

Rural Women: Spec. NAC's

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PLANNING A WOMEN'S COMPONENT  
INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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TWO MEETINGS AND PINDARS WATERSHEDS

JAMAICA

5320046

(Prepared by Elsa Cheney)

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Office of Women in Development  
United States Agency for International Development  
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Note: This report was prepared by Dr. Elsa M. Chaney, Office of Women in Development, USAID, Washington, and Ms. Beverley Samuels, Home Economics Officer, Integrated Rural Development Project, Christiana, Jamaica. Dr. Chaney is responsible for Parts I-III; Parts IV and V were prepared jointly by Ms. Samuels and Dr. Chaney. Although a draft was reviewed by the Project Director, the Rural Development Officer at USAID, and the Project Advisory Team, the opinions expressed here are those of the two authors. This document should be regarded as a preliminary statement of suggestions and possibilities presented by the Jamaica IRD for integrating women in development.

## FOREWORD

The present report covers Phase I in what has been conceived as an ongoing relationship between the Office of Women in Development, USAID/Washington and the USAID/Government of Jamaica Integrated Rural Development Project already underway (1978-1982) in the Two Meetings and Pindars watersheds, Jamaica. Phase I, lasting two weeks, involved on-site discussions with the Project Director, the Advisory Team and many of the Jamaican staff, as well as with persons in the health, education and agricultural extension networks in the two areas. As well, many farm women in the Christiana area -- particularly in the districts of Silent Hill and Wild Cane -- were most generous in receiving us into their midst and discussing with us their hopes and problems.

Phase II will consist of a two-month consultancy in which several of the suggested avenues of work will be launched, after a period of "Inquiry" on the best ways of proceeding, to be carried out by the Home Economics Officer.

Both of us wish to thank those who were so helpful to us and so generous with their time during Phase I. First of all, we thank Dr. H. Patrick Peterson, Rural Development Officer, USAID/Kingston, for the original invitation and for initial orientation. Next, we are grateful to Mr. Henry Stennett, Soil Conservation Director, Ministry of Agriculture, and IRD Project Director, for his gracious reception and for his sensitive concern that the needs of women be addressed in all phases of the project. The U.S. Advisory Team was always ready to listen, argue and discuss with us. Many of the suggestions outlined here are really theirs, and we thank Roger Newburn, Ryland Holmes, Rudy Pederson and Santiago Ducaney for all their help. Special thanks are due to Mr. and Mrs. Barnes of the Christiana Project Staff; and Pamela Stewart, Agricultural Extension Officer, Rose Howard, Agricultural Extension Assistant, and all the others on the Project Staff who assisted us.

Finally, we acknowledge in a special way Dr. Donor M. Lion, USAID Mission Director, for his concern that his people address the needs and contributions of women not only in this project, but also in all aspects of the Mission's program.

Elsa Chaney  
Beverley Samuels

## BACKGROUND

The USAID/Integrated Rural Development project, now in its first months of activity in the two watershed areas of Two Meetings and Pindars, has as one of its principal goals the increase of agricultural production in order to improve the standard of living of small hillside farmers in rural Jamaica. (Project Paper: 5)\* The immediate group to be served includes the 4,000 farmers of the areas, mainly those with land holdings of 5 acres or less, but also including some whose low income puts them in the target group (even though their holdings may go up as high as 10 acres). Per capita income of the potential project participants is estimated at less than \$200 (in terms of 1976 prices) (Project Paper: 12). Also included are some 1,000 landless rural dwellers; when the families of each group are counted, the total number of beneficiaries totals some 25,000.

AID's Integrated Rural Development project is part of a larger effort on the part of the Jamaican government to improve the standard of living of the country's poorest 150,000 farmers by increasing their incomes and providing improved roads, housing, electricity and water. The Government of Jamaica also intends the USAID project to serve as an agricultural production model which can be replicated on small hillside farms in the other 31 watersheds of the mountainous inland regions (Project Paper: 5-13).

Some 80 percent of small farmers in Jamaica cultivate lands on steep hillsides, and thus soil conservation is the necessary focus around which other components of the project must revolve, the "glue" which holds the project together (in the words of Dr. Peterson). Without a careful restoration and conservation of the soil for the next generations, Jamaica will be increasingly unable to feed its people and agriculture may well be permanently impaired, if not altogether doomed.

Small farmers in Jamaica produce most of the domestic food crops and about 25 percent of agricultural exports. They represent about one-half of all farmers, although they occupy only 13 percent of the acreage devoted to agriculture. About 60 percent of the Jamaican population lives in rural areas, and 30 percent of the total workforce is in agriculture. One-quarter of the farmers are women (USDA, 1978).

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\*Other specific goals include control of soil erosion in the watersheds and strengthening of the capability of the human resources in the Ministry of Agriculture.

One outstanding feature of the IRD project is the recognition on the part of the Jamaican Government and the project designers and directors of the important role women play in the rural economy of the country. Throughout the island, women not only perform traditional household tasks, but they also actively participate in agriculture. A sample survey carried out in the project area estimates that 22 percent of the holdings are managed principally by women (Project Paper: 56)\*. Even when they are not the principal farm operators, however, spouses of male farmers participate regularly in farm production activities. In the survey, 47 percent of the male farmers interviewed said that their spouses assisted in most farming operations, while another 21 percent reported collaboration at least in planting and harvesting (Ministry of Agriculture, 1977: Table 156). Many others assist in marketing (83 percent of the "higglers" or market traders of Jamaica are women (Smikle and Taylor, 1977:32)),\*\* farm management and decisionmaking. In this connection, it is interesting to note the high degree of agreement between men and women on whether spouses are consulted when major changes (for example, in cropping patterns or farm practices)\*\*\* are made on the farm. In the farmer survey mentioned above (Ministry of Agriculture, 1977: Table 171), 64.9 percent of the male respondents said they usually consulted their wives on such changes. In a 10 percent sample of female spouses of participants in the farmer survey (male spouses of women farmers were not included), 65 percent of the women also reported that their spouses consulted them on major farm decisions. (Project Paper: Appendix R-3).

In spite of the fact that Jamaican women already are heavily involved in most key farm operations, as the Project Paper notes,

little has been done to draw them more directly into the change process. Of those extension activities which do exist, the wide majority are directed toward the men. Only occasionally is assistance designed for women and that which is constructed (sic) usually deals with home economics topics (Project Paper: 57).

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\*The Advisory Team believes this figure may be high, and suggests 15 percent as more realistic. The 22 percent estimate would, however, be more in line with the overall Jamaica average as reported in the USDA study cited.

\*\*The "higgler" or market trader system includes some 13,000 higglers, about half of whom purchase directly from the farmer (sometimes harvesting his crop), and sell either wholesale to other higglers or retail directly to consumers in some 100 parochial markets. The 17 percent males are not typical higglers, but largely farmer-vendors (Smikle and Taylor, 1977:32).

\*\*\*The question asked was "When changes are to be made on the farm (changing cropping patterns, farm practices, etc.) do you usually consult with your spouse?"

The Government of Jamaica has recognized the importance of women's role, principally through the creation of a Women's Bureau (June 1975), attached to the Prime Minister's Office (under the direction of Mrs. Peggy Antrobus who has, however, now gone back to her home in Barbados where she has initiated the Women and Development Unit [WAND] under the auspices of the Extra-Mural Department, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill.)\* The present Women's Bureau Director is Mrs. Hazel Thomas. Additionally, the Government early in 1977 created the post of Minister of State for Women's Affairs and appointed Mrs. Carmen McGregor, a Senator elected in her own right, as the first incumbent. The Women's Bureau is concentrating its present small resources on rural women, and has initiated several small agro-industries in various parts of the island. Additionally, those actively working with rural women include the health network in each area, lead by the District Nurse (including midwives, health aides, nutrition assistants and family planning aides\*\*); the education network (including teachers of home economics and agriculture), and the Ministry of Agriculture's own network of Home Extension Officers (three work in the IRD Project areas).

So far as the AID/IRD project is concerned the Project Paper (pp. 56-57) discusses the determination made at the outset to launch a concerted effort to involve women directly in the change process. What progress is being made to carry out this goal? Perhaps most notable is the fact that no distinction currently is being made between women and men farmer operators in the initial project activities, chiefly the drawing up of Farm Plans for soil conservation and improved cropping practices. In addition, the Project Paper (p. 57) calls for the recruitment of two women agricultural extension agents in each watershed area, as well as the training of at least two women at the M.S. level in rural sociology and extension planning. Already several female agricultural extension agents and extension assistants are at work in the project, as well as female soils and water management experts. It is not known to what extent they are aware of or committed to solving the special problems of women. One extension assistant says she always makes a point of talking to the spouses of male farmers.

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\*Dr. Jocelyn Messiah: Institute of Social and Economic Research, at the same campus of the UWI has proposed to AID through its Caribbean Regional Development Office a two-year research proposal on "Women in the Caribbean" which would deal with women and the family, education, law, politics, perceptions and stereotypes of women, and include an annotated bibliography. A second phase would develop an innovative analytical approach to studying (through oral history interviews) individual lives of representative groups of women.

\*\*These are all recognized para-professional fields.

Generally, however, it is the impression that women who are not farm managers are rarely included in discussions of the Farm Plan or otherwise included. Nevertheless, the Project Paper specifically calls for the inclusion of farm household women in the receipt of credit, production and marketing technical assistance benefits of the project (p. 57). While women's situation needs and contributions may be more salient to women staffmembers, the ideal, of course, must be for all personnel, male and female, to be cognizant of and sensitive to those women not involved as principal decisionmakers on the farms. It was this concern that all women in the watershed areas benefit from the AID/IRD project and that all personnel begin to collaborate in this goal that lead to the present consultancy.

### INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT/CURRENT ACTIVITIES

In the Two Meetings/Pindars watersheds, agriculture is carried out principally on hillsides of varying degrees of slope; consequently, there are serious problems as rushing waters carry away the precious topsoil during the two rainy seasons (March/April and October/November). Thus, the IRD project necessarily has begun with an emphasis on the critical problem of soil conservation. It is important to emphasize, however, that the project is not solely concerned with the application of soil conservation treatments, i.e., terracing, ditching, elimination of gullies. As basic as these activities may be, conceivably there could be other means to reach the principal overall project goal which is increased productivity leading to improved incomes, i.e., better cropping practices, improved fertilizer utilization, better varieties, contour farming.

The basic working document for the Project is the Farm Plan (Annex 1), which assesses all aspects of the participating farm, including the tenancy status, crops and animals produced and marketed, soil conservation methods already practiced -- and lays out (with mapping) the sections to be treated and the subsequent crop and animal development. Participating farmers may do part of the work themselves (and get paid for it). People whose Farm Plan does not include soil conservation treatments still can participate in other aspects of the project. Farmers who are women are covered (and, in fact, are participating, as a quick glance through some of the Farm Plans signed to date demonstrates).

However, women whose spouses are not participating still are entitled to project assistance; for example, agricultural extension

services in raising chickens and rabbits, or vegetables for the family table; credit, and home extension services. The latter services will also be available to all women:

- female farm operators in carrying out their homemaking and child care responsibilities
- farmers' spouses who may help on the farm (as most do),\* but who define their principal responsibility as the home.

As the first step in carrying out the goals related to the integration of women in roles outside their cash-cropping activities, Ms. Beverley Samuels, a recent graduate of the Jamaica School of Agriculture, was recruited to serve on the Extension Staff as Home Economics Officer. She began work in October 1978, and her first assignment was to become familiar with the needs of women in the area. She has been carrying out this task principally through the Christiana Home Economics Center, attached to the Ministry of Agriculture. Mrs. Minna Henry has been invaluable in assisting Ms. Samuels to become acquainted with the region.

The second step was the invitation to Dr. Elsa Chaney, Office of Women in Development, USAID/Washington, to work hand in hand with Ms. Samuels to define possible areas in which the project could more fully integrate women in their roles outside the production of cash crops. She spent two weeks in Jamaica (March 2-18), 1979), principally in the Two Meetings/Pindars watersheds, and the following design for an "Inquiry" is the result of her and Ms. Samuels' collaboration. The work was carried out in close consultation with the Advisory Team; many helpful comments and suggestions were given by Roger Newburn, Ryland Holmes, Rudy Pederson and Santiago Ducaney.

We call our report an "Inquiry" because it is designed to suggest possible avenues of activity for the Home Economics Officer, in collaboration with the Agricultural Extension Staff and others. By no means do we wish to suggest that Ms. Samuels intends to carry out a long-term survey. Rather, in the next six-eight weeks she will embark on a series of explorations and experiments, conversations, meetings, consultations and discussions (to be detailed below) in order to begin charting the best course for carrying out her responsibilities.

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\*In this connection, it is interesting that a large number of even those spouses of male farmers who are characterized by their husbands as "not willing to work" on the farm, actually do so (498 of 647). Additionally, 1288 spouses in the survey were characterized as "housewives willing to work" on the farm. (Ministry of Agriculture, 1977: Table 156) (N=3098).

## HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAM GOALS

Because the main thrust of the IRD Project has been defined as the improvement of the standard of living of small farmers in rural Jamaica, and because this goal is to be achieved through the increase of agricultural production, we feel it is important that the home economics program and other women's components be tied as closely as possible to the main project.

In order to accomplish this end, we propose a revision of the basic project working document, the FARM PLAN, specifically to include a FAMILY FOOD CROP PLAN (FFCP). The FFCP is a planned cycle for growing not only nutritious vegetables for the family table, but also animal protein in the form of eggs, poultry, rabbits and goats.

The goal of making Jamaica's rural economy more productive in terms of cash crops for the urban population and for export is an understandable one, particularly in the light of the large amounts of foreign exchange expended not only for food commodities not easily produced on the island, but also to fill food deficits in products which could be produced in Jamaica such as mackerel (or substitute, now imported from Brazil), goat meat (imported from Australia), rice and many other items. The IRD Farm Plan understandably reflects this concern.

However, we note several serious deficiencies in the Farm Plan from the point of view of family nutrition for the project participants themselves:

1. There is no recognition of the importance of food produced and consumed on site. The Farm Plan only addresses the production and marketing of crops and animals to be sold. From the point of view of basic economics, this is a curious omission, also reflected in the fact that the annual income calculation does not count the food which the family grows and consumes as income, only what it sells.
2. There is no provision in the Farm Plan for food the family will consume. Most families eat part of their starchy cash crops -- but the whole thrust of the Farm Plan document nevertheless gives the erroneous impression that only cash crops are important. From the point of view of family nutrition, such a lack could be disastrous.\*

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\*As the Farm Sector assessment carried out by USDA points out, most farms produce foods low in protein: cassava, yams, sweet potatoes, bananas, plantain and breadfruit. The results are that 20 percent of children under 4 years of age are significantly underweight for their age; mortality rates for 1-4 year olds are twice that of Barbados, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and--->

3. The above two observations address the negative aspects of the Farm Plan's orientation to cash crops. Without a positive effort to address the nutrition needs of the farm operator and his or her family, however, in the Farm Plan, such needs will not be considered "important." And without this inclusion, emphasis on the growing of nutritious food for the family table, families will either:

--continue to eat a starchy diet of food from the cash crops which are low in protein

--use the increased income from the cash crops produced through the project to buy processed (and non-nutritious foods) in the supermarket

Ultimately, it makes more sense to consider the following:

1. Revise the Farm Plan, in consultation with the Home Economics Officer, to include a specific cycle of vegetable and animal protein to be produced on site for the family to eat.
2. Include in the programming for this cycle at the appropriate places in the Farm Plan, i.e., Crops Marketed and Consumed; Livestock Production; Land Rotation Schedule; Map (with a plot or plan for intercropping of vegetables for family consumption to be shown); Proposed Crop Development; Proposed Animal Development.
3. Set aside at the Demonstration Sites in Kellits a section to be called the Family Food Crop Plan (suggested by Roger Newburn), on which a selection of nutritious vegetables would be grown. We do not, incidentally, necessarily suggest a plot, since (a) such an idea might be resisted as competitive with land for cash-cropping, and (b) there already is the custom of inter-cropping vegetables.
4. Work closely with the Home Economics Officer(s) to decide what animal and vegetable production should be undertaken in relation to needs of specific family types, i.e., number of small children, number of those doing hard physical labour, special needs of pregnant and lactating mothers, and the like.
5. Initiate interviewing, with the guidance of the Home Economics Officer, of the women on the farms, ascertaining what they feel are their needs and deciding what kinds of assistance the women themselves desire and will accept. This consultation would form part of the regular Farm Plan assessment, and the women who are not the principal farmers would be drawn into conversation and consulted on at least one of the team visits.

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Tobago; 45 percent of pregnant women are anemic; weights and heights of school children from low-income families are significantly lower than average; agricultural workers during periods of heavy labor lose weight.

The degree of consultation between men and their spouses is already very high in Jamaica, as the project survey demonstrates. Therefore, it appears to go very much against Jamaican cultural norms to ignore the woman (unless she happens to be the principal farmer), as apparently now is being done in interviewing for the Farm Plan.\* From the spouse's perspective, it will be very upsetting if the face of the farm is completely altered by men and machines moving earth; she may very well oppose or react negatively to what she does not understand. It is unfair to the women not to consult them when the whole face of their world -- the farm -- is to be considerably altered and changed.

The Home Economics Officer will be available to work several days with each team to initiate interviewing of the women during the Farm Plan assessment.

A concerted effort on the part of the Home Economics Officer(s) to address the nutrition issue, as outlined above, would include advice on what to grow as well as information on the best ways of preparing foods in nutritious combinations. The nutrition program is spelled out in more detail in the following sections: Means to Carry out the Home Economics Program Goals, and An Inquiry on the Home Economics Program.

Other possible goals, either now or for the future (to be decided in collaboration with the Project Directors) might include:

- some basic instruction in clothing (we noted that almost all the children on Silent Hill and in Wild Cane had colds, which the mothers said were chronic); we are not sure the children have sweaters or jackets.
- some craft work, showing the women how to use simple materials and techniques (for example, tie-dyeing) so they can make dresses and articles for the home inexpensively. Possibly some home industries based on women's handwork might be developed.
- processing and preservation of foods as a further step in the nutrition program -- to take advantage of the abundance at some seasons and make food available at times of scarcity.
- home improvement, for example, building ovens out of kerosene pans, renovation or installation of latrines.
- planning programs (this and several of the above suggestions would require short term technical assistance) for the farm radio schedule to be initiated as the new radio station in Christiana is inaugurated.

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\*The Project Director indicated that such omission of the spouse from the interview is not the policy of the project and will be rectified.

POSSIBLE COLLABORATION/OFFICE OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

From the perspective of the Office of Women in Development, the Jamaica IRD Project is a key one in which to participate and to work out a possible model for implementing women's components in a major rural development effort. The Jamaica project offers several distinct advantages and opportunities as an area of field experiment in Technical Assistance for the WID Office:

1. The project is a high-profile one, intended in itself to be a model for rural development, not only in the two watershed areas where the present project is being carried out, but also for some 30 additional mountainous regions of rural Jamaica where poor farmers are working in roughly similar conditions: on small hillside plots with severe problems of soil erosion.

Misuse of resources for the past 30-40 years, particularly in relation to the soil, means that if this project does not succeed, Jamaica's rural agriculture and rural people may be doomed. Discussion of the project occupied 45 minutes of the meeting between Presidents Carter and Manley; last fall, a Congressional Delegation, including Representative Richard M. Nolan of Minnesota, a member of the House Agriculture Committee, visited the project.

2. In Jamaica, another advantage is the combination of a sympathetic USAID Mission Director, Dr. Donor M. Lion, and a committed Rural Development Officer, Dr. H. Patrick Peterson (just beginning his tour of duty there), who is interested to see women's needs and contributions addressed.

Dr. Peterson understands women in development in its broadest definition, as going beyond the "home economics" rubric where we began our assignment (this is not at all to downgrade the important home economics/garden plot/extension/nutrition aspects of the work we are initiating, which will remain central).

3. A particularly concerned and sensitive project director, Mr. Henry Stennett, Soils Conservation Director, Ministry of Agriculture, who was very supportive of our efforts and came the last day Chaney was there -- a Saturday -- to hear about our suggestions and conclusions.

4. Links we already have developed with women such as Hazel Thomas, Cynthia Ellis and others at the Jamaica Women's Bureau; Novlette Jones, Director of Home Extension for the Ministry of Agriculture in Kingston; Jocelyn Messiah and Dawn Marshall, Institute of Social Research, and Peggy Antrobus, Women and Development Unit, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados.
5. Over the next five years, \$60 million is to be spent in the agricultural sector in Jamaica. Almost anything can be worked into the rubric that we wish to suggest (see CDSS for Jamaica). We should study the CDSS carefully and flag opportunities for weaving women in development into the total, island-wide program.

For the time being, I want to suggest that we propose to the USAID Mission and began identifying short term technical assistants for the following:

- Gardening and vegetable crop specialist: The present home economics officer does not have any background in growing vegetables. However, the Project Horticulturalist is most sympathetic, and the Team Leader himself made the suggestion that a garden plot be part of the Demonstration Site at Kellits (where stands of yam, banana, cassava, red pea and other cash crops already are well underway).
- Marketing expert: USAID is presently beginning the design of a major overhaul in the system of marketing food. There is concern that the "higglers" of Jamaica -- the women who act as the link between farmers and consumers -- not be prejudiced by this project. The idea now is to integrate the full-time higgler into the system, and to find part-time employment alternatives for the weekend higgler (I suggested this as a project for the Jamaica Women's Bureau to tackle, but a marketing expert also will be needed -- and this is Dr. Peterson's first priority and request to the WID Office).
- Person to set up the mechanism for supervising and coordinating the tasks of the home economics team. If we amplify the team to include three more Home Economics Officers and eight Home Economics Field Assistants, a system has to be designed for their effective functioning within the project and in the watersheds. I plan to consult with Mary Rainey and Helen Strow, American Home Economics Association on this.

- Expert in preservation and processing of food (which might lead to an agro-industry, something the Jamaican Project Director, Mr. Stennett, is most interested in). Here, we shall want Ms. Samuels to participate in the WAND/World Education subregional seminar on agro-craft industries scheduled for Jamaica in May or June.
- Trainers in extension and nutrition for the Field Assistants Course in Summer 1979.
- Media Information Specialist. I have suggested that Maria Terese Aguirre, Director of the USAID/Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences "Educational Media for Women" Project, headquartered at IICA in San Jose, Costa Rica, be invited to Christiana for the Seminar to be held on extension programming for the new radio station. Ms. Samuels also should be included in the Seminar. Ms. Aguirre will be able to assess the situation in terms of what information the women need in agriculture/nutrition to carry out the Farm Food Crop Plan successfully, and can suggest a technician to work with the project as a short term consultant to design not only radio, but broader media initiatives to reach rural women with the information they need.

MEANS TO CARRY OUT GOALS/HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAM

(This section should be read in conjunction with the Inquiry Section following.)

I. ADDITIONAL STAFF

A. Three additional, fully-qualified Home Economics Extension Officers

(Jamaica School of Agriculture has four specialties: nutrition, extension clothing, and arts and crafts.)

Ideally, each watershed area should have at least two Home Extension Officers in order to cover the vast number of opportunities for women which the project presents. Because our preliminary review suggests that nutrition and extension are the key areas for work at least for the present (and this accords with the emphases suggested by the Project Director and the Senior Advisor for Extension Activities), our recommendation would be to recruit an additional officer for Two Meetings with a specialty in extension, and two additional officers for Pindars with nutrition and extension specialties.

If the project can at present only contemplate one additional staff person for home economics, Ms. Samuels suggests a counterpart in nutrition since that is the emphasis (see below) which appears to be the most logical starting place for work with women in their non-cash crop responsibilities. This would strengthen the thirst of the Home Economics program by having both officers working from a similar background of training.

Alternatively, an argument could be made for recruiting a young lady with the extension specialty in order to complement Ms. Samuels' expertise, i.e., Ms. Samuels could impart her greater knowledge of nutrition to a counterpart, while the counterpart could do the same for her in extension.

B. A small group of Field Assistants in Home Economics

Preliminary soundings in the Home Economics Departments in several of the Junior Secondary Schools indicates that the Teachers themselves occasionally use especially capable past students as assistants. Discussion with a few Teachers indicates their willingness to collaborate in identifying possible recruits to serve as Field Assistants in Home Economics for the IRD Project.

The IRD Project already employs Field Assistants in Agriculture. Young ladies of the area also are at work with minimum training (for example,

two months for those in health) as Health and Nutrition Assistants. There would thus be a precedent for the creation and training of a group of Field Assistants in Home Economics.

(SEE INQUIRY, II-B)

## II. NETWORKS

Whether or not Ms. Samuels decides with the Project Directors to go forward with the creation of Home Economics Assistants, she and her prospective co-workers -- because of the very nature of an "integrated rural development project" -- cannot work in isolation. There are several possibilities for net working the efforts of the Home Economics Officers with ongoing services, initiatives and organizations both within and outside the project:

- A. Agricultural Extension network of the IRD project
- B. Health Network in the two watersheds
- C. Home Economics Officers of the Ministry of Agriculture
- D. Education Network, especially the Home Economics and Agriculture Teachers
- E. Sub-watershed Development Committee Networks  
(SEE INQUIRY, II-A through E for a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of each network)

## III. THE FAMILY FOOD CROP PLAN

Some work already has been done (by the Project Horticulturist and others on the growing cycle and the food value of potential crops (and animals) contemplated for the Family Food Crop Plan (FFCP). However, the Home Economic Officer plans to carry on research in greater detail so that she can serve as a resource person for implementing the Food Plan for the family table into the Farm Plan assessment document, along with experimental work on the most nutritious combination of foods and dishes created from locally-grown food crops and animals.

(SEE INQUIRY, III for details)

## IV. EXPERIMENTS IN GROWING FOOD, PROPAGATING ANIMALS AND PREPARING NUTRITIOUS MEALS FROM LOCALLY-GROWN FOOD CROPS

In the next six weeks-two months, the Home Economics Officer intends to perform a few experiments in order to gain experience in work with the people, especially the women, and to see what kinds of techniques might be developed for group activities in growing vegetables, propagating animals and preparing nutritious meals.

(SEE INQUIRY IV for details)

## V. WORK WITH WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

There is not sufficient time during the two weeks of the consultancy to go very deeply into the question of what organizations -- formal and informal -- may exist in the rural areas, and specifically in the two watersheds.

Dr. Chaney intends to pursue this topic with the Women's Bureau in Kingston which she will visit after leaving Christiana. In the meantime, Ms. Samuels and Dr. Chaney met Professor Harvey Blustein at Kelli's and he volunteered to look into women's participation in general organizations (particularly in the Jamaica Agricultural Society), as well as any organizations specifically designed for women. Mr. Arthur Goldsmith, also working with the Cornell University Participation project, also has said he will collaborate.

We intend to go more deeply into this topic during the next phase of the implementation of the women's component. In the meantime, Ms. Samuels' experiments in group activity (see INQUIRY I.V for one such activity, "Rabbit Partners," which we hope to try, building on the Jamaican custom of pooling resources -- in this case cash -- in order that each person in a "Partners" group in turn is given a pool of cash to which others have contributed that month until all have had a turn.

## INQUIRY/HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAM

(This section spells out some of the lines of inquiry which the Home Economics Officer will pursue in the next six weeks-two months, in collaboration with the Project Director and Advisory Staff, in order to arrive at a better basis for making decisions on the Home Economics Extension Program)

### I. ADDITIONAL STAFF

- A. Additional Home Economics Officers--this matter is not within the purview of the Home Economic Officer, but we earnestly hope that it will be given priority consideration.
- B. In order to ascertain whether the idea of Field Assistants in Home Economics is feasible, Ms. Samuels will:
  1. Visit the Senior Education Officer for Secondary (hopefully, Mr. Ryland Holmes might accompany her), Mr. I.G. Cambell in Mandeville (coincidentally, we met him at Alston Secondary when we visited there, and he evinced interest in the project and said he would like to collaborate).
  2. Visit the Principals and Home Economics Teachers/Agriculture Teachers in the Junior Secondary Schools to work out details of selection and recruitment.
  3. Interview prospective recruits from the July 1979 graduating classes.
  4. Begin planning curriculum and resources for a short orientation course; decide on the basis of the preparation of prospective recruits the content, length, materials needed, etc. (It is anticipated that the course might last two-four weeks, and could be conducted at the nearby Home Economics Center in Christiana during the summer.) Ms. Samuels believes that each Home Economics Officer could successfully work with and supervise two assistants. Thus, if the project is to have three additional Officers, eight young ladies would be recruited; if only one additional at present, four.

### I. NETWORKS

- A. The IRD Project Network: Advantages: Ms. Samuels and colleagues need some manner of working in a less isolated fashion from the project. It has been suggested by Mr. Holmes that a logical step would be for the Home Economics Officer(s) to work with the Agricultural Extension Staff. Ms. Samuels is sympathetic to this suggestion, because most of the Ag Extension staff were her classmates at the JSA, and she feels comfortable with them (and vice versa). Disadvantages: Working full-time with the Agricultural Extension teams would mean full days in the

field, leaving Ms. Samuels and counterparts little time for other endeavors. Conversely, if they decide to work half-time with the teams, then perhaps they would lose a certain momentum and continuity in the work. Moreover, the project badly needs more linkages with the already existing institutions in the watersheds, and Ms. Samuels has been making valuable contacts with both the health and education networks.

- B. Health Networks: Advantages: As our visits with the District Nurse, District Midwife and Health Aide Ms. Williams demonstrated, the Home Economics Officer(s) of the IRD Project would benefit from the fact that the Health Network already is deeply embedded in the communities (at least insofar as Nurse McPherson's area is concerned), while the Ag Extension teams necessarily must concentrate on many other aspects of the farm outside the farm family and its health/nutrition. We were impressed in the case of Nurse McPherson with the regular and wide coverage of territory by the Health team (whether this is true of the other section of the Two Meetings watershed and in Pindars would be a matter for this inquiry, should a decision be made that work with the Health Networks is indicated).

Ms. Samuels does feel that working with the health network would give her entree with the women with whom the health people already are in touch through their home visiting program, clinics, etc. Another advantage is that the health teams stress nutrition as an integral part of their work and thus have laid a basis for further emphasis on this topic. Additionally, work in collaboration with Nurse McPherson would give a certain "legitimacy" to the Project Home Economics Officers and their activities.

Disadvantages: Working with the Health Team might simply isolate the Home Economics Officers from the project, unless the collaboration were carried out on a parttime basis. It is evident that even two Home Ec Officers cannot divide their time in too many directions, or their effectiveness will be impaired.

- C. Home Ec. Officers, Ministry of Agriculture: Advantages: Mrs. Novlette Jones of the Ministry of Agriculture in Kingston is keen on some sort of linkage being established in the field among the various groups serving women, i. e., Home Extension Officers, Health people, Nutrition Assistants, etc. However, because the Officers from the Christiana area were not here last week (because of some sort of training course), we did not have a chance to speak to them -- and we did not track down Mrs. Wilhel Laurance, the Officer in the Morgans Pass/Kellits area. If this line of collaboration is considered worthwhile, Ms. Samuels could pursue the possibilities -- and in any event, should pay courtesy calls on them. Disadvantages: It would appear that the Ministry's Home Extension Officers already are so overburdened that areas of actual collaboration, outside of occasional consultation, might be difficult to work out. In addition to Ms. Samuel's courtesy calls during

the next weeks, Dr. Chaney will also be seeing Mrs. Jones in Kingston once again on March 16 (tentative), and will explore more concretely with her what might be done.

- D. Education Network: Advantages: A possible area of collaboration to be explored is the creation of the Home Economics Assistants corps. Other areas might be explored such as participation in PTAs, "Open Days" for parents at the schools, 4-H clubs and the like. Another interesting area of collaboration might be in the School Gardens, particularly where girls are involved in the agriculture courses (40 percent of agriculture students at Kellits are women). Disadvantages: We feel that the Home Economics Officers of the IRD Project should not become too involved in the regular school home economics/agriculture courses because many demands would begin to be made on their time; work in the schools at this point might be somewhat peripheral to the project.
- E. Development Committee Networks: One way that we might involve the health, education and home extension officers of the Ministry of Agriculture would be through recruiting them to the Development Committees in the sub-watersheds.

As these are not yet functioning, we do not know what to suggest their relation to the Home Economics program might be -- but Ms. Samuels would appreciate being kept informed of progress as these committees are formed.

### III. FAMILY FOOD CROP PLAN

- A. In order to do a complete research job on computing the food value of each food crop grown in the watershed areas, the Home Economics Officer plans to visit the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute at the University, Mona, and other institutions as needed.
- B. Ms. Samuels also will begin to design workshops and demonstrations to impart information on food crops and nutrition education to the Agricultural Extension people.

### IV. EXPERIMENTS IN FOOD/ANIMALS/NUTRITIOUS MEALS

- A. The Home Economics Officer, in order to gain experience in food crops, would very much like to monitor the growing of the intensive vegetable garden in the Demonstration Plot. A possibility suggested by Roger Newburn might be considered, with the collaboration of Ms. Samuels: a section of the Demonstration Plot which would be labelled "Family Food Crop Plan," in which various nutritious vegetables would be grown.
- B. An experiment with a few vegetables on the plot of one of the women would be the ideal. This would complement the Demonstration Plot,

demonstrating vegetable growing on a smaller, more realistic scale.

- C. Possible experiment with a group of about six-eight women to propagate rabbits (with the assistance of Andra Carrothers) building on the "Partners" idea to help the women earn some cash. In return for initial stock, each woman would give back to the project a buck and two does.
- D. The Home Economics Officer will do experiments with local foods in order to get the ladies accustomed to them. These experiments will be carried out on a group basis, i.e., the Home Economics Officer will form groups in several areas. The Officer will do her demonstrations mostly with the local foods that the ladies grow in the areas. From her observation, the people grow some nutritious foods but most of them are sold instead of consumed by the family. Reasons for this are:
  1. The people don't know the food value of these foods.
  2. They don't know how to prepare the food in tasty, appetizing ways, or in ways that release the protein, e.g., to let them cook legumes and cereals together because that is the only way they will really benefit from the protein content.
  3. Having them eat fruits and vegetables is another problem, e.g., some people say they are bored with just boiling and eating vegetables. The cho-cho is an example -- not very nutritious, but with the addition of milk and other nutritious substances it makes a delicious pudding or even porridge.
  4. There is also always the problem of people getting animal protein to eat. Most of the children are malnourished. Demonstrations on how to use some of their beans and peas as protein substitutes would be the ideal.

All these demonstrations will be possible if the Home Economics Officer has her equipment to be provided by the project, i.e., stove, oven, pots and pans, etc.

## V. WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

At this point, until the organizations map of the area is completed by the Cornell Team, nothing formal is planned. However, Ms. Samuels will keep in touch with the Cornell people in the next weeks, and will report to them any women's activity of which she becomes aware. It is also suggested that on her trip to Kingston she also visit the Women's Bureau; also that provision be made for Ms. Samuels to attend the next seminar (in an on-going series planned by the Caribbean Women's Association in collaboration with World Education, Inc.) on income-earning activities for women. Dr. Chaney will provide more information on this in the next several weeks. (The next seminar will be held in Jamaica in May). We will be suggesting that several local women from the watersheds be included in this and other seminars, if such inclusion is not already planned.

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