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THE ROLE OF RURAL HAITIAN WOMEN
in
DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

This study of the role of rural Haitian women in development was undertaken under contract with USAID from October through December, 1980. It secured information with a view to enhancing the role of rural women in development while strengthening the family and alleviating poverty. The study consisted of 1) a review of pertinent literature, 2) interviews with people in Port-au-Prince active in development programs for women, and 3) fieldwork observations and interviews. Fieldwork interviews were conducted with many peasant women, and men, both individually and in groups. The women ranged in age from 17-70 years and were involved in various activities. Development projects and work sites were visited; interviews were conducted with workers, small business owners and project directors.

Fieldwork interviews were conducted in the regions of the north, northwest, La Gonave, the Artibonite, the Cul-de-Sac Plain, Kenscoff and Port-au-Prince. A number of regions were visited in order to get a sense of any similarities or differences there might be by region. Site selection was made in conjunction with topics of special interest. These were commerce, agriculture, animal husbandry, non-agricultural employment, education and charcoal production. In addition several development programs, credit and community organization activities for women were examined. In some cases, details of women's personal histories were obtained in order to provide a context for understanding. Finally, general descriptions of various women's activities were secured.

The development model is generally one of modernization. International experience in a number of settings indicates that as societies modernize,

the status of women frequently deteriorates. As sex roles in society come under increasing scrutiny, there is a tendency to impose newly emerging Western models on other societies. The very question of "women in development" thus stems from a certain bias, namely, the American experience. With this in mind, a conscious attempt is being made by the author not to impose Western role models on the Haitian situation. With a heightened awareness of the strengths of Haitian women, and a sensitivity to the special problems they face, development efforts may serve to enhance rather than diminish the roles of Haitian women in society.

In rural Haiti the household is the traditional focal point of social life, religion and economics. The formal institutions of churches, schools and community councils are fairly recent additions to the local scene. Economic livelihood is secured through small scale peasant farming, commerce and to a lesser extent home industry. Within this framework the roles of men and women complement each other. In general terms men till the land and women market the produce; ideally both share the responsibility for household maintenance. While there is competition between peasant households, there is considerable sharing within the household. While there is certainly interpersonal conflict between men and women, the more significant conflicts are those between peasant households and other sectors of Haitian society. The discussion of the roles of Haitian women which follows should properly be viewed within this context.

Social Relationships and Household Management

In rural Haiti men and women enter into various forms of sexual and marital unions; legal marriage is viewed as the ideal. It is not uncommon for men and women to enter stable marital unions after the husband and/or wife have already had a child together or with someone else. People may enter a "plasaj", customary, union rather than legal marriage because they can't afford legal marriage. In both legal marriage and "plasaj", men (but rarely women and then only secretly) may have sexual relationships with other partners. The parents of children born outside of stable marital unions are identified as "manman pitit," mother of the child, and "papa pitit", father of the child. Men may live with their legal or "plasé" wives or may live with or have visiting relationships with outside women or "manman pitit". Men are expected to support their children by whatever union, but some neglect their duty. Two women who have sexual relations with one man may know and be on good terms with each other, although in other cases this is a cause of jealousy. Sometimes one wife will rear a child born to the second wife of the same man. (For further information see Bastien 1961, Simpson 1942 and Smucker 1981).

Having children is very important to both men and women. One of the first questions asked of strangers is, "how many children do you have". Young women do not consider themselves mature until they've had a child. There are Haitian saying which state, "children are wealth", and "the child is stronger than marriage". This latter means that the bond between a man and a woman is more strongly established through having children together than it is through marriage. There is also economic importance attached to having children. In addition to the labor they provide to the peasant household, children provide one's economic security in old age. In this

regard, one woman stated that she would prefer to have girl children because girls are more serious and more likely to fulfill their obligations to aged parents.

Children in Haiti, both boys and girls, inherit equally from both father and mother. All children who are recognized, whether they were born of legal marriage or not, inherit equally. Legally married spouses have right to half of the property acquired after marriage; the children get the other half. Children also inherit equal shares of all of their parents inherited property (Comhaire-Sylvain 1961, 220-221). Unmarried or "plasé", women receive their inheritance through their family of origin. They do not inherit anything from the fathers of their children. Their children, however, inherit from their fathers as well as their mothers. In this way these women may have access to greater resources in their old age via their children's provisions for them.

While there is a preference among women in Haiti for legal marriage, "plasaj" is also respectable. When asked which was better, marriage or "plasaj", one peasant woman responded that from a religious point of view it is better to be legally married, but otherwise it depends on chance. It is better to be "plasé" to a wealthy man than to be married to a poor one. Other women point out that legal marriage gives one the title of "madam" and carries with it greater status and prestige. A number of households in Haiti are also headed by single women who live only with their children.

The authority in the peasant household formally rests with the man. When men were asked who carries the authority and decision-making power in the household, they unanimously stated that the man is head of the household and that authority rests with him. All women agreed with this, when asked the

same questions, but modified the response. They suggested that when husband and wife live in harmony as they should, authority isn't an issue; under these circumstances men and women make decisions jointly and share the authority. (In fact, women's opinions regarding financial investment are often highly regarded). They suggest that when a man and woman don't get along, the woman is not "free". Men say they have the right to beat their wives for infidelity or not performing their household duties. Finally, the issue is one of age rather than sex. "As long as a landholding parent still lives in the home, moral authority and final control of land and labor supplies rests with the older parent or grandparent, whether male or female". (Smucker, 1981).

On a day-to-day basis women have primary responsibility for child care, household management and expenditures. Women are assisted in their household work, cooking, cleaning, laundry, marketing, etc. by children who regularly perform household chores. Women are also assisted in their child care responsibilities by older children, their husbands or other relatives at times when they need to be away from home, usually for marketing or commerce.

Women obtain money through the sale of garden produce and commerce. They generally spend the money on family necessities. Men have their own money as a result of the sale of their export crop. Men handle the sale of the export crop and large animals; women handle the commerce in internally marketed goods and produce. Men spend money for the household and for their amusements. These amusements consist of rum, tobacco, cock fights, card playing and dominos.

Women have the reputation for being more serious and responsible than men. Women will drink small quantities of sweet alcoholic drinks at celebrations and smoke cigarettes or a pipe occasionally. They will attend public dances only if accompanied by men. They don't gamble. Women are, however, active participants at religious ceremonies as dancers, possessed spirits and preparers of food. A number of respondents indicated that women are more serious because it is they who must respond to their children's needs each day while, for the men, the children are less visible.

Commerce, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

Women's involvement in commerce, agriculture and animal husbandry is correlated with their region of residence and their individual social and economic circumstances. The following descriptions are of rural women from different regions, living arrangements and economic circumstances. These sketches are drawn to acquaint the reader with both the typicalness and the variations in the role of rural Haitian women.

The rural area around Thomazeau in the Cul-de-Sac Plain is generally arid but has some irrigation. The soil is salty in spots. Sugar and rice are the main crops but millet, corn, sweet potatoes, manioc, beans, tomatoes, eggplants, onions, plantains and bananas are also grown. Some years ago it was a charcoal producing area, but the trees are gone now to the extent that people often buy wood or charcoal for cooking. The town of Thomazeau is easily accessible by motorized vehicle from Port-au-Prince and is about 1½ to 2 hours travel time from the city. The village is another one hour's walk from Thomazeau. It is accessible by vehicle but there is no commercial traffic to the village.

The principal occupation of many of the women in this region is commerce of the travelling intermediary type often called "Madam Sara". This word is derived from the name of a bird which makes a lot of noise. This term is not liked by the market ladies since it carries with it the connotation of someone who is gossipy and quarrelsome. The women prefer to be called "machand", market ladies. A young woman who has been doing this sort of commerce for 7 years gave the following account of her life circumstances and trading activities.

She was born of parents from the rural area around Thomazeau and lived with her mother in a peasant village until she was about 10 years old. At that time she left home to work for her godmother, a market lady who lived in Port-au-Prince. She went to live with her godmother as the result of her mother's inability to adequately support her family after a cyclone passed through the village. As she was the oldest child and capable of working, this arrangement provided some relief for her mother. She became for her godmother what in Haiti is known as a "ti moun". (This term is the generic name for child, but in this context has the specific meaning of a child who is sent by his/her family to live and work in the home of another. In return, the ti moun is fed, clothed and occasionally sent to school). This woman performed the tasks of washing, ironing, cleaning and cooking for her godmother. She also accompanied her godmother on market trips and learned to do commerce in this manner. The godmother has since left Haiti and is living in New York City.

The young woman continues to live in Port-au-Prince and rents a room downtown near the market. She makes 2 trips each week to the countryside to buy produce, to sell in Port-au-Prince. On Wednesdays she travels by commercial truck to Croix Fer and Belladère to buy corn and beans in season (November). Later on in the season she will buy millet. Before she leaves Port-au-Prince she sometimes buys rice to sell wholesale in Croix Fer and Belladère. She returns to Port-au-Prince Thursday evenings and sells her produce to "révendez", retailers. She does not sell retail herself. On Fridays around noon she travels again by commercial truck to Mirebalais to buy corn and beans. She will also buy millet there later in season. She again returns to Port-au-Prince Saturday evenings with her

produce. She doesn't buy anything in Port-au-Prince to sell in Mirebalais because there isn't enough time for it. Again, she sells her produce in Port-au-Prince to retailers. When she buys produce in Croix Fer, Belladère and Mirebalais, she buys directly from peasant farmers or from someone who has already bought from them.

She figures her profit after she has finished selling the produce each trip. For the week prior to our discussion her investment was \$300.00 per trip. On the first trip she lost \$10.00, but on the second trip she made a profit of \$30.00, so for her week's work she made \$20.00.

She figures her profit to be what remains after her costs are covered. Aside from her investment capital, there are other costs. As a passenger without produce she must pay \$2.00 for a one way trip. If she carries produce she doesn't have to pay for herself but pays a fee per sack for transport. At Belladère she pays \$2.00 per sack for transport; at her other stops she pays \$1.60 per sack. Belladère is farther away, therefore the transport cost is higher. She also pays a fee of \$0.40 per sack for workers to load them onto the truck and pays a fee of \$0.20 per sack for workers to unload the sacks. Once she arrives in Port-au-Prince she pays a fee of \$0.60 per sack per day for a depot.

Market ladies pay depot fees by the day, if they have produce in a depot, they may sleep there free of charge. Market ladies who wish to avoid paying depot fees can keep their produce with them and sleep in the market free of charge. They, however, run the risk of losing produce and/or money to thieves while they sleep. If a market lady sells directly in front of the depot, she is obligated to pay an additional small fee per

unit for the privilege of selling at this particular location. Market ladies are sometimes willing to pay this fee because produce sells better there than even a short distance away.

This market lady also has other costs. She must pay for a government patente (license), a sum of \$7.36 each year, and an identity card for \$2.00 each year. She pays for a maid, a young woman who moved to Port-au-Prince from the north of Haiti (\$8.00 per month plus 2 meals per day). The maid takes care of the children while she is away on her marketing trips.

The government license seems to vary in price (in the North it was reported as costing \$11.00) and is not required for all forms of marketing. It is required of the travelling intermediaries who buy in the country markets, yet not all market ladies of this type can afford it. In this regard an interesting network had developed which speaks to the importance of kin ties in marketing (for further information on this topic see Legerman 1971). Market women who are able to do so, buy the necessary license. Relative who can't afford to buy the license make an arrangement with the buyer. When authorities ask to see her license, the non-licensed market lady says she is buying produce for the licensed woman. When the authorities check with the licensed market lady, she confirms that it is so, but in actuality the other market lady is buying for herself and not for the licensed market lady.

The license can also be used to cut down the competition. If a woman notices that there are others who always buy where she does and knows that they are unlicensed, she may report them to the official in an effort to prevent them from continuing in commerce.

Family ties are also an important source of credit for commerce. Husbands frequently give their wives the capital necessary to start in commerce. This market lady got started in commerce with the credit she received from an aunt. When she has difficulties and losses her investment capital, she borrows money from family members to start over.

Family ties help to make the process of marketing easier. This market lady has a cousin who also travels back and forth from the countryside doing commerce. The cousin stays with her when she is in Port-au-Prince and occasionally sells for her. She also has relatives who buy produce in country markets she doesn't frequent. These relatives sometimes buy for her and send the produce to the country market where she picks it up.

This woman has 3 children, a son and 2 daughters. She is not married. The father of her first child, her 7 year old son, went to New York 6 years ago and does not send her anything for the child's support. She has 2 daughters (aged 2 years and 4 months respectively) by a second man who does not live with her but supports his children when he is able. Her son lives with her and goes to school in Port-au-Prince. The infant is also in her care, but the 2 year old daughter is living in Jacmel with her grandmother. She will stay with her grandmother until she is 4 years old. Then she will come to Port-au-Prince to live with her mother and go to school. The child went to live with her grandmother as an infant because she was ill and her mother was too busy with her work in commerce to provide her with the necessary care and attention.

This market lady attended a state run school and learned how to do embroidery and sewing in her youth. She would have liked to have been a

seamstress but wasn't able to gather enough money together to buy a sewing machine and the necessary materials. Now she feels that if she had more capital, she would expand her commercial activities. She does not stock items in order to sell at a higher price when they are scarce because she can't afford to do so. She would also be concerned about the problem of loss due to spoilage and rodents.

Many other women still living in this rural area are also extensively involved in commerce of the travelling intermediary type. They often leave their homes on Monday and don't return until Saturday evening. They usually send food and necessary clothing home for their families once a week. If they have an older girl child, they will leave the household chores - cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing - and responsibility for the care of younger children in her hands. If they don't have an older child, they might have their husbands do cooking and child care, and make an arrangement for someone else to handle the laundry. If there is no husband, a woman will leave the care of her children in the hands of another relative, sometimes an older woman who is no longer engaged in commerce herself. If possible, people also like to send their children to boarding school in Port-au-Prince. These schools therefore, serve the dual functions of providing education and child care.

Older women recall that their mothers used to engage in the same kind of commerce but note that there are differences today. Women used to travel and transport goods by animal; now they travel by commercial truck. Increased transportation costs and inflation require them to have larger sums of investment capital than formerly. Reduced travel time permits women to

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increase their trips of purchase, but profits are not as reliable since more women are doing commerce. The number of women involved in commerce increased after Hurricane Hazel (1954) passed through the village. Prior to the cyclone more women were engaged in agricultural work, planting, weeding and harvesting as well as the keeping and selling of goats, sheep, pigs and chickens. Women used to make and sell sisal rope, straw sleeping mats and saddles in greater number than they do today.

Murray and Alvarez (1975, 121-123) suggest that the extensive and increased involvement of rural women from this area in commerce has had the following effects:

1. The internal market system constitutes a separate status system through which women can move up in the world independent of the economic status of their husbands.
2. Successful business activity becomes an expected part of the female role.
3. It draws women farther away from agricultural activities.
4. The weekly shipment of food from Port-au-Prince is expected and has the effect of encouraging the use of gardens less as a source of food than as a source of trading capital.
5. The "balance of power" in the household has shifted in the woman's direction.
6. In some cases men have given over their gardens to sharecropping and have moved to the city to assist their wives.
7. The success of the domestic group rises by virtue of trade rather than land acquisition.

8. The absence of women in the home has created a shift in domestic roles.
9. The situation could depress childbearing if it is seen as an economic liability.
10. The absent mother creates a different type of mother-child bond.
11. Contact with Port-au-Prince has in some cases created people's higher aspirations for their children.
12. There is a broader range of potential mate selection for young women.
13. Some older women choose to come to Port-au-Prince to live with their daughters. This leaves their husbands in relative isolation at home.

Overtime this village has experienced considerable change. Many people from here went to the Dominican Republic to work until they were forced back under Trujillo in 1939. Later, the devastation of Hurricane Hazel greatly altered economic activity. Access to the improved road network and proximity to the increasingly modernized Port-au-Prince area have also had considerable impact on the village economy. As the following sketches demonstrate, the extensive involvement of women from Thomazeau in commerce as travelling intermediaries, while certainly a representative type, is not typical of many other rural Haitian women.

The rural area outside of Grande Rivière du Nord is mountainous; rainfall is usually adequate. Crops are varied and consist of coffee, cocoa, beans, manioc, sweet potatoes, corn, peanuts, plantains, bananas and breadfruit. The fruits produced are oranges, grapefruit, mangoes, grenadine, coconut and corosol. The area used to produce cashews but for the past several years the trees have been diseased and have not produced well. Cotton was also produced some years ago, but no longer since there is little market for it

and the price is low. Trees are fairly abundant in comparison with some other regions in Haiti. Wood for cooking is gathered, never purchased. Charcoal production is very limited. Housing is not organized by village but is scattered throughout the mountains. The area is accessible by foot or animal only and is about 1½ hour walk uphill from Grande Rivière du Nord. Public transportation is available from Grande Rivière to Cap-Haitien, 15 miles away.

The occupations of women in this area tend to be centered in the household. Women are primarily responsible for child care and household management marketing, cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing etc. for the the family. They intersperse these activities with the selling of produce from the family gardens and occasional commerce. Men are primarily responsible for agriculture and animal husbandry; they handle the sale of the export crop (coffee) and large animals. The role of women here contrasts markedly with that of women in the Thomazeau area and comes closer to representing the more traditional role of mountain peasant women. In families where husband and wife are both present, their roles tend to be in balance. In families headed by women, the women tend to perform more agricultural work.

An example of a fairly typical woman living in this area is a married woman living with her husband and 8 children. She considers herself fortunate in that all of her children are living, although they all have stunted growth and have exhibited other characteristics of malnutrition. The family has made considerable sacrifices to send their children to school. Their eldest child, a boy, is currently living with relatives in a nearby town and attending secondary school.

There are 5 boys and 3 girls in the family ranging in age from 19 years to 4 years. They all perform chores in the household depending on their age and sex. The girls generally sweep (houses and courtyards are thoroughly swept every morning), carry water to the house from the spring, make the bed, clean the house, help with the cooking, dish washing, clothes washing and ironing, and marketing. The boys generally gather and cut wood for the cooking fire, graze the animals, and help with the garden cultivation and harvesting. Boys and young men climb trees to harvest coconuts, oranges and other fruits. When the boys become young men they are often given their own gardens to cultivate. Young women are often given money to engage in commerce. While these tasks are sex-specific, they are not rigid. This division of labor holds generally throughout the regions visited for this report.

This woman started doing commerce when she was a young girl still living with her parents. On Wednesdays she would leave home with a group of other young women like herself and take a commercial truck to St. Raphael. She would sleep in the market place with the others overnight and on Thursday buy rice and beans before returning home. On Saturday she would go with a group of people by animal transport to Limonade to sell her rice and beans. Her parents initially gave her \$3.00 seed money to do commerce. She could usually turn a profit of a dollar. She was not obligated to turn over investment capital or profits to her parents, but she would sometimes bring them food gifts.

Since she is married and has small children, she doesn't do this kind of commerce any more. She also does not work in the garden or take care of

animals. Her work is essentially that of household management. She knows how to sew by hand and makes all of her own clothes, all of the girls' clothes and the small boys' clothes. The older boys' clothes and her husband's clothes are made by a tailor. (This is in keeping with the custom in Haiti. Seamstresses make women's clothes and tailors make men's clothes). She would like to do sewing as a trade but can't because she is too busy with the children and lacks a sewing machine. She sells in the market in Grande Rivière what surplus there is from the gardens cultivated by her husband. With the money thus obtained she purchases in the same market place other items needed by the family. She also sells tobacco on a small scale from her home to people in the neighborhood.

While a number of women in this area engage in commerce "... commerce ... is one of relatively small scale ... commerce in cashews, for example, is very much seasonal, and a woman may decide to undertake the considerable effort involved in order to raise money for a particular purpose ... not for the purpose of accumulation and reinvestment for its own sake. For many then, commerce is periodic or seasonal. For some it is year around and nearly full time. And for a few it is speculative and of a larger scale." (Smucker, 1981).

For every peasant household there is a woman-wife, mother, sister-who sells the garden surplus in the market to secure the funds to provide for other household needs. In addition to this, many women engage in some form of commerce. The following examples indicate the varying modes of commerce engaged in by women of this region.

One older woman, a well established retailer, has been selling since she was a young woman. She started selling coffee, then cashews, then grain.

Now she buys bread and candy in the Grande Rivière market and sells it in the crossroad. Another goes once a week to buy peanuts at a country market to sell in several nearby towns. She occasionally buys chicks, raises them at home and sells them at the same town markets. Another woman buys rice in Grande Rivière, stores it in her house and sells it from her home to local people. This works out well for her since she can take care of her small baby at the same time. Another woman specializes in the occasional sale of meat. Another buys "clairin", a kind of rum, by the gallon from the factory and sells it in small volumes from her home. Another woman buys peanuts, makes peanut butter in her courtyard and sells it. While the sale of coffee, the export crop, is handled by men, women process coffee and cocoa for use in the home and sell it on the internal market. Several women sell cassava.

The cassava making process is an interesting example of the kind of interplay characteristic of the roles of men and women in rural Haiti. The cultivation and harvesting of the manioc is handled by men. Women come with donkeys to transport the harvested manioc to the house. A group of women assemble in the afternoon to peel the manioc; a group of men come in the evening to grate it. Men press the grated manioc. The next day the men bake the cassava bread and the women take it to market.

Women in this immediate area do not work as agricultural wage laborers, but people know of places not too far distant where they do. Women will occasionally work in the garden, particularly during the harvest, but they do not do heavy garden work. Both men and women harvest coffee beans but only women pick the beans that have fallen to the ground during the first

picking. Men take care of and sell goats, pigs and cows. Women take care of and sell chickens and turkeys; they sometimes feed the pigs. Men take care of and sell horses and donkeys. Women heads of household will have men relatives work their land for them, hire it done, rent out the land or in some cases work it themselves. If they own large animals, they usually make arrangements for a man to take care of them for a fee.

Smucker (1981) indicates that there is considerable out migration from this area of young people, especially women. This is accounted for by marriage and employment of women as domestic servants. There is also the case of 2 young sisters who moved to Cap-Haitien to work as prostitutes until they could collect enough money to engage in commerce. Both returned to the neighborhood with VD sometime later. One of the sisters also had TB and died. The other sister recovered, married and established a household in the neighborhood.

A contrast in fortunes is also exhibited by another pair of sisters. After their mother's death which occurred when both were young children, one of the sisters went to live with an aunt in Cap-Haitien; the other went to live with her grandfather in the neighborhood. The former child was sent to school, became well educated, married and moved to Montreal. The latter child was expected to work for her grandfather such that when school authorities came looking for her, her grandfather hid her under the bed. She also married but remained a poor peasant woman. Until recently she has done occasional commerce in coconuts and chickens; her age no longer permits such strenuous work. She is now widowed and lives with her son who cultivates her small holdings.

The changes over time in this region have been slower and less drastic than those in the Thomazeau area; they are more closely linked to climatic and other environmental factors than they are to modernization trends. Women's activities are centered at home and in commerce. Women here are less active in agricultural work than are those described in the following brief sketches drawn from other regions.

The fertile grain growing region of Dubedou outside of Gonaives is rather flat and arid. Millet, corn and beans are the principal crops. There is considerable agricultural wage labor in the area. A man who works a full day is paid \$2.00 and receives 2 meals and drink. The most common labor practice is "bout zeb", whereby a man works a certain amount of land for a fixed fee. At this rate men can make about \$4.00 per day. Women never work in the latter fashion although they do work as agricultural wage laborers. Women are paid at a rate of \$1.20 for a full day's work or \$0.60 for a half day. This work might consist of planting, weeding and harvesting beans and corn. Women are often paid in kind for harvesting. They also take care of and sell all farm animals including cows; the exception is that they do not handle "difficult" cows.

Grande Savanne in the Northwest is a seaside fishing village situated on the salt flats. People also rely on grazing animals and farming for their income but report that they haven't had a good harvest in the past 3 years. Women do not perform agricultural wage labor here. Their main occupations are child care, household management, commerce and harvesting. Women sell fish and all farm animals including cows. In addition, many women travel to Gonaives to buy cigarettes, rum, rice, beans, corn meal,

cloth, soap, etc. to sell in the neighborhood. The women travel by commercial truck; prior to the roads' being built they went by boat. They find the truck to be more expensive but quicker. Women engage in harvesting along with the men but don't usually do other garden work. Women do all forms of garden work if they have no husband or other man to do it for them. Both men and women engage in animal husbandry.

Ti Rivière in the northwest is located in an arid highland area. The primary agricultural crops are peanuts, millet, sweet potatoes, manioc, beans and corn. The area also relies heavily on charcoal for its support. There is limited animal husbandry. This consists mostly of goats, chickens, and a few pigs. People also keep donkeys, mules, horses and an occasional cow.

Women in the area have as their occupations child care, household management, agricultural work, charcoal making and occasional commerce. Commerce is small scale and limited to things women can sell in the neighborhood. This is due to the fact that women here generally lack the means to engage in larger scale commerce. Women take care of chickens; men usually take care of the other animals. Men and women often share the agricultural work. For example, men plant peanuts and dig them up. The women gather, dry and store them. Women also make peanut butter and peanut candy. A sisal handcraft project that employs both men and women has recently started in the neighborhood.

People have difficulty supporting themselves year around in this area. There is therefore considerable seasonal outmigration to find work. Both men and women leave here to work in Gonaives and the Artibonite. Women often go to the Artibonite for 3 month periods of time to harvest rice. It was

noted that people don't migrate to New York or Miami because they can't afford it. Because of this type of migration from the northwest it is easy for people in Anse Rouge and St. Marc to obtain "ti moun". In better times these children are not so available.

An example of how a woman's work pattern may change by circumstances is represented by an older woman encountered while she was hoeing her garden in the L'Arbre plain. She is the mother of 7 children. She was never legally married but enjoyed a stable "plasé" relationship with her husband until he died.

She stated that while she was married, life was good; the family never knew hunger. During that time she never worked in the garden. She took care of farm animals and sold live animals including cows. She no longer engages in animal husbandry since the passing of the law which prohibits free grazing. She used to travel to Cap-Haitien to buy cloth to sell in the market of Anse Rouge and surrounding area. Since her husband's death she must work in the garden and has no time for commerce.

She also lost land after her husband's death. Her husband had been legally married to another woman. After the man's death, a land dispute arose over land this woman had bought with her husband. The dispute was settled in favor of the man's legal children. The land lost to this woman was good irrigated land; she now works her own inherited land. In contrast, across the road from where this woman was working alone in her garden, a group of 4 men were working as agricultural wage laborers in the garden of a woman whose husband is temporarily away from home.

Ka Philippe is located in the northwest in a valley between 2 mountain ranges. It is a few hours drive inland from the main road. The area receives little rain. There is no fruit grown here. The crops are primarily corn, millet, peanuts and beans. Charcoal is also produced.

Women engage in child care, household management and some commerce. They are very active in agricultural work and charcoal making. The women sell produce from their gardens; they also buy corn, millet and beans in other areas to sell in the neighborhood. Both men and women engage in animal husbandry and sale of animals, but men are more likely to take care of larger animals while women take care of chickens. People don't keep cows.

Men and women work together in agriculture and charcoal making. Both make straw hats, baskets and sleeping mats. Ka Philippe seems to be somewhat a typical in that women's participation in agriculture and charcoal making is more thorough going than in other areas. It also struck this author that a larger number of women were more vocal than in other places regarding agricultural practice and community council activities when these questions were addressed to a mixed group of men and women.

Savien is located in the irrigated rice growing region of the Artibonite valley. Women's primary occupations here are child care, household management, commerce and agricultural work. Commerce is generally in rice and corn. Women usually purchase corn in Petite Rivière to sell at Pont Sondé and Port-au-Prince. They sell rice at the same locations. In contrast to the corn, rice is harvested from their own gardens or purchased in the neighborhood for re-sale in another area. Women buy unhulled rice which they process before selling. The processing involves soaking the rice

in water for 3 days, then heating it in salt water (certain varieties only) before placing it on a concrete slab in the sun to dry for up to 4 days. The rice is then pounded with a mortar-and-pestle or ground by machine after which it is winnowed. The entire processing, except for the grinding, is usually handled by women.

In this area, women's work in agriculture varies according to means regardless of marital status. A woman who can afford it does no agricultural work. For women who do, the agricultural work pattern is as follows: Both men and women work together in the rice nurseries. Transplants are carried to the garden by animal or on the heads of men and women. Men prepare the soil. Both men and women plant rice but men are more likely to do this. The women who do it are more likely to be young women. Women are more heavily involved in harvesting the rice. Both men and women work at weeding out the rice fields after the harvest. Both work in "coumbit" style (collective work party) in this area. Usually men work together but separately from the women (and vice versa), but sometimes there is a mixed group of men and women. Both men and women work as agricultural wage laborers, women more often in the harvest than at other times. Men are paid \$1.60 and women \$1.20 for a half day's work, one meal included; or, they are paid in kind. It was suggested by one respondent that women are paid less because they work less quickly than men.

At Obleron in the mountainous area of Kenscoff women are chiefly involved in commerce but some work the land as well. Women reportedly do garden work here either because they don't have husbands or other men available to them, because they like to garden, or because their husbands don't work hard.

La Gonâve is a small island off the west coast of Haiti; it is mountainous and surrounded by arid coastal lowlands. Its principal crops are corn, millet, manioc, sweet potatoes, peanuts, beans, pumpkins and sisal. Women engage in child care, household management, agriculture, animal husbandry, commerce and charcoal making.

Men and women work together here in agriculture. Men dig the holes to plant millet and women follow to plant and cover. Men usually weed the gardens. Both men and women, but more often women, harvest the millet, sack it and carry it home. Men and women, but more often men, shell it; women winnow it and sell it. Corn and beans are handled in much the same fashion; men generally grind corn. Men prepare the soil and plant manioc and sweet potatoes; the women follow and cover the plants. Men also dig them up, but women follow the men and gather the tubers out of the field. Women weed gardens when the weeds are small. They also pick limes and a fruit called "cachiman".

People on La Gonâve also make cassava bread from manioc. Women usually handle the entire process but men sometimes peel and grate the manioc. The cassava made here is smaller than the type made in Grande Rivière and is not as extensively retailed. It is usually made in a cooking pot.

Men and women divide the labor involved in ropemaking. Sisal is often cut by men, pounded with rocks by women, then stripped by men. Sometimes it is sold in this state. Recently people have not been making it into cord because there is little market for it, but when they do both men and women make cord.

Animal husbandry is generally considered to be man's work but if a woman doesn't have a man to take care of the animals for her, she will do it herself. Fowl are usually taken care of by women. Men sell cows, horses, donkeys and mules. Women sell fowl and sometimes pigs and goats. Women slaughter fowl and goats; men slaughter the other animals.

Women on the island engage in commerce in goods purchased in Port-au-Prince. These items consist of such things as rum, sugar, flour, oil, rice, beans, soap, matches, etc. Some of the women travel to Port-au-Prince to make purchases. Others stay on the island and buy from these women in order to retail locally. Items such as chickens, eggs, peanuts, mushrooms, limes, goats and turkeys are bought on La Gonâve and taken to Port-au-Prince to sell. Women do work as agricultural wage laborers on La Gonâve but it is generally the poorer women who do so.

Summary

The predominant economic role of women in Haiti is commerce. The involvement of women in commerce takes a number of different forms. The same woman may be involved in commerce to a greater or lesser degree at different times in her life, depending on her circumstances. A woman may restrict herself to selling what is produced in the family gardens. This selling is not properly termed commerce. She may sell from the garden and also occasionally do commerce. Some women buy things in the local market to sell from their homes or on a small scale in the crossroads or at public gatherings. The latter are usually such things as rum, cigarettes, tobacco, bread, peanut butter, candies, or prepared foods such as fried pork, fritters, rice and beans or coffee. There are women who regularly buy agricultural or manufactured goods at the local market to sell in smaller quantities at the local market, or they may travel to a distant market to buy goods to sell at the local market. There are also women who specialize in travelling to country markets to buy in large quantities and resell wholesale in the cities or larger towns.

Women interested in doing commerce choose the type of commerce they will engage in depending on what is already familiar to them, how much capital they have to invest, and what their living circumstances are. Women stop doing commerce either temporarily or permanently for a variety of reasons. They may lose their investment capital because of poor sales, theft or trickery. They may need to spend their capital on other things such as the education of their children or for the illness of their children or other relatives. They also leave commerce at times of their own illness

and when their age no longer permits. Child care restricts commerce only when infants are at the breast. At other times, child care arrangements are made within the family network.

Development agents sometimes have the erroneous impression that market ladies do not know how to calculate profit. Market ladies usually calculate their profits on the basis of what remains after capital goods are sold. Capital investment and expenses are taken out; what remains is the profit. Women also calculate what kind of profit they can expect if they buy something in large quantity and sell in small quantities since they know the price per unit. Profits are not figured on a daily or weekly basis but on the basis of sales per investment. It should also be pointed out that for the most part market ladies' capital investment and profits are small. True capital accumulation is quite limited. Profits can more easily be seen as salaries for services rendered the provision of goods in appropriate quantities to the consumer.

Development agents have also expressed concern for the impact of enlarged road networks on commerce. At the moment these roads seem to have had the effect of bringing more goods and produce to market, increasing the number of women involved in commerce, and increasing the amount of capital needed to establish oneself in commerce. They have also served to increase the cost of food transported by commercial truck rather than animal. Since transport time is reduced, market ladies can make more buying and selling trips than formerly. If at some point in the future there would be a shift to bulk cargo transport, this would obviously cut considerably into the commercial activities of many market ladies. It remains to be seen what the long term effects will be.

There is a considerable literature on commerce in Haiti. For further information see: Lundahl 1979, 121-186; LaGra, Fanfan, and Charleston 1975; Girault and LaGra 1975; Mintz 1960, 1964, 1971; Murray and Alvarez 1975, 85-126; Locher 1975, 127-182; Legerman 1971, 382-390.

Women's role in agriculture and animal husbandry is less thoroughgoing than it is in commerce. Some rural women play no role in the actual tilling of the land; some work only at the harvest; some harvest crops and perform other types of field work in the agricultural cycle; and some women perform all types of agricultural labor. In the more arid grain growing regions women are more actively involved in agricultural work than they are in the wetter mountainous areas. In some grain growing areas men and women work together in agriculture. Where one finds this arrangement men do the more physically strenuous work while women do the lighter work. Women who have men to do the agricultural work, or women who can afford to pay for wage labor, do less agricultural work than do poorer women. Since men and women inherit equally, it is not uncommon for women to be landowners. The women who work at agricultural wage labor are generally poorer women who have no other means of support; they are more active in harvesting than in other agricultural work and are often paid less than men.

Women are generally the keepers of fowl - chickens, turkeys, guinea fowl and occasionally ducks. (Men keep fighting cocks). Women also feed other animals such as pigs when they are in the courtyard. The other animals - cows, sheep, goats, horses, donkeys, mules and pigs are usually kept and sold by men, but again there is some variation here. In the more arid regions where people have been more dependent on animal grazing for

their livelihood, women are more involved in animal care. The division of labor is that women care for, sell and slaughter the smaller or easier to handle animals, and men handle, sell and slaughter the larger and more difficult animals. Women who own large animals often make arrangements for men to take care of them for a fee.

Charcoal Production

As in other aspects the role of women in charcoal production varies according to region and individual social and economic circumstances. Women are predictably more actively involved in charcoal production in areas where more charcoal is produced.

In the mountains around Grande Rivière du Nord charcoal is only occasionally produced. In the one case known charcoal is made by a man with the assistance of his son. This man sells the charcoal himself to a regular client.

A rather small quantity of charcoal is produced at Garde Cognac not far from Plaisance. The process is handled mostly by men. On occasion the wife of a man making charcoal will help to rake out coals. If a man is making a large quantity of charcoal he may hire women to rake it out. The women's payment would be \$1.00 per day or 2-3 sacks of charcoal. The women prefer to be paid in charcoal because they can sell it for more than the cash payment. In this area sacks sell wholesale for \$1.00 to \$1.60. It is not thought to be healthy for women to rake charcoal, which requires working over hot coals, because women are less resistant to the effects of sudden heat changes than are men. (The issue of hot and cold among Haitian peasants is related to a commonly held theory of illness). It is, therefore, poorer women who would do this work. In this area the selling of charcoal wholesale is handled by men; retail selling is handled by women.

At Grande Savanne in the northwest, women used to sell charcoal, but they were not involved in its making. Now there is no charcoal being made here. Women sometimes work at sacking the charcoal that comes down from the mountains.

Outside of Anse Rouge along the road to Ti Rivière in the northwest, people make charcoal in the agricultural off-season. Men gather the larger pieces of wood; women gather the smaller. Men prepare and fire the charcoal mound and rake the charcoal out. Women don't rake out coals here because of the same hot and cold issue noted above. It is said that women could get TB from it but that men are less susceptible. The charcoal is sold by women.

At Ti Rivière, an area of considerable charcoal making, both men and women cut the wood to make charcoal, but men do this more than women. Men prepare and fire the charcoal mound; women rake out the coals. Men sack the charcoal and women sell it.

HACHO and Fonds Agricole are supporting a reforestation project in Ti Rivière that has as its goal, charcoal production. Both men and women work on this project. The men constructed the shaded nursery. Both men and women filled the seedling sacks with soil. Men planted the seeds and the women watered the plants. At transplanting time the men prepared the ground and dug the holes, the women carried the seedlings to the garden, men planted the seedlings and the women covered the holes. The transplanted trees are watered by women who carry the water from the river to the gardens. Men and women are paid equally for their work in "Food for Work".

At Ka Philippe in the northwest, both men and women are involved in charcoal production and agricultural work. Men and women both gather wood, prepare and fire the charcoal mound, rake the coals, sack and sell the charcoal. Husband and wife sometimes work together at making charcoal. Ka Philippe produces a significant amount of charcoal but somewhat less than Ti Rivière.

Abricot on La Gonâve formerly produced considerable quantities of charcoal. Since the number of trees has diminished, less charcoal is being produced. The making of charcoal is considered to be a man's occupation, too heavy for women's work; however, poor women (often those without husbands) do make charcoal. Women who make charcoal sometimes have men cut the wood and fire the charcoal mound for them. In one case a woman made an arrangement with 2 or 3 men whereby she would do their laundry in exchange for their cutting wood for her. One woman handles all the charcoal making tasks herself except for the firing of the charcoal mound; she has a man do this for her. The most common division of labor, however, is that men will cut the wood, construct the charcoal mound and fire the charcoal. Women will rake out the coals, sack and sell the charcoal.

One poor woman in the neighborhood has no land, no children, and no husband. She makes her living by making charcoal and performing agricultural wage labor. Land owners allow charcoal makers to enter their land, cut the trees and make charcoal. The land owner then gets 40% of the charcoal produced; the charcoal maker gets 60%.

Conway (1979, 3: 13-14) reports further information on charcoal production at Fond Parisien.

The great majority of the part-time charcoal producers at Fond Parisien are women. Charcoal production, like firewood collecting, is now viewed as women's work. This development is quite recent. Local residents related this change to the fact that large trees are no longer available, and women are able to cut the saplings which remain on "public" land.

Only a handful of the residents of Fond Parisien are full time producers of charcoal. These full-time producers are all older women.

In other areas of Haiti, the poorer individuals entering charcoal production have not been exclusively women and this has not been seen as a female occupation.

The sale of charcoal is a mixed situation in terms of the division of labor. As seen above, at the level of the small producer it is usually women but occasionally a man who sells charcoal. Wholesalers are both men and women, but there is reported to be a greater number of men than women involved at this level. One male wholesaler in the Cap-Haitien area buys charcoal from regular clients and also hires people to make charcoal for him. He cuts the wood himself, pays men to prepare and fire the charcoal mound and pays women to rake out coals and sack the charcoal. He sells the charcoal wholesale to men and retail to women. Another wholesaler in the northwest buys charcoal unsacked and pays both men and women to sack it for him. This wholesaler sells the charcoal in Port-au-Prince. He sells wholesale to both men and women and sells retail mostly to women. The retail trade in Cap-Haitien and Port-au-Prince is handled almost exclusively by women.

Summary

Charcoal production overall is not considered to be a woman's occupation, but women are sometimes involved to varying degrees. In areas of greater concentration of charcoal production, women tend to be more extensively involved; poorer women are more active in charcoal making than those better off. Women rarely make charcoal independently of men. Where men and women work jointly at charcoal making, women's activities are usually centered around raking out coals and sacking charcoal. Men predominate in the wholesaling of charcoal although some women are active wholesalers. Retail sale of charcoal is handled almost exclusively by women.

This author finds Salinas (1980, 2) to be in error when she states:

It is safe to say that the majority of charcoal producers are elderly women and women with no other economic opportunity, and... women serve almost exclusively as the intermediaries in the sale and distribution of charcoal.

Given the issue of regional and individual variation, it is safe to say that there may be a given region where this is true, but these statements are clearly not generalizable to the whole of Haiti.

Kitchen Gardens

The kitchen garden is a vegetable garden located close to one's house in which are planted vegetables for home consumption rather than sale. People in some regions of rural Haiti are used to planting kitchen gardens; these gardens are usually attended by men. Based on the known dietary needs of the majority of the population, a good case can be made in Haiti for increasing the production of nutritive food crops through emphasizing the use of kitchen gardens. Additionally, there is evidence to support the fact that people are likely to have better nutrition if they grow subsistence crops rather than rely on cash income to meet their food needs (see Chaney 1980, 6-7).

Nutrition centers in Haiti have focused on supplemental feeding of malnourished children and nutrition education for their mothers. While this has been of considerable assistance, more could be accomplished through teaching parents, both men and women in regions where it would be possible, to plant suitable subsistence crops in their courtyards, and making available to them the necessary seeds and seedlings to get started (see Chaney 1980 and Attfield 1979 for 2 proposals of this type).

A nutrition center director in the Kenscoff area who has also worked as an agricultural agent has in mind starting a vegetable nursery and giving plants to the mothers of the children so they can plant them in their courtyards or other available space. Since Kenscoff is a vegetable growing region where people are used to growing kitchen gardens, this could probably work out quite well.

In the north around Grande Rivière, people are also used to having kitchen gardens. The land is well suited to this purpose. The gardens are planted and maintained by men for the use of their families. They often contain carrots, beets, eggplant, cabbage, okra, spices and leaves for teas.

In the area of Ti Rivière in the northwest people are used to planting spices, melons and sometimes tomatoes, eggplants and other vegetables in their courtyards. If they had seed available, they would be interested in doing more gardening of this sort.

At Obleron in the Kenscoff area, people are also used to growing things in their courtyards. They grow plantains, coffee, avocado and mirliton in this way. Kitchen gardens are not, however, appropriate for all regions of Haiti. At Savien in the Artibonite, people have kept kitchen gardens but they no longer do so due to the salt content in the land. People here have been known to plant pumpkins, corn, eggplant and other vegetables in their courtyards. In the rural area outside of Thomazeau, people have built their homes on salty land which is unsuitable for any kind of cultivation.

While kitchen gardens can be of assistance they will not solve Haiti's problem of chronic food shortage. Other measures such as an expanded agricultural credit program could further relieve the problem.

Storage

Storage in rural Haiti varies by region, type of crop grown and abundance. In the north in the area around Grande Rivière there is little storage because people generally can't afford it; economic necessity forces them to sell their produce immediately after harvest. The occasional storage of corn is in trees and on roofs. The corn needs to be well dried before storage; if the rains come too soon it is impossible to store corn. Aside from these factors the most difficult problem in corn storage is rodent damage. Manioc and sweet potatoes can be stored in the ground for a considerable length of time and people occasionally store pumpkins on a shelf in the house.

In the grain growing region of Dubedou outside of Gonaives people use a kind of small house on stilts called a "columbié" to store corn, beans and millet. All are well dried before placed in storage. Sweet potatoes and manioc are stored in the ground until needed here also.

At Grande Savanne in the northwest women preserve fish by salting and drying them in the sun. The fish are put in the sun each day until they are eaten. This method is used for home consumption of fish only. Fish that are sold in the market are sold fresh.

In the area outside of Anse Rouge in the northwest on the road to Ti Rivière, people store millet in sacks and calabashes in a small 2 room house which is used as a depot. Seed is separated out from the other grain which is used as a reserve for eating purposes as well as sale. Other crops such as corn are all sold; only millet is stored.

In Ti Rivière in the northwest peanuts are stored for as long as 12 months. The peanuts are dried in the sun and then stored in baskets. The same system is used in the peanut growing areas of La Gonâve.

At Savien, people store rice in order to have it available for seed and to eat. The rice is stored in a small house or depot. There is, however, a problem of rats getting into the rice.

At Oleron in the Kenscoff area corn, beans, and millet are stored. Corn is stored in trees. Millet and beans are dried and placed in barrels or baskets for storage. Near Viard potatoes are stored in the ground until needed.

On La Gonâve, people store corn, millet, peanuts and beans. Corn and millet are stored in structures called "soud" of 2 types; one type is the same as the "colombié" used in the area around Gonaives, and the other is the depot type used in Savien and Ti Rivière. Corn is also stored on the cob in trees. Grains are stored for purposes of seed, eating and to hold for sale until the market price rises. Peanuts and beans are sun dried and stored in sacks. People remark, however, that they haven't had anything to store for a long while. Again, sweet potatoes and manioc are kept in the ground until they are needed.

Church World Service is in the process of building silos on La Gonâve for grain storage. The plan is for these silos to be used in conjunction with cooperatives which are to be established. The silos are not yet functioning, but a number of women have expressed interest in the project because they expect to be able to buy cheaper grain as a result.

One silo has been established to date. The result of its use has been to serve middlemen who bought up grain to store in the silo. Poorer farmers did not have access to the silo because their economic need obliged them to sell their grain while it was still in the field. If the goal of this development project is to be of assistance to the most needy, it would seem advantageous to establish the silo cooperative in such a way that poor farmers' grain could be purchased by the cooperative when these farmers need to sell it.

Women also make fruit preserves from oranges, tamarind, guava and other fruits. Guava jelly is also made. These are made infrequently and are usually made for home use rather than for sale.

Summary

Where there is food storage in Haiti it consists mostly of grain and is handled by men. Women sometimes dry fish and make fruit preserves for home use. Storage is often limited due to lack of sufficient crop abundance to warrant storage, the immediate need for cash and fear of loss to rodents. In some areas, there is seasonal overabundance of fruits such as mangoes, oranges and avocados. There might be some potential to commercially preserve these things for an urban market, although known attempts to do this to date have failed.

Employment

While opportunities are limited, there are some other non-agricultural sources of employment for Haitian women of rural background. A description of some of these follows:

Gravel Making

On the mountain overlooking Cap-Haitien a number of people, both men and women, are employed to crush rocks by hand to make gravel for construction purposes. Men work with the larger rocks and women with the smaller. The work is organized on an individual basis. Each woman sits on a pile of rocks and crushes them with a hammer. The women can come any days they want to work on their pile. They are paid by the truckload.

Men are paid \$5.00 per load for a truckload of large rocks. Women are paid \$10.00 for each of their truckloads of smaller rocks. If a woman makes a truckload of fairly fine rocks, she is paid \$15.00 for the load. It takes about 4 days to make the \$5.00 load and about 9 days to make the \$10.00 load.

Before she started making gravel, one of the women used to take in laundry. Another woman formerly worked at separating coffee and oranges at a Cap-Haitian warehouse. Sometimes the women bring their children with them to work, but usually they have another relative look after the children while they're working.

The women occasionally work together "cumbit" style, but usually they work on their own. Soon this work will be automated; when it is, the women will gather rocks instead of crushing them, and be paid according to how much they gather.

Cassava Factory

While much cassava is made in the courtyards of peasant dwellings, at Haut du Cap one also finds small scale cassava making "factories". One such operation is organized in the following manner:

The milling operation follows the same division of labor as the northern peasant household operation. Women's activities consist mainly of peeling the manioc and selling the prepared cassava. The women who peel the manioc are usually paid in the starch which is a by-product of grinding the manioc. The women generally prefer to be paid in starch rather than in money. Although the price of starch varies, it is generally better than the salary they would receive if paid in cash. The women market the starch themselves, thus also saving a step for the mill owner. Other women come from Cap-Haitien to buy the cassava bread to sell in Cap. When these market ladies don't buy up all the cassava, the women who peel the manioc are given the opportunity to retail the cassava for a \$0.04 profit on each sheet of bread. The cassava peelers estimate that they average about \$3.00 per day. The starch amounts to about 2-4 mamits per person per day. A mamit sells from between \$1.20 and \$2.40 depending on the season. The peelers also get cassava to eat while they're working, and on especially good days they are given a meal.

Men are paid to run the grinding machine and bake the cassava flatbread. The men who operate the grinding machine receive \$0.10 per sack of manioc. The men who bake the bread are paid \$1.80 per day; they are never given meals. The owner of the grinding mill charges clients \$0.20 per "sac" of manioc brought to be ground.

Commercial Weaving

This year, a commercial weaving operation that had been operating successfully in Port-au-Prince moved to Haut du Cap. The owners, a married couple, moved here because they prefer living in the environment of Cap-Haitien and because the government has given them a 15 year tax break incentive to move to the provinces as part of the government's attempt to decentralize business enterprises.

The factory specializes in artist designed tapestries, pillows, lamp shades, handbags and some smaller items made from Haitian cotton. They also make macramé plant hangers from Haitian sisal and are just beginning to make rugs from imported wool. The operation has been very successful in Port-au-Prince and is also going well here. Nearly all of the items are exported to markets in the United States and Europe.

Most of the people employed in the factory are women. Women are preferred because they are thought to be better workers; they are said to be more serious than the men. On the other hand the owners prefer to employ men in supervisory positions; it was jokingly said that men make better supervisors because they are "used to bossing women around" and "like to be supervisors". There is some heavy work on the 2-person weaving looms for which the strength of men is preferred. In the owner's experience, however, 2 men don't usually work well together on the loom. They prefer to have a man and a woman, or 2 women, to work together.

Potential employees are sought through the "Chef de Section" (local sheriff). Each employee is tested for manual dexterity and color blindness. It is found that men are more frequently color blind than women. In general, the owners have found that workers here are somewhat more difficult to

train than were the workers in Port-au-Prince. They attribute this to the fact that workers in Port-au-Prince are more used to city life and are therefore more disciplined.

Each worker starts as an apprentice and is paid \$1.60 per day. Those who successfully complete a 3 month apprenticeship become regular employees. Most of the workers are paid by piece rate rather than a daily wage because the owners find this more effective. The most skilled workers work on the large tapestries and are paid \$3.00 per day. If they make a perfect tapestry, they get a \$0.50 bonus.

Another weaving center is located at Fort Jacques. The Pilot Project for Artisan Development was established by the Haitian Ministry of Social Affairs and the Interamerican Development Bank. It is more of a training center than a money making operation. It specializes in weaving wool tapestries.

This center also employs mostly women; one man works there as a supervisor. The person in charge, a woman, is a skilled artist. Again, women are the preferred employees, although men are preferred to do the heavier work on the looms. They have employed several men but have had difficulty keeping them. Employees spend one year as apprentices. They are paid \$1.00 per day and are given one meal. Those who have passed the apprenticeship period are paid \$2.60 per day; overtime is double pay. The project director finds that the employees are "lacking in discipline". She says they like to talk rather than work. There is an established rate of turnout each day but very few women meet it.

This Pilot Project also employs men and women to do sewing and embroidery in the industrial park of Port-au-Prince. The women do the fine handwork and the men usually run the large sewing machines. A private leather goods factory also uses this division of labor for the most part. The owner feels that the women could operate the large leather sewing machines just as well as men but that the women see work on the large machines as men's work.

Factory Work

In the last several years there has been an increase in factory employment in the Port-au-Prince area. The World Bank (1978, 23) reports the following for 1977:

"The modern industrial sector employed about 25,000 people with an above average proportion of women (about 65% as compared to the 45.7% female share in the labor force)." For a description of certain characteristics of women working in the assembly industry see Pierre (1980). An interview with a young factory worker revealed the following information:

This young woman has completed 4 years of secondary school. After leaving school she worked in a hotel for a while; after the hotel closed she went to work in a factory. She has been working at her current factory job for 8 months. She started out as a simple worker for 3 months probationary period at a salary of \$2.20 per day. After 3 months she became a regular employee and was paid \$2.60 per day. She has recently been promoted to inspector and currently receives a salary of \$80.00 per month. Most of the people she works with are women. Male employees usually hold super-

visory positions. There are 2 shifts, day and night. The night shift employs more men because a woman out alone at night "might be thought to be a prostitute". She will stay at this job as long as she can but fears she may lose it to someone who has better connections. She feels that if one is literate and educated, promotion is possible; those who are illiterate remain at the level of simple workers for the whole of their employment.

Salt Collection

Salt in Haiti is extracted from salt holes located at various places in the salt flats along the seashore. In the area around Anse Rouge some women are employed collecting salt. They stand in the water in the holes, dig with their hands to the bottom and bring up the salt in blocks. If the salt isn't "ripe", it breaks and is more difficult to draw out of the water. Men are not employed in salt collection.

Salt collection is necessarily half-day work because standing in salty water for too long is hard on the skin. It is also seasonal work which has its peak in the hot months of July and August when the sun evaporates more of the water leaving greater quantities of salt.

The women usually work from 5:30 A.M. until 9:30 or 10:00 A.M. If the salt is plentiful, women can usually collect 3 barrels in this time. They are paid \$3.00 for the collection of 3 barrels. They are also given baskets of salt. These baskets amount to 7 or 8 mamits (60 mamits per barrel). The women generally keep some of the salt for their own use and sell the rest. Years ago women were paid for their work in salt.

After the price of salt fell they didn't wish to continue working for salt but preferred to be paid in cash. It is poorer women who work as salt collectors.

The owner of the salt hole sells salt to both wholesalers and retailers. The wholesalers are both men and women but slightly more are women. The retailers are generally women.

Castor Oil Making

The castor bean grows in many places in Haiti. Where it does, women frequently make castor oil, occasionally for sale but also for use within the home. Castor oil is used as women's hair oil, as a remedy for constipation and as a lamp oil at religious ceremonies.

The ripe beans are picked and dried in the sun. The seed is then removed from the shell and heated in a cooking pot. It is then pounded in a mortar-and-pestle, after which it is cooked in hot water. When the water evaporates the oil remains.

Handcrafts

A number of development organizations have initiated handcraft projects, many of which employ women. While the items made are of generally high quality, it is often difficult to find markets for the goods produced, especially after the development agent withdraws. These items are generally not sold locally but rely on an export market. Rural Haitian women are not able to address this market independently. In order for handcraft projects to be successful in the long run they should be organized in one of two ways. Either they are done by private business people who address

the export market themselves, or, handcraft projects are developed which can viably address local needs and interests, creating goods which can be marketed through existing local channels.

Domestic Employment

The most traditional source of employment for women of rural background is as domestic servants. Work of this nature is found on both short and long term bases. Pay varies considerably from \$5.00 to \$50.00 or more per month. Workers may or may not live in and have their meals included. One form of domestic service is the giving and taking of "ti moun" in which no wages are paid.

Health Practitioners

Some women find occasional employment as midwives and mambos. Midwives who have had the Division of Family Hygiene training are paid \$3.00 per delivery. Mambos are the female equivalent of the Houngan or witch doctor. Mambos are trained by other traditional religious practitioners and charge fees per services rendered. These might consist of conducting ritual healing ceremonies or providing remedies.

Prostitution

Another source of employment is prostitution. While it is a very low status occupation, some women are willing to enter prostitution temporarily in order to obtain enough capital to invest in commerce. Prostitution is a form of commerce undertaken by young women with few or no other economic options.

Home Industry

The majority of women working in home industry are employed as seamstresses. Outside of large cities manufactured clothing is not readily available. Women who have sewing machines make all kinds of women's and children's clothes. Men's clothes are made by tailors. Seamstresses are found in the towns, not usually in the countryside. Rural women who become seamstresses move to town. Many women have expressed an interest in becoming seamstresses; they are prevented from doing so by lack of capital to purchase a machine and other necessary materials. Extensive expansion of this industry does not seem appropriate since seamstresses currently do not always have enough work to keep them busy.

Women perform a number of other tasks in the context of their homes. Women make castor oil, dried fish, preserves, peanut butter and candy. They process coffee and cacao. In some areas women spin cotton, make rope and weave sleeping mats. These things are done for home use and in some instances for sale in the market. Further development of home industry could prove valuable to rural women. This kind of independent employment in the context of the home seems preferable to either cottage industry (women working in their homes for an outside employer) which may be exploitative, or factory work, which is often exploitative as well as disruptive to home life.

Summary

Non-agricultural employment opportunities for rural Haitian women are limited. The opportunities that do exist offer little potential for advancement. Rural women have expressed considerable interest in learning new skills and trades; however, they lack the literacy and educational

background which are often prerequisites to new sources of employment. As the modern sector grows, education becomes increasingly important. The lack of access to a relevant educational system is one of the important factors placing severe restriction on the employment options available to rural Haitian women.

Education and Women's Projects

Rural people in general in Haiti place a high value on education to the extent that they will sell animals or go into debt to keep their children in school. Their sacrifices frequently seem out of proportion to the benefits their children derive from school attendance.

Enrollment in primary education amounts to 41% of school age population in rural areas and to 176% in urban areas. The urban-rural differential is, however, worse in terms of completion: only 2% of children in rural areas complete primary versus 27% in urban areas. Curricula and syllabi in primary education, which are designed to prepare for a certificate at the end of the 6th grade, appear mostly irrelevant to the country's socio-economic development and inappropriate to the learning capacity of children. These general features combined with high dropout rates (especially in rural areas) make educational expenditures in rural areas almost a complete loss: most rural children receive basically irrelevant education for a short time in a language (French, the official language) that they do not understand. Thus, education, so far, has not been a positive factor in rural development. (World Bank Report 1978, 58).

Rural people indicate no preference for sending either boys or girls to school. Their choices about who goes to school are based primarily on their financial means at the time and on the child's aptitude. One mother, however, indicated that many years ago people said one shouldn't send girls to school because they thought educated girls would criticize their husbands. She indicates that this attitude has changed and that people now try to send all their children to school. One teacher indicated that girls are "smarter" than boys in school. Others indicated that both boys and girls are "intelligent" and that both are serious students.

In spite of these expressed attitudes the statistics show a somewhat higher percentage of boys attending school than girls. In 1976 the total enrollment of children aged 5-14 years attending primary school was 42.2% of the population in that age group. For boys the figure was 44.1% and

for girls 40.3%. Literacy rates in 1971 indicated a 23% total 29% male and 18% female (AID Program Summary, Haiti 1980, 204). The new World Bank rural school project is attempting to make some changes in the rural Haitian school system. It remains to be seen what effect their new methods will have.

An adjunct to the World Bank schools are the CINEC centers, Centres Intégrés de Nutrition et d'Education Communautaires, which function as a kind of "head start" program for healthy 5 year olds. The mothers of the enrolled children are supposed to come to the center on a rotating basis to serve as teacher aides. In actuality the mothers do the cooking, washing and ironing, and supervise the children's recess. The CINECs also serve a population of 1-4 year old children. The children come to the center once per month with their mothers. At that time the children are weighed; the mothers are given food to take home and are taught stimulation exercises for the children.

The mothers of the 5 year olds (and anyone else in the neighborhood who is interested) are supposed to attend 2 two-hour evening sessions per week in home economics for 9 months. This aspect of the program has not been successful to date; attendance is low. The women are interested in learning to sew, but the other subjects hygiene, nutrition, agriculture, small animal husbandry, handcrafts, community organization, commerce, recreation, and 6 hours of Creole literacy do not hold their attention. These sessions have also been ill timed. In order for them to be more successful they should be timed such that women can arrive home before dark since rural Haitian people, as a rule, do not like to be out after dark.

The World Bank schools also house the Programme d'Education Familiale or home economics centers for young adults. This is a more elaborate version of the kind of program described above. The women attend class 4 hours per day, 4 days per week, for 18 months. The curriculum consists of the study of hygiene, nutrition, child care, cutting and sewing, cooking, agriculture, small animal husbandry, handcrafts, community organization, cooperatives, recreation, motivation techniques, and Creole literacy. The young women do not have to have previous education in order to attend. Attendance is irregular.

This type of home economics program is available through other sources such as church groups, private schools and development projects. One private school visited in Gros Morne is directed by a young woman. The school is licensed by the Haitian government, Ministry of Social Affairs. It is a 2 year program but there are some students who attend for 3 years and others who attend for 6 months. A certificate is issued upon program completion. Student fees are \$3.00 and \$7.00 per month; the latter fee includes the teaching of embroidery on the sewing machine. Some of the students attending this school have completed primary school, others are illiterate. The students are primarily interested in learning to sew. Craft skills are taught, but the problem with the handcraft items made is that they have not been able to find a market for them.

Church World Service operates a vocational school for young men and women on La Gonave. The curriculum for girls duplicate the home economic centers. The girls are primarily interested in learning to sew in order to work as seamstresses, and in learning to make cakes and pastries to sell. The boys are also taught tailoring and pastry making. There is a

desire to expand the boys curriculum to include the study of mechanics, masonry and iron working. The school is the only one of its kind on the island and is well attended by young women, more often from the town but from rural areas as well.

Catholic Relief Service funds another project of the same theme in Pilate, the Family Economic Planning Center. The women who go to the rural areas as teachers, however, are not paid directly for their work. Each of 10 women are given \$200.00 for a 6 month period to invest in a money making project of their choice. Each woman has chosen commerce. They are investing in rice, cloth, peanuts and beans. The project began in October, 1980; it remains to be seen how it will succeed.

Another largely educational program for young women is CHREPROF, Centre Haitien de Recherches pour la Promotion Féminine, located in Port-au-Prince. This program varies, however, in some significant ways from the home economics centers. It serves an urban population, a large percentage of which have migrated to Port-au-Prince from other areas. It teaches functional literacy in French, teaches some English and operates a job placement service. The placement service finds work for young women as domestics, factory workers, hotel and restaurant workers and aides to the elderly.

CHREPROF also supports some projects outside of Port-au-Prince such as a handcraft cooperative in Miragoane and an agricultural project for women in Verrettes. It is interesting to note that while the Verrettes garden is a women's project, the agricultural division of labor for the area is maintained. The use of the land was a gift from the "deputy", the local congressman. Men prepare the land for planting and the women plant.

Irrigation of the land is handled by both men and women. The weeding and harvesting is handled by women. The women pay for the agricultural work involved in their garden through the weekly ~~dixes~~ collected by the women's group.

CHREPROF sponsors a dormitory for market ladies in Petion Ville. There is no charge for this service, but the women are obliged to obtain a membership card before they are allowed to sleep there. The number of women who sleep there varies by market day. Space was originally intended for 100 women a night, but as many as 400 have slept there. Instruction in Creole literacy is also provided in the evening. On the occasion of this author's visit, the literacy instruction was not well attended. There were 3 small groups studying with about 5 participants each. Reasons given for this by a program official were that many women were too tired to participate after a long day working in the hot sun, and that the women were afraid to leave their produce unwatched to attend the sessions.

Some years ago in the area of Kenscoff, Ère Cicaut started his well known Afè Nèg Coumbit project. After a while he realized the importance of the inclusion of women and created Afè Nègès. In the beginning, home economics centers were established in each of eight rural sections of Kenscoff. These continue but Afè Nègès has since taken on projects of a more economic nature. They are in the process of establishing small stores, one in each of the rural sections. Four are currently functioning. They sell such things as rum, sugar, soft drinks, oil, soap and canned milk. Their prices are slightly cheaper than other stores. The person employed in each of the stores is a man because the clerk is obliged to sleep in

the store to watch the produce and it is not acceptable for a woman to spend the night alone.

Afè Nègès currently rents a truck from Afè Nèg to transport market ladies to Port-au-Prince. The women pay \$0.80 - \$1.00 per sack depending on its size for the transport. If they carry no produce on the way back, the women pay \$0.60 for their transportation. They pay after they return home. There is one free day per week, Tuesday, when the women don't have to pay for their transportation. Afè Nègès is attempting to buy a truck of their own to use in this way. They then would like to keep the profits to make credit available to women for commerce or for emergencies such as a death in the family.

Summary

Developers recognize that illiteracy in rural Haiti is a serious impediment to the overall development of the country. The problem will not be rectified by sporadic projects to teach adult Creole literacy; these have had little success. The problem could be easily solved through a national government commitment to universal literacy, preferably in French unless formal functions of government and business shift to Creole. Creole literacy is of limited value to peasants when important legal documents such as land deeds are written in French and where written Creole literature is sparse. The peasant value placed on education is of a practical nature; parents invest in their children's education in the hope that it will provide the children with greater economic opportunity. Since rural children rarely complete primary education, these hopes are little realized; perhaps the new World Bank sponsored schools will help to change this situation.

Development projects for women have often focused on education in home economics. The practical results have been that some women have been able to establish themselves as seamstresses and occasional cake bakers while others have had greater access to employment as domestic servants. A few projects for women concentrate directly on economic improvement. Considering the need and the fact that peasant women respond readily to programs from which they perceive there to be direct economic advantage, more attention should be focused on this area.

Community Organization

To the extent that there is community organization in Haiti it exists through the community council movement. In the regions visited, the community council leadership tended to be dominated by men. The attitude expressed by both men and women, however, is that men and women have the opportunity to participate equally in the council. In the one neighborhood visited where women felt excluded from council membership, the issue was class rather than sex. The more prominent and wealthier segment of the neighborhood excluded the poor, both men and women, from membership.

Women feel they have profited from the community council primarily through the work the councils have provided, particularly the "Food for Work" projects. An example is the community council at Carrefour Brun in the area of Dubedou.

The community council at Carrefour Brun has a membership of 350 people, about half women. The active membership is about 150 people with 65 women. They have engaged in a number of projects which involved the labor of both men and women. In building construction the men dig the foundation and carry large rocks in wheelbarrows. The women carry smaller rocks, gravel and sand on their heads. In soil conservation projects, men dig the soil, women carry rocks and men place them. In road construction men dig out the route and women carry rocks and sand. In all the above projects, women also have the responsibility for food preparation and supplying water. The council also has a bakery project and a home economics center. The instructor for the home economics center is supported through the profits from the bakery.

The president of this council is a woman who has been president for the past 3 years. She was originally the vice-president who became president when the president left his post mid-term. She plays her role in a manly way and has a group of men who accompany her when hosting visitors. She wears pants (unusual women's attire in rural areas) and acts quite typically like someone in authority in Haiti. She is a cultivator and engages in commerce.

At the council meeting attended at Carrefour Erun many more men than women were present and the men were more vocal. The women were timid and did not answer even though certain questions were directed to them; the men answered for them. This contrasts with some other councils visited where men were more numerous but women still spoke up quite freely. Clearly there is a range and diversity of women's participation in council affairs. Some women suggest that they cannot attend council meetings regularly because of their responsibility for children and their involvement in commerce which takes them out of the neighborhood. They say that their husbands attend and represent them. Generally speaking, it may be observed that formal and public contexts in Haiti tend to be dominated by men. Ultimately, however, the question of active participation seems to be as closely linked to the interests and politics of the situation as it is to the issue of male versus female.

Another form of community organization which has had little success in rural Haiti is the cooperative. Some reasons for this are: 1) the fact that cooperative formation is difficult in general, 2) the principles of cooperatives are not taught thoroughly enough to peasants unfamiliar with the concepts involved, 3) peasants lack trust in people outside the

family where economic matters are concerned. In discussing the possibility of cooperative formation for the purpose of commerce, some market ladies suggested that this sort of thing would not work in Haiti because market ladies "don't trust strangers", that is, non-family members. They have no confidence in strangers and fear magic from them regarding economic matters to the extent that it is often difficult to get change for a large bill from someone they don't know. Within the family, though, there is considerably more trust and cooperation. This information suggests that cooperatives or other collective economic projects might have greater chance of success if they were organized within the existing family networks as defined by Haitian peasants.

Credit

Money is generally scarce in rural Haiti except at harvest time when it changes hands fairly rapidly. Since peasants usually operate under circumstances of cash shortage, access to credit is an important aspect of daily life.

Peasants are most likely to deplete their economic resources and be in need of credit for reasons of crop failure, commerce, illness in the family, death of a family member or the education of their children. In attempting to meet their needs people may turn to a number of sources, the first and most readily available being family and friends. The investment capital from women's commercial activity is another source of funds used in emergencies. People may sharecrop, rent out, sell land or sell their crop at a reduced price before harvest to meet their expenses; as a last resort they may turn to the money lenders.

The most common source of credit in rural Haiti is family and friends.

Kinship offers much protection against the hostile forces, but not enough; the peasant sums up the situation saying: "When you choose godparents you must do so with a view to extend the family." He will look for them where his kinsmen are absent or too insignificant to be of help, and he will try to ally himself with rich peasants and city-dwellers of some influence; the higher his own status in the community the better his chances to give his child a prestigious couple of godparents from whom attention, favours, and help are expected... (Bastien 1961, 491)

Among family and friends interest is not charged.

Investment capital from a woman's commercial activity is often a source of funds for family emergencies. When the capital a woman would use for commerce is needed for other things, she will likely leave commerce entirely for a time, or engage in some very small-scale local selling which requires limited capital, until she is able to accumulate enough capital to reinvest in larger scale commerce again.

People have a number of alternatives in securing needed cash through their land. They may enter into a sharecropping arrangement. This is most useful when the landowner doesn't have the funds necessary to plant his garden. It is also useful to the land-short sharecropper. Under this system called "démouatyé" the sharecropper bears all the expenses except the land itself. At harvest time the landowner is paid up to half of the harvest. In this way both the landowner and the sharecropper share the risk.

A landowner may also rent out his land directly in time of need. He may do this on a yearly basis or he may opt to rent out the land for a long period of time (several years) for advance payment. Another option of course is for the owner to sell his land.

If the peasant finds that he can't wait until the harvest to meet his needs, he may sell his crop while it is still in the field for a lower price than he would expect to receive at harvest time. This kind of arrangement is usually made with a market lady for an internal crop or a speculator for an export crop.

When financial need is greater than that which can be met through other means, people sometimes turn to money lenders for short term high interest loans.

The speculator and the town-lawyer, who often double as usurers are the adversaries of the peasantry. They are those who lend the peasantry money at 50% interest, requiring titles of property as guarantees and using blackmail or threats to acquire titles. (Bastien 492)

Market ladies have been known to pay loans with 10 to 20 percent interest per month.

The formal credit system in Haiti, IDAI (Institut de Developpement Agricole et Industriel) and the BCA (Bureau de Credit Agricole) address themselves to a concern for agricultural production rather than to the credit needs of peasants as discussed above. Both describe themselves as semi-autonomous Haitian government agencies.

IDAI concentrates its activities on financing the cultivation of cotton, corn, beans, peanuts and rice in the localities of Gonaives, Mirebalais, Jacmel, Mirogoâne and Cayes. It has a reputation for being a lending institution which is unavailable to the poorer farmer. Credit is extended to those who have the means of repayment. IDAI has developed a regular clientele.

The BCA "... was created to promote especially coffee and cocoa growing. One of its principal aims is to grant supervised credit to those peasants who are too small and too lacking in credit worthiness to qualify for the IDAI scheme." (Lundahl 1979, 539) It also gives loans for general food production. The BCA has 10 regional offices located at St. Marc, Gonaives, Cap Haitian, Port de Paix, Jérémie, Jacmel, Fond des Nègres, Thiotte, Baptist and Hinche. It also has 23 local offices which function at the level of the commune.

A BCA report of June 2, 1980, on loans given to rural women indicates that the staff of the BCA at the central (Damien), regional and local levels is composed of men and women. Women fill the positions of accountant, cashier, secretary typist, and (2) credit agents. Until recently the post of credit agent was filled exclusively by men. The BCA works through Agricultural Credit Societies which are small groups of 7-15 people. Membership in these groups is open to both men and women as long as they meet the eligibility requirements. These requirements are:

- to be a Haitian adult
- to be of good moral character
- to have agriculture as one's principal occupation
- to cultivate no more than 6 carreaux of land
- not to belong to another association having the same goals

In the case of a married woman the BCA doesn't require marital authorization for the granting of credit whether individual or collective; however, it is only willing to make loans to both a husband and wife who are members of the same society when it involves 2 different farm operations and only if the woman is actively farming. The same conditions apply when husband and wife belong to two different societies.

Of the 20,000 farmers who benefited from loans last year, 19% or about 4,000 are women. Fifty percent of these women are married and 50% are "concubines". In certain regions women have invested up to 40% of their loan funds in commerce. Six percent (240) of all the women who have received loans last year are officers of the societies. In certain regions like the Cul-de-Sac Plain and Fond des Nègres the societies which have women among their officers have reimbursed their loans at the rate of 100%.

BCA loans are given for the production of agricultural crops and livestock. While loans are not officially given for investment in commerce, it is well known that a part of the loan funds are used for commerce. Putting this money into commerce is often seen as a means of eliminating the risks of agricultural production and helps to account for the high rate of on-time repayment by women. The BCA is also aware that credit is needed for reasons of consumption as well as production and would like to make loans available for these purposes as well, but is limited by its means. There are plans, however, to set up banks at the local level. These banks could benefit market ladies by providing them an alternative means of saving their capital through the slack season and in making loans available for investment in commerce.

While programs that would extend greater credit to women to invest in commerce seem appropriate, to do this without emphasizing at the same time increased agricultural production for the internal market could have detrimental consequences. Local Haitian markets are fairly saturated. Rates of profit usually amount to what can be considered a modest salary. There seems to be a certain functional ebb and flow to the present network. If more women were able to enter or stay in commerce as the result of more accessible credit this would necessarily mean more competition for the existing market ladies. Without increased agricultural production for the internal market, the result would be an even narrower profit margin for those engaged in commerce. With greater production, greater commercial activity by more women could be absorbed. It is important to note that the increased agricultural production pertinent to women's economic activity is in the realm of the internal market, not export crops. The commerce in export crops is handled almost exclusively by men. (See addendum.)

Given the scarcity of agricultural land, the mountainous topography, and scattered peasantry, rural Haiti does not easily lend itself to the technological innovations which increase production. Perhaps one area still open to increased production is the pattern of land use. Murray and Alvarez (1975, 89) found in the Cul-de-Sac Plain, for example, that "... there are suitable plots of land which have not been planted in beans because the peasant lacks capital to buy seed." They further report, "We did not hear of or find any cases of peasants borrowing money to buy seed. Most loans (by either males or females) are made either to begin trading or for life-cycle crises (especially funerals). The peasants we knew do not invest much cash in their agricultural activities and rarely go into debt because of their gardens. Bean seeds must be paid for in cash, and if the peasant does not

have the cash available, he will probably plant sweet potatoes instead, since stem cuttings can be obtained free." Smucker (1981) reports that in the mountains around Grand Riviere du Nord, another bean growing region, peasants say they would plant more beans if they had the financial means. In Verrette where the main crops are beans, corn, rice and sweet potatoes, it was reported to this author that farmers have to purchase both seeds and sweet potato cuttings. At times land is not planted due to the fact that people can't afford to purchase the necessary seeds and cuttings. This information suggests that an agricultural credit program directed to the production of internal market crops could serve to increase production. Increased production would make more produce available for market ladies to sell and would also be of nutritional benefit to the population, especially children.

Simply making more credit available, however, may not entirely solve the problem. People frequently invest agricultural loan money directly into commerce to cut down the risk of loss. Furthermore, Murray and Alvarez report that peasants generally don't borrow money to buy seed. This is understandable considering the risks involved in peasant farming and the difficulties of repayment if there is crop failure. An alternative might be to have the lending agent, a development program, share the risk through some kind of agricultural insurance program. One possible model for this kind of shared risk could be a variation on the Haitian sharecropping or "démouatyé" system. Under this arrangement the lender could provide the seed and take as his payment a certain agreed upon percentage of the harvest. In this way the development agent would be assured a certain percentage of repayment dependent on weather and soil conditions. This kind of arrangement has the advantage of allowing the peasant who is usually cash short another option at the time of

planting. It can allow him to plant what he would see as best to plant on that land at the time rather than be limited by what he can afford to plant. The obvious drawback is the administrative problems it represents. Other formats could be considered. The main objective would be to establish a credit system which would allow peasants to maximize their options regarding land use in an effort to increase agricultural production for the internal market.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The primary roles of rural Haitian women are child care, household management and commerce. They are also the primary carriers of loads. To a lesser extent women are involved in agriculture, animal husbandry and charcoal production. The most common source of non-agricultural employment is domestic service. A few but increasing number of women are employed in factories. Few women have profited from formal education. The main benefit women have derived from community council activities are "Food for Work" payments.

Where women engage in the same type of work as men, the operating principle seems to be that men do the more physically strenuous work. The most usual agricultural work for women is harvesting. Regarding animal husbandry, women handle fowl and small animals. Regarding charcoal production, women are more active in raking coals, sacking and retailing charcoal. The women who perform these tasks are more often poorer women or women who have no men available to do them.

In response to the question of who works harder, women often responded that men work harder but women work longer. Women have less leisure and fewer amusements than do men. The greatest need among Haitian peasant women is to improve their economic circumstances. The following recommendations are made with a view to addressing this need.

1. Establish an agricultural insurance credit program with the goal of increasing agricultural production of internally marketed produce. This would in turn make it more feasible to increase the involvement of women in commerce.
2. Encourage increased utilization of courtyards for kitchen gardens by making seeds and seedlings available to peasant farmers. This would help provide a much needed diet supplement for all family members.
3. Encourage a national commitment to universal literacy in the official language. This would help prepare women to take advantage of new sources of employment which result from modernization.

4. Study ways to expand viable home industry for women. This would best be oriented to goods for which a Haitian market exists.
5. Efforts at cooperative formation or other collective economic endeavors might better select membership from the extended family than a group of "strangers". This is especially true of projects involving market ladies.
6. Crafts projects will likely fail unless there is a known market outlet for the goods produced. Projects undertaken by private business people who bear the responsibility for marketing the goods produced, or projects which address a known Haitian market have a greater chance of success.
7. Women are enthusiastic about learning any new trades or skills that might be made available to them.
8. Take into consideration the following questions in future development planning:
 - A. Does the proposal address primary needs?
 - B. Does it help to preserve or strengthen the family?
 - C. Is it suitable to the cultural orientation of the people involved?
 - C. How does it affect the role balance between men and women?

One should keep in mind that whatever projects are proposed, the established division of labor between men and women will likely be maintained. Evidence for this lies in the CHREPROF garden project at Verretes and the Afè Nègès stores.

At the time of this study two other reports on the role of women in Haiti were in process. One was being done by Mrs. Ingrid Donner Shabafrouz, a sociologist consultant, for ODPG, Organization Développement Plaine de Gonaives. This study addressed the role of women in the Plain of Gonaives only. FAO also hired a consultant to study the role of women in Limbe. The development community could profit from the circulation of all these reports.

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Addendum

3.6 Tableau récapitulatif

Les principaux points de différenciation et d'opposition entre les deux systèmes sont récapitulés dans le tableau suivant:

Tableau 4. Tableau récapitulatif des éléments d'opposition et de séparation entre les deux systèmes de commercialisation

	<u>Système 2</u> (Produits pour l'ex- portation)	<u>Système 3</u> (Commercialisation locale)
- Agents économiques	Principalement hommes (spé- culateurs)	Principalement femmes (Madam Sara)
- Méthodes d'achat et de vente	"Le spéculateur achète" Pas de marchandage Pas de pratique	"Le paysan vend" Marchandage Pratique
- Informations sur les prix et les produits	Assez bonnes	Très limitées
- Lieux de commercialisation	Boutiques, soutes, entre- pôts	Marchés
- Transport	En grosses quantités Marchandises non accompa- gnées	En petites quantités Marchandises accompagnées
- Organisation spatiale	Fortement hiérarchisée	Modérément hiérarchisée
- Crédit	Le système repose sur le crédit de type usuraire	Peu de crédit
- Contrôle	Fort en principe (IEPCADE, Département du Commerce..)	Faible
- Fiscalité	Forte taxation	Taxation éliminée en 1974.

Source: Girault and Labra 1975, 50.