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REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM FOR WOMEN:

CONSIDERATIONS, SUGGESTIONS,

AND NEEDS

Submitted To

The Agency for International Development

By

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The Near East Bureau has approved a project that would support in-country and regional seminars designed to explore training needs for women and to conceptualize the contents of specific training programs geared to meet these needs. The project evolved to redress the imbalance in the percentage of female beneficiaries/participants in AID-supported training programs in the Near East which, in FY 1977, accounted for only 13%, almost double that of the preceding year (Van Dusen: 1978). While this figure has since increased and is expected to continue to rise (judging from forthcoming projects which, if not specifically earmarked for women, have the potential of involving them in greater numbers), women in the region still remain proportionately represented.

Since the initial approval of this project, a number of factors, both administrative and substantive, have delayed the formulation of the "Project Paper" for which I was contracted to write the "Social Soundness Analysis" component. Due to changes in the scheduling of the project (currently slated for FY 1980 rather than FY 1979 as originally proposed), the lack of consensus on the conceptualization of the project (identifying which groups of women are to be selected as participants, which needs are to be addressed, and which needs are best served by a regional seminar and which are more appropriately served by in-country seminars and training, etc.), and due to the fact that there is no project paper for which to write a social soundness analysis of a specifically-defined project, although the scope of my work, as delineated in my contract, has remained the same, the thrust of my work has been modified to accommodate the above-mentioned factors. Therefore, my input will hopefully contribute to providing background information for the eventual formulation of the project paper since it can no longer be part, as originally stipulated, of a non-existent one.

Extrapolating from the relevant data and literature I have reviewed -- these include AID country reports for the Near East region and for other LDCs on the status of women; studies on, and policy guidelines for, integrating

women in national development efforts in LDCs through income-generating activities, training programs, formation of credit, consumer and producer cooperatives, etc. (AID, the World Bank, the United Nations, private research groups, individuals, etc.) -- and from discussions with individuals who are involved in/familiar with training projects for women within the various divisions of AID Bureaus and Offices, at the World Bank, at the United Nations in New York, contracting agencies with AID, etc., as well as drawing from my own experiences in and familiarity with the Near East region, this report seeks to identify, on a preliminary basis, the following:

1. Priority training needs for women in the Near East where AID intervention might assist in meeting those needs.
2. Stratification of those needs to delineate the following:
  - a. Framework of seminars -- i.e., whether and when they should be regional or in-country and, by so doing,
  - b. Narrow the selection of potential participants/beneficiaries and the program content of training projects and seminars.

This report is submitted as a general guideline for finalizing the formulation of the project paper and its design. I am grateful for the feedback on my "working paper" interim report, and I have attempted to incorporate commentaries and suggestions in what follows.

#### Socio-economic Factors Defining the Problem:

The uneven rate and stage of development of the countries which comprise the Near East Region necessarily affect the identification of training needs for women, the stratification

of these needs, and the identification of training programs best suited to meet those needs so as to enhance for East women's active and systematic participation in national development efforts. Intra-regional variations are reflected in, among other indices, the degree of urbanization -- ranging from a high of 45-50% in such countries as Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, to a low of 2% for the Yemen Arab Republic; in female illiteracy rates -- ranging from a high of 99% in Yemen to a low of 41% in Jordan, with an overall female illiteracy rate standing at 85% in the Arab World as a whole without taking into account urban-to-rural differences; in the percentage of school age girls actually enrolled in primary school -- ranging from 83-85% in Tunisia and Jordan, to 1-5% in Yemen and Afghanistan; in the percentage of female students in total enrollments at the primary school stage -- ranging from a high of 55% in Tunisia to a low of 2% in Yemen; in the percentage of female students in total enrollments at the secondary school cycle -- ranging from 33% in Egypt to 1% in Yemen; in the rate of economic activity of women as a percentage of the wage labour force -- ranging from 24% in Tunisia to roughly 1% in Yemen (see tables in appendix); as well as in the degree to which women's mobility is proscribed by legal or cultural constraints and the degree to which governments in the region are committed to formulating and implementing policies designed to involve women in all aspects and phases of economic, social, cultural and political development, in national life.

Bearing these intra-regional variations in mind, all the countries under our purview, however, are experiencing a phenomenon that is global in scope (the internationalization of labor) and which is particularly marked in the Near East, since 1973, as a result of the increase in oil prices and the concomittant growth in the demand for labor resources to meet the production, construction and service needs of the oil-rich states, namely, the out-migration of economically active males, particularly the skilled and

semi-skilled, to the oil-producing Arab states and, in the case of Afghanistan, to Iran. Other than to the oil-producing Gulf countries, economically active males in the Near East region seek more lucrative employment opportunities in Europe (particularly true of North Africa and Egypt) as well as in the United States.

The consequences of this out-migration on the individual economies of the countries in the Near East region lie outside the scope of this report. However, the impact of this phenomenon on changing and redefining women's economic roles have only just begun to be researched and documented. Perhaps the most compelling changes in women's economic roles, as a result of male out-migration, are the following:

1. New class differentiations have been, or are being introduced; and these are reflected in the redivision of labor and in the reorganization of property relations:
  - a. Depending on the amount of remittances a family or household receives, on its regularity and on its investment, the out-migration of males has relieved some women of the necessity to work either as family producers and/or for a wage. Options for the household as a whole have increased.
    - (1) If the household or family were landless or near landless, they can now afford to acquire land or increase their land holdings.
    - (2) If the women formerly worked for a wage, they can now reassume household (unpaid) economic activities; if they were formerly family workers, they can now hire labor, etc.

- b. Due to the absence of males in a household as a result of their out-migration, women are compelled to assume increased workloads by their taking on those chores formerly performed by the absent men, in addition to their own; this might entail working as hired laborers.
  - c. Due to increasing labor scarcity (on sectoral levels) as a result of out-migration, and to the concomittant rise in the price of hired labor, households which formerly depended on hired labor and who now can no longer afford their wages, are compelled to depend increasingly on the unpaid family labor of women and children in a whole range of economic activities (from which they may have previously been exempt) as substitutes to hired wage labor.
2. Male out-migration, along with other factors such as marital dissolution due to divorce (highest in Morocco and Egypt), death or desertion; the economic marginality of males in a household; etc., contributes to the increasing incidences of female-headed households. It is estimated that 16% of all households in North Africa and the Middle East depend on a woman for their subsistence and material well-being (see Buvinic & Youssef: 1978, 1979a, Youssef: 1979b).

The fact that a growing number of women in the Near East are forced to assume sole or major financial responsibility for themselves and for the members of their households, on the one hand, and yet are all too often ill-prepared in terms of skills and training to enhance or ensure the economic solubility of their households (Ibid), is not only detrimental to the viability of the households themselves, but also compounds the national problem of increased

rates of labor shortages in skilled and semi-skilled areas (such as mechanics, welders, construction workers, machine operators, draftsmen, technicians, etc.), and of the subsequent decline in productivity and increased wastage of both natural and human resources.

The dire need for poor women, who find themselves de facto heads of households, to seek steady employment opportunities in the formal exchange economy is vividly illustrated in the case of Yemen where it is estimated that roughly 30-50% of the active male population migrate out in any one year, that roughly one-half to two-thirds of these men are married, spend roughly 2-4 years abroad (mainly in Saudi Arabia), usually returning during the harvest seasons (McLelland: 1978). These women are not only increasingly assuming the agricultural chores formerly performed by men and (among the higher strata) but moving into the modern sector (enlarged by workers' remittances) as money-counters in banks, secretaries, teachers, etc. (Myntti: 1978). Strikingly, the vast majority of the all-female workers at the Chinese textile factory (when it was first recruiting and currently) are divorced, widowed, or have no adult male earner present in the household.

The case of the Chinese textile factory is particularly illustrative in that it clearly demonstrates that economic need far outweighs cultural proscriptions and is the determining factor in inducing changes in women's ascribed roles and status. In fact, during my visit to the YAR, I was told that the Government of Yemen was initially skeptical about the feasibility of implementing China's stipulation that all the workers to be recruited for work in its factory be women, the assumption being that cultural constraints are sufficiently strong to militate against the success of China's proposition. The Chinese launched a massive radio campaign to recruit women to fill the available jobs at the factory, and on the day they were to report at the factory gates, 600 Yemeni women (almost entirely heads of households, mainly due to divorce and mail out-migration) showed up!

The need to train women in marketable skills due to shortages in skilled and semi-skilled male labor is vividly illustrated in the Sohag region of Upper Egypt where it is estimated that 50% of the active male population in Sohag, and 75% in Beit Alam, migrate out (mainly to Kuwait). The productivity of the land has declined, and women are not assuming the economic roles of the men who have migrated out. While data has consistently under-reported the economic contributions of women in agricultural production (either because it is largely unrenumerated, seasonal, casual, etc.), Upper Egyptian women, in contrast to Delta women, have historically been less active in field-related work, but are definitely not inactive as unpaid family laborers (see Rugh: 1979). The reason for the lower rate of economic activity for Upper Egyptian women has little to do with differences in social customs between the regions but, rather, the social customs themselves were derived from the differences in systems of irrigation prior to the construction of the Aswan High Dam and the shift to perennial irrigation -- the natural Nile flooding did not require concentrated labor activity of men and women, nor strenuous activity during the planting seasons. Current programs to mechanize agriculture in the Sohag region may have the potential of exacerbating the economic marginality of women unless they are mobilized and trained to operate and maintain machines and other equipment being introduced -- this, not only in field-production but, more significantly, in poultry raising, dairy production, care of livestock, packing crops, etc., all of which are activities that women are primarily responsible for. (see Table for participation rates of women in agricultural activities comparing Upper and Lower Egypt).

The effect of male out-migration and the resultant shortages in skilled and semi-skilled labor power have compelled the governments of the region (mainly Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt; to some extent Syria and Yemen; and wholeheartedly the new government of Afghanistan) to recognize the necessity

of training women in marketable skills, not only so as to fill the present shortages, but also, and perhaps more significantly, the returns on such investments as training programs gives a higher yield in the case of women's training than it does in the case of men's -- women who have acquired marketable skills are less likely to emigrate than are men. Crown Prince Hassan, of Jordan, for instance, adds that working wives might even dissuade their husbands from becoming expatriate workers, particularly among university graduates where ECWA reports over 160,000 from Jordan, Syria and Lebanon were working in the Gulf states; and the rate of emigration among the educated and skilled, in Jordan alone, amounted to 83 persons per day in 1977-1978, and 95% of Jordanians working abroad are male. This clearly demonstrates that the attrition rate among educated and skilled males entails a heavier loss on investments made in education and training of men than for women (ECWA Regional Conference on Women in Development - May 29-June 3, 1978). As a result of this recognition, government policies (as indicated in 5-Year Plans) have been formulated to more systematically integrate women in national development efforts, both through increasing access to education and training (formal and non-formal) and through increasing access to income-generating activities (in the formal and informal economic sectors).

Other socio-economic factors which have an immediate bearing on defining training needs for women in the Near East region are high drop-out rates of girls at every stage of the school cycle -- more pronounced in rural areas; the bias towards academic training in the secondary school cycle which aggravates the economic marginality of adolescent drop outs (see Youssef: 1978a) despite the enormous national need for middle-level technicians and other paraprofessionals, on the one hand, at the same time that it emphasizes the need for vocational and guidance counsellors at the schools, and for other paraprofessional training -- particularly para-medical training and upgrading of nurses' training as well as for social and extension workers.

Lastly, but by no means the least, are the severe economic pressures that increasingly compel women to contribute to household income (if and when they are not the sole providers), whether in the form of production of use-values (income-saving activities such as poultry-raising for household consumption, making head-scarves to distribute to

guests during wedding ceremonies or feasts, etc.), or in production for exchange value in the formal and informal market sector; as well as to band together in informal associations to extend credit to one another (through rotating credit cooperatives); to exchange goods and services such as child-care; to prevent hikes in the cost of living in their communities or to bring in services (water pumps, electricity, etc.); and to exchange information (nicely illustrated in the field experience of an Egyptian social scientist, Taghreed Sharara, who found that after the construction of a sewage system in a village in the Delta, the women began to complain that the water, when boiled for making tea, did not taste as good as when they used to bring it from the communal well -- so, at tea-time, they would all go to the well so that they could see one another and exchange news and information). These informal associations are probably the most effective (but neglected) vehicles for upgrading community life and must be recognized in development work if the active participation of the people in making decisions is the goal of development efforts.

The most successful community programs, in that they become generic, have been those which have directly involved the people in the community in all phases of project design and implementation. The Bassaissa project in Egypt is one such example. In this village, an Egyptian professor from the Department of Material Engineering and Physical Sciences at the American University in Cairo, working with an interdisciplinary team, introduced a photovoltaic cell to the community and involved the entire village in making decisions on priorities for its use. Other technologies were introduced (a milk separator, baking oven, water distillator) which depended on the energy source from the cell. The villagers, both sexes, learned to operate and maintain the machines and requested that the electrical energy generated by the cell for two hours per day be utilized in powering a television set, in the same way that they had previously requested the milk separator and water distillator. Payment for the machines requested by the villagers was met through the formation of an interest-free rotating credit cooperative (which has become the common mainstay of many Egyptians). A film about this project is currently being considered which, if undertaken, will have enormous educational value not only for extension workers and development planners, but for people in other villages and poor urban communities who, if given the opportunity, could actively participate in identifying priority needs and devising their own solutions to meet these needs.

Identification of Training Needs:

The combined socio-economic factors noted and discussed above are an excellent and unique opportunity for this AID project to diversify skills' training areas for women.

For those women who are currently economically marginal; by that I mean family producers, preparatory school drop-outs, unemployed women with dependent children in low-income family households, etc., and for those women who are hired agricultural wage laborers (usually seasonal or casual), diversified skills-training programs could include, though are not limited to, the following:

1. Industrial Skills:

a. Repair and maintenance of machines (ranging from sewing and knitting machines to simple farm machinery). The most prevalent form of income-generating activities for women, supported by the majority of governmental institutions (Ministries of Labor, Social Affairs, Local Governments, etc.) in the Near East countries, are in handicrafts production and clothing manufacturing. While there is nothing inherently remiss about such skills-training in what are deemed to be traditionally "female occupations," these can be expanded to include their repair of the machines used in that sort of production.

b. Training in the use of simple farm machinery since women are increasingly assuming more diversified agricultural roles for which they are ill-prepared.

c. Training in the repair and maintenance of vehicles for those who have completed the preparatory school cycle or have dropped out. Given the propensity for mechanics (males) to migrate out and the resultant shortages in mechanical skills (witness the state of disrepair of busses in Cairo alone), women can fill these shortages without any risk of losses in training investments. Currently, this is a proposal being negotiated by the USAID Mission in Egypt with a demonstration industrial vocational school in Cairo to increase female enrollments in industrial voc-ed programs.

d. Industrial drafting, is a project currently being undertaken in Morocco (too early at this stage to evaluate its success).

2. Construction Trades (plumbing, electrical wiring, carpentry, drafting, etc.)

At the moment, this is a dormant project under the auspices of Al-Azhar's Centre for Studies on Women in Development in collaboration with USAID, UNICEF, and the ILO, as well as with the cooperation of Osman Ahmed Osman's Arab Contractors (which already has an on-going construction-trades training program for women). Women, in the poor urban district of El-Waily in Cairo were found to be amenable to the idea of learning these skills (see Van Dusen: 1979, and Hammam: 1979). Syria also boasts a construction company in which roughly fifty percent of construction workers are women. An interesting historical note: Egyptian women, as early as the nineteenth century, were recruited through the corvée system to work in construction on irrigation dams, buildings, etc., working side by side with men.

3. Commercial Skills (marketing, book-keeping, accounting, etc.)

These skill areas are necessary to complement the formation of producer, consumer and credit cooperatives. They are particularly necessary for those women already engaged in handicrafts manufacturing under the auspices of various ministries in the Near East countries. Only Tunisia has a successful permanent exhibit/market for handicrafts production: the Artisanat. Most of the other countries depend on annual bazaars to market goods produced in small cottage industries. While the lack of these skills has often contributed to many of the failures in setting up cooperatives in LDCs (see Cebotarev: 1977 & World Bank: 1978), if coupled with training in entrepreneurial skills (World Bank: 1978), the record of successes scored may be enhanced. A mechanism to establish quality control of goods produced must also be devised if a permanent marketing exhibit is set up. A World Bank urban development project in crafts and

vocational training for women in Rabat (Morocco) found that remedial education (literacy and numeracy) was needed to supplement the project's goals (Scott: 1979).

For those women who are currently engaged in mid-wifery practice (such as the "daya" in Egypt or the "qabila 'arabeyya" in Tunisia), and for secondary school drop-outs as well as for nurses's assistants:

#### 4. Paramedical Training.

(First aid; immunizations; simple obstetrics; diagnosis, treatment and/or referrals to physicians for such common/prevalent ailments as glaucoma, trachoma, schistosomiasis (bilharzias), and ailments due to nutrition deficiencies such as anemia, teeth defects, etc; basic physical examinations for the dispensing of birth-control pills and other contraceptives, laboratory technical skills, etc.)

Participants in the paramedical training program can be deployed not only in rural and urban clinics and dispensaries, but just as importantly in the schools and factories where basic medical attention is totally inadequate or lacking and very much needed. Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia are beginning to concentrate on providing such training and, while Egypt has suspended the licensing of the "daya", studies continually show that most villagers and the urban poor prefer, and resort to the "daya" and to other traditional health practitioners.

Bahrain is the only Arab country where middle-level medical personnel, nurses in particular, are accorded status and recognition. Egypt, only belatedly (although it can boast the establishment of the very first nursing and mid-wifery school in the region as early as 1830), has begun to recognize the need to upgrade the quality of nurses and has begun to confer national recognition through annual awards. Significantly, with this commendable step to make the nursing profession as reputable and as desirable as it ought to be and, historically, has never been, the daughter of the ex-Foreign Minister, Ismail Fahmy, plans to study nursing.

For students in social-work institutes and faculties of education, there is a pressing need for:

5. Training in Vocational and Guidance Counseling, for ultimate deployment of participants in preparatory and secondary schools where encouragement of female students to enter vocational and technical schools, agricultural and industrial, is sorely lacking. High school drop-outs can also be trained as assistants to these counsellors.

For planners, social workers, extension workers (who are mainly recruited from the graduates of the Faculty of Agriculture):

6. Training in Project Formulation and Research Methodologies, including data collection and analysis, research design, statistics, census design, etc.

Literature on the Middle East has always pointed to the unreliability of quantitative data; yet a great deal of research goes on by indigenous individual or institution-bound researchers and planners without adequate background preparation in project formulation and research methodologies.

The Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) held an interesting and apparently quite successful workshop on integrated rural development. The workshop was entitled "Approaches to Integrated Rural Development" and was part of the program activities for ECWA's Regional Plan of Action for Integrating Women in Development. The workshop was held in Baghdad, Iraq, from March 31 - April 21, 1979, and thirty-five rural extension workers from Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq participated. While data collection was one item on the agenda, others included techniques in animal husbandry and agriculture, institutional support for women's associations, the role of popular organizations for leadership training, delivery of integrated services (education, health, housing, etc.). The outcome of this workshop was a manual written in Arabic (5,000 copies) to be used as a guide for IRD extension workers. Seventy-eight copies in English were also printed, and more are expected. The success of this workshop, which used conditions in rural

Iraq as its field of inquiry, has also been indicated in Yemen's expression of interest for replicating the research and data collection, using conditions in Yemen as the base of inquiry, for discussion at a second regional IRD workshop.

The Near East region's interest in project formulation and research methodologies for data collection on women in the region is further illustrated in two other forthcoming ECWA projects:

--- An 8-country workshop of project formulation, which was to be held in Kuwait and is not slated to be held in Jordan (in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor), is scheduled for some time in 1980 (the dates are not yet fixed). AID may consider cooperating in this workshop.

--- The second project, scheduled for December 10-22, 1979, in Syria, is a workshop on National Development Planning for Integrating Women in Development. It will be held in cooperation with the Institute for Social and Economic Planning (Syria) and the Arab Planning Institute (headquartered in Kuwait). Its focus will be on: sectoral planning, research tools, the economic value of housework in gross local production, using Syria as a case study.

Bahrain is also interested in field data collection on women's needs (expressed to ECWA by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs).

Al-Azhar's Centre for Research on Women in Development (established as a program activity in the aftermath of International Women's Year), includes field research as an integral component of the curriculum at its College for Women. The Centre is also interested in upgrading students and faculty through training workshops on research design and methodologies. While commitments to this Centre have been made by UNICEF (the establishment of the Centre itself was UNICEF-inspired), the Centre is interested in cooperating with USAID. Discussions between the Centre and AID have taken place twice over the past year and a half, but there has been no follow-up.

Regional Seminars vs. In-Country Seminars and Training:

The groups of women identified for training needs (numbers 1-3) preclude attempts to organize a regional seminar due to a number of constraints. These constraints are as follows:

1. Legal. The majority of the countries in the Near East do not allow women to travel outside the country without permission of a male guardian (father, husband, uncle, brother, etc.)

2. Socio-cultural. It is unlikely that such permission would be granted for these particular groups of women.

3. Economic. Depending on the organization and division of labor in the household, these women cannot afford to be relieved of day-to-day responsibilities (whether these be in performing domestic chores, earning a wage, etc.) just to participate in a regional seminar.

Regional seminars in the Middle East tend to draw elite women who are already over-extended as it is; therefore, many of these seminars tend to become social events. It is refreshing to know that the ECWA workshop on Integrated Rural Development participants were rural extension workers (non-elite) was successful. Given the variations in the degree of mobility women have in the region, compounded further by class variations within each country, an institution such as Al-Azhar (in light of the sheer weight its name commands in the region), may perhaps be the best approach for convening a regional seminar on paramedical & health auxiliaries (#4). There are a number of reasons for involving Al-Azhar in such a regional seminar. These include its commitment to enhancing the role of women in development; and, given the uncertainty as to the direction of the growing Islamic fundamentalist movements (including that in Afghanistan) and how they will impact on women, it is important to support Al-Azhar so that it can continue in its commitment to integrating women in

national development efforts. In saying this, I do not mean to imply that the increased interest in reasserting the Islamic heritage of the region is intrinsically retrogressive towards women. Islam is not monolithic, and, as demonstrated earlier, economic considerations have a greater hold on women's behavior than do cultural proscriptions. However, as in the case of many movements, the potential exists equally for deleterious or beneficial consequences on women's roles in society. Al-Azhar also has on-going programs, including seminars on women in development, as well as its own maternity and pediatrics clinic in the urban poor district of El-Waily in Cairo. What would be especially fruitful, if it can be arranged as a joint sponsorship between Al-Azhar and the Ministry of Health in Bahrain, is to have the regional seminar on paramedics and health auxiliaries in Bahrain (for reasons mentioned earlier), or invite Bahraini paramedics to participate in the seminar once a location is decided upon.

Regional seminars (numbers 5 and 6) can be held in cooperation with the various academic institutions (social work institutes, faculties of agriculture, education, social sciences, etc.), as well as with appropriate ministries (education, labor, social affairs, agriculture, local government, etc.), and planning institutes. The Arab Labor Organization (of the Arab League) may also be invited to participate. It is currently involved in researching the conditions of women's employment (wage discrimination towards women). In Jordan, for instance, where one-third of agricultural wage workers are women, many of whom are Palestinian and widowed, it was found that women received half the wages men received, social services at place of employment, health and sanitation conditions at the workplaces, etc.

One of the purposes of these regional seminars, besides the sharing of information and cooperation in tackling common problems, should be to establish "networking" groups to develop lobbying-power that impacts on planning and change in the individual countries' efforts at integrating women in development processes. The momentum building up now for the Mid-Decade International Women's Conference, as well as for the end of the Decade, enhances the timeliness of these seminars.

The in-country seminars and training programs proposed in this report are recognized as being much more difficult to implement than the regional seminars. However, they are not impossible; and, as pointed out earlier, conditions do exist where such experimentation, perhaps daring, is not only desirable but necessary. The vehicle maintenance and repair training program is, for instance, Mission-inspired (Cairo). Other USAID Missions should explore the possibilities of its replicability in the countries where they are serving. Egypt's USAID Mission has also recently suggested a WID program activity in income-generation with a focus on increasing access of women into the industrial labor force and upgrading the position as well as the conditions of work of female factory workers. This program activity fits in well with the ALO research (mentioned above) and with ILO on-going research as well. I am very enthusiastic about this proposal, and other USAID Missions might be encouraged to explore replicating it in the countries in which they serve.

Most of the AID/WID programs in the Near East Bureau are recent or forthcoming and, therefore, cannot adequately be evaluated in terms of their achievements regarding Near East women's involvement. This fact reinforces the timeliness and intention of the present project under discussion, at the same time that it reinforces the commitment of the Near East Bureau to monitor its projects, with a view to assessing their impact on women, in all phases of project identification, design, implementation and follow-on activities. The evaluation of World Bank projects in the Near East is similarly handicapped since it was only as of 1977 that a post of "Adviser on Women in Development" was created in the Central Projects Staff of the Bank. The United Nations Secretariat is currently in the process of evaluating its WID projects in preparation for the Mid-Decade International Women's Conference, and the results are not yet available. I have, however, tried to incorporate, in the body of this report, some of these projects with which I am familiar, particularly as they relate to the identified training needs and suggested programs.

Given the constraints imposed by the absence of a Project Paper for this Regional (and In-Country Seminar) Training for Women in the Near East, this report is only preparatory and its suggestions, tentative. Its potential for serving as a "pilot project" (see Van Dusen: 1978), given the innovative and experimental nature of diversified skills-training areas for women in the Near East (at least in the suggested in-country programs), for breaking new ground in meeting identified needs, cannot be stressed enough.

(Appendix)

1.1. Female Educational Achievement:1972 & Labor Force Participation Rates:1970\*

Country	School Age Girls in School (primary) %	Female School Enrollment (Primary) % of Total Enrollment	Female School Enrollment (Secondary) % of Total Enrollment	Female Labor Force Participa- tion Rates %
Tunisia	83	55	27	24
Syria	57	37	24	11
Morocco	36	33	26	15
Egypt	55	38	31	5
Jordan	85	43	30	
Afghanistan	5	13	13	
Yemen	1	2	1	

Source: ILO, Statistical Yearbook (Geneva:1973); UNESCO, Literacy 1969 to 1971 (Paris, 1972) as cited in Beck & Keddie:1978, Table 2.2, p.63).

\*World Tables 1976 (World Bank:1976) as cited in Van Dusen:1977)

2.1 Female Economic Participation Rates of Rural Women in Upper & Lower Egypt

Activity	Lower Egypt		Upper Egypt	
	nos. (100's)	%	Nos. (100's)	%
Plowing	83	49.7	10	10.9
Harrowing	83	49.7	38	41.3
Drilling	91	54.5	38	41.3
Cultivation	105	62.9	31	33.7
Irrigation	104	62.3	32	34.8
Fertilizing	95	56.9	35	38.0
Resowing	107	64.1	32	34.8
Thinning	111	65.8	32	34.8
Hoing	93	55.7	34	37.0

Table 2.1 continued.

	#	%	#	%
Transporting Crops	117	70.1	25	27.2
Packing Crops	109	65.3	38	41.3
Milking	101	73.2	37	55.2
Poultry Raising	132	79.0	75	81.5
Home Agricultural Manufacturing	107	64.1	42	45.6

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Source: Abou El Seoud, K. and F. Estira, A Study of the Role of Women and Youth in Rural Development with an Emphasis on Production and Consumption of Nutritive Elements. FAO/Middle East Office:1977-8, as cited in Andrea Rugh:1979)

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