters.

If this is a widespread phenomenon, it is worrying and does not bode well for the prospects of ensuring that social policies for the mitigation of the negative social impact of structural adjustment programmes can serve the more fundamental purpose of not exacerbating and even, if possible, improving women's subordinate social and economic status.

As we argue below, however, the separation between the two disciplinary groups seems to us not to be fully warranted. It occurs in the context of some mistrust bred, paradoxically, of seeing terms born in one discipline acknowledged by practitioners of another — but then taken up and used by them in a slightly different sense, or for eccentric purposes. The use of concepts from role theory is a case in point. Economists, who tend not to concern themselves overmuch with sociological processes, use terms like

'role learning' and 'role models' as portmanteau-type explanations for the gender division of labour. As far as feminist anthropologists are concerned, this completely misses the point that it is the ideological and material subordination of women which is the quintessence of the gender division of labour [see Whitehead, forthcoming 1991].

The workshop discussions also revealed that both parties seem to have moved away from giving the household a central place in their analyses, though in economics, as we note below, the pendulum may be swinging back. Feminist anthropologists seem to have discounted the importance of the household in favour of analysis of the gender dimension of the wider set of social relations in general. The residential household group is nevertheless acknowledged as a nexus point, in which some interweaving and overlapping of different strands occurs. The conjugal contract is one such point on which analytical work on both household functioning and gender relations comes together.

Development economists are also involved in a process of reappraisal. Variations of the neo-classical model of the household with its reliance on the joint welfare function have been used in studies of household labour and consumption decisions in a number of developing countries. In itself, gender asymmetry is perfectly compatible with some version of the neo-classical rational choice approach. But the basic assumptions of the model have been severely criticised. Feminist economists have particularly singled out the notion of altruistic distribution within the household as a disguise for male power and female subordination [Folbre 1986; Galbraith 1974; Sen 1984; Kabeer and Humphrey 1991 forthcoming; Joekes 1987].

The papers in this volume address some of these issues. They are roughly equally divided between economists' and anthropologists' contributions.

First, much of the work currently being done by economists on the gender dimension in structural adjustment uses large and complex data sets derived from ongoing series of national household surveys. The papers by Haddad and Appleton in this volume are examples. Appleton offers some methodological reflections on the uses and limitations of large-scale household surveys, demonstrating his points with data from the Cote D'Ivoire Living Standards Measurement Survey. Haddad shows that the equivalent Ghanaian data has some important uses in revealing gender differences in economic and welfare outcomes, but is of limited value for illuminating the differential processes which determine these outcomes.

Haddad and Appleton have clearly accepted the existence of gender stratification in society, and they both carefully eschew any validation of the neo-classical household model. Evans' paper is a lucid

deconstruction of that neoclassical approach, which is by now surely increasingly discredited. (For a discussion of alternative approaches to the household economy, see Kabeer Discussion Paper forthcoming). Even so, Haddad and Appleton have not extended their analysis to encompass issues of power in gender relations, either inside or outside the household; and this undermines their attempts to account for the impact on individuals' welfare of and the responses to economic change. In fact they almost completely bypass any discussion of the household at all. Haddad does toy with the idea that the household may have some significance. But he proposes that it is only a factor indirectly, insofar as the composition of the household may serve as aggregative proxy for the individually discriminatory 'process' variables.

However, as both papers also make clear, regardless of the approach taken in the analysis of data, the questions that it can address are highly dependent on the model of the household which (implicitly or explicitly) informed the collection of the data themselves. To that extent, the neo-classical household model lives on, shaping the nature of the gender analysis that can be done with these data. For example, while Haddad is able to use data from the Ghana Living Standards Survey to illustrate some aspects of household stratification, he is unable to fully explore the gender dimension in the poverty process because, as he points out, gender disaggregation for important variables in his data set is mostly limited to household headship. Viewing the household merely as a convenient conduit for data collection rather than as a conceptual construct runs the danger of leaving important questions unasked and hence unanswered.

An alternative economic approach is now being developed which takes up some of the feminist critique of the neo-classical household model. This is the bargaining model, of which the most detailed formulation to date is contained in Sen [1990] (see also Folbre 1986; Jones 1985). The household decision-making process is conceptualised as a bargaining process between parties whose bargaining power depends on their position as individuals within the larger economy. Cooperation will take place — the household persists — as long as, on balance, it is in the interests of its members. Where there is a conflict of interests, decision-making outcomes will reflect the differential bargaining power of household members. Hence, Sen's characterisation of the household as a site of 'cooperative conflict'. Wilson's paper in this volume is a rare empirical application of Sen's cooperative conflict model of the household, set in a developed country context. It demonstrates how issues of gender power are unlikely to be uncovered by straightforward survey methods since power works in a concealed way and is more apparent in information which is withheld than in that which is volunteered.

Other contributions in this volume also pursue the issue of more qualitative methods of data collection to supplement or supplant the quantitative methods favoured by most economists. Roberts presents a review of anthropological understandings of the concept of the household, in which she suggests that such a diversity of household forms exists that attempts to impose a single model are illegitimate. This important cautionary note does not close the door completely to systematisation; it indicates rather that a range of household models is called for, sensitive to the variations she identifies as well as to the larger structures within which households are embedded. Weekes-Vagliani [1989], in a paper presented to the workshop but published elsewhere, attempts such a multiple categorisation using the same Ivorian data set as Appleton.

The pointers offered by Moser and Sallis and by Leach suggest other ways forward in the study of households. The former provide a clear account of an effective, locally-based field research technique, which applies an in-depth understanding of social relations within a quantitatively rigorous framework. They also suggest that the new national household survey data sets may be put to fruitful use in providing a means of setting certain local level case studies in national perspective. Leach's paper is also firmly grounded in the qualitative tradition. It offers some fascinating insights into the interpersonal negotiations which go on inside households. It provides an anthropological equivalent of Sen's model by sketching out empirically the significance for these negotiations of the social relations of gender and the lines of exchange and resource mobilisation which join particular household members to networks outside the household itself.

Anthropologists' contention that households are embedded within a larger social formation, rather than outside or separate from it, is also echoed in Fleming's contribution. This explores the issues raised by the increasing orientation of development agencies towards social groups larger than the household, namely, inter-household 'grassroots organisations'. She warns that inter-household organisations need to be subjected to the same critical analysis that is being brought to bear on households.

We noted earlier on in this introduction that there is an apparent gulf between economic and anthropological approaches to household studies. It exists to some extent because of the absence of dialogue across disciplines. Each discipline creates its own mind-set which serves to insulate its practitioners from hearing, understanding and valuing contributions couched in an unfamiliar vocabulary. We hope that this *Bulletin* can make a constructive contribution towards bridging this gulf by bringing together within one volume the current concerns and preoccupations of the two disciplines.

Anthropologists may feel gratified that development economists no longer automatically discount the significance of intra-household asymmetries, but are attempting to incorporate a systematic consideration of gender stratification into their analysis. This progress can be credited to the accumulation of careful ethnographic data and analysis of concrete household forms in a variety of contexts. Economists are broadening the empirical base of their analytical constructs, even if by anthropologists' standards they continue to have an inadequate understanding of social relations and individual behaviour.

At the same time, economists may wish to challenge the caricatured understanding of economics which informs some anthropological work. Like all disciplines, economics encompasses a range of ideological and methodological positions. Too often, economics is identified with what is in fact one of its narrow, albeit influential, sub-disciplines, namely neo-classical economics, while the work of institutional, structural and political economists is ignored. What distinguishes most economists is the search for generalisable insights. Anthropologists perhaps need better to appreciate that policy has to be made on this basis, and while economics ought not to reproduce the preoccupations of anthropology, there is evidence from the papers in this *Bulletin* that they are slowly, perhaps, but surely learning from them.

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