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WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women's work in agricultural crop production, storage and crop processing, and off-farm income-earning is increasingly recognized by planners and project designers. Yet women's access to land, agricultural extension, and non-agricultural employment is limited--often undermined even further by agrarian reform and rural development policies which assume men are the sole producers and providers in societies. Making women partners in development is consistent with concerns for equity as well as with tenets of economics. The underutilization and underemployment of women does not make economic sense. Development interventions have been and can be further redesigned to build on women's productivity, strengths, and experience.

Women in Development is not a separate issue, but is integral to all discussions relating to agrarian reform and rural development. This paper amplifies this perspective by systematically discussing the items on the U.N. FAO World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development agenda: Access to Land and Water; Agricultural Inputs, Credit, and Services; Education, Training and Extension; Nonagricultural Employment; and Participation. Existing studies are reviewed, policy-relevant research questions are posed, and possibilities for improved project intervention are provided. Women's access to resources such as land, agricultural inputs, and training, as well as women's work incentives are highlighted. Until more rational and even-handed planning prevails, male preference in institutional support is expected to take its toll on women's productivity, program effectiveness, and ultimately, on development.

WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Enhancing women's capacity to participate in the larger rural and urban economies as well as within the domestic household sphere has become an increasingly important focus for development planners. Recognition of women's substantial participation in the agricultural labor forces of Asia, Africa and Latin America grows as field studies are done, statistical reporting systems are revamped to note whether respondents are men or women, and qualitative evidence accumulates.

Making women full partners in development is consistent not only with oft-stated concerns for equity but with the tenets of economics as well. Underutilization or underemployment of half the potential labor force does not make economic sense, especially when increasing human productivity is a major objective of development efforts. In many parts of the world, women's responsibilities include growing, processing and storing the family food supply; building and/or repairing the shelter; providing clothing, rudimentary health care and the children's first education. Yet women's resource bases may shrink while their obligations grow--particularly in those regions where heavy out-migration of men leaves women, seasonally or sometimes for longer periods, as de facto heads of households. Their access to land, agricultural inputs and opportunities to participate in financially remunerative tasks (even if only to market their small surplus in the nearest town) often are further eroded as programs of mechanization, commercialization, and institutional and social change are designed and implemented.*

* Boserup makes many arguments in this regard on an international basis. Staudt, Jelin, Mernissi, Salazar, Smock, and Elmendorf present evidence from several countries supporting the generalization.

While the development process is not inherently sex-biased, it appears that development programs and policies certainly may be (Boserup 1970, Clark 1975, Deere 1977, Staudt 1978). In spite of increased awareness of the negative impacts which development may have on women's abilities to fulfill their economic and social roles, there are many obstacles to designing specific programs for bringing about desirable outcomes and avoiding adverse effects. Simply knowing that concentration of land ownership will increase if farm mechanization is encouraged, for example, does not automatically mean that a land redistribution program or a prohibition on machinery imports will follow. The adverse impact of increasing inequity of land ownership may be seen as a necessary cost of achieving a desirable outcome such as increased production per unit of labor. Similarly, in order to address women's needs and potentials, competing interests must be satisfied, and practical problems of program design, execution and financing solved before "enhancing women's participation" can be translated from an objective to a development strategy.

This section sets forth some of the critical issues on women in development. The remainder of the discussion will be devoted to reviewing each of the conference agenda items with an eye to possible concrete strategies for incorporating women in every aspect of agrarian reform and rural development.

Women Agricultural Producers

Women in the rural areas are becoming "visible." It has been discovered that women's labor contributions to agriculture exceed those of men in many countries.* Some-

* Clark, Deere, de Wilde, Spencer, Weil, and the U.N. ECA document a number of cases quantitatively.

times women also control the disposal of the products of their labor (Simmons 1976, Smock 1977, Weil 1973). Yet in many cases, women grow the low-value food crops destined for household consumption, while men control the return from high-value cash crops -- even though women may contribute large amounts of labor time to weeding, cultivating and harvesting the produce destined to be sold.*

Agricultural statistics consistently undervalue women's agricultural labor -- both in terms of hours invested and economic return. By including women as "unpaid family workers," a zero valuation often is assigned to their time in the fields.

Off-farm Employment

Women increasingly are seeking earning opportunities off the farm in the rural areas, or in the nearby towns or the cities. Even the most hearty advocates for improving women's opportunities for wage employment recognize the thorny difficulties involved in creating full or part-time cash-earning opportunities. Low pay, unsafe and unsanitary work places, few promotion possibilities, job insecurity and exploitation in terms of wages and hours are characteristic of working conditions for both women and men in the developing world. Yet there is both historical and current evidence to indicate that women are found in greater proportions in the lowest-level, least well-paid jobs and that they have much less occupational mobility than do men.

In nonagricultural employment, for example, women are said to be particularly well-suited to the "feminine" detailed and repetitive work tasks of the textile and

* Van Allen's classic account of the Aba riots is amplified by reports from Deere, Okala and Mabey, and a host of other writers.

electronics industries, to the "traditionally female" food processing activities, or to the "role-compatible" handicraft or cottage industry production on a small scale (Dixon 1978, Elmendorf 1977, Lim 1979, Mernissi 1976, Salazar 1975). Such sex-stereotyping of jobs may increase the number of women's opportunities created at certain stages of industrial development, but it may also work to keep women out of potentially more rewarding jobs as industrialization proceeds (Chaney and Schmink 1976).

The informal sales and services sector jobs in many countries are open to wide participation of women (Arizpe 1977, Boserup 1970, Leis 1974, Smock 1977). The power and high profit margins of rich West African women traders are renowned, but even here studies indicate that women's opportunities in this area have an upper limit (Mintz 1971, Robertson 1975-76). There are, moreover, probably thousands of women engaging in petty or small scale retail trade who receive a minimal return for long hours spent on a sidewalk or in a crowded market stall for every one who has "made it big." And the services that many women provide are the most menial and low-paid that any society offers - domestic work - without job security or possibilities for advancement (Arizpe 1977, Bryant n.d., Chaney 1977, Salazar 1975). Yet insofar as women's access to more or better agricultural and industrial jobs is limited, these sales and service sectors will be expected to provide increasing opportunities for women.

So far as specific strategies are concerned, no strict guidelines can be applied and guaranteed to promote, or at least not to inhibit, the achievement of women in develop-

ment objectives in a given country. The issues which might be relevant to developing such strategies or considering whether they are explicitly needed are, therefore, often posed here as questions. References to research are cited to indicate the evidence leading to the questions and, in some cases, as sources for speculative answers in given situations.

ACCESS TO LAND AND WATER

The productivity of both men and women farmers depends to a major extent on their access to land and water resources. Women, like men, cultivate land in a variety of institutional arrangements -- as landless laborers, as tenants, and as owner/operators -- and in some cases they even act as landlords. Legal rights, either "traditional" or established through a written modern legal code, condition women's status and determine whether or not women may own land as individuals. Social and cultural traditions often lead to different patterns of ownership and cultivation for men and women. Women's obligations to provide food for the household in the Gambia, for example, result in women controlling the flood-irrigated land next to the river for production of the staple rice. Men grow cash and supplementary food crops on rain-fed upland as well. A project intended to raise productivity in agriculture would have to recognize the resources currently allocated to members of each sex; for example, a suggestion to facilitate women's cultivation of rain-fed uplands or to involve men in irrigated crop production could be expected to encounter resistance since traditional land use rights would have to be changed drastically.

In many developing countries, women's access to land for farming is contingent upon their husband's, father's, or other male kin's access to land. Women generally cultivate land identified as "belonging to" related men. Women may, in fact, carry out all decision-making as well as physical work tasks on this land and control the disposition of the product or they may, as many of the statistics on farm

management indicate, simply furnish "unpaid family labor."

Where women clearly have use rights, but do not have legally recognized ownership and inheritance rights, it may be helpful, in considering the need for or the dimensions of a possible land reform, to think of women as "tenants" on their men's land. In this light, a woman's tenancy security and sharecropping rates would be considered in relation to production incentives and her willingness to make permanent investments in the land. A woman working a husband's land in a society where marriage can be broken relatively easily might be less secure than, for example, a woman who "rents" land from a brother or natal kin group member. Similarly, a woman who has no control over the product of the land would have less incentive to increase her labor and enhance her productivity through improved farming methods and inputs if her allocated share of the output would not increase. The possibility that a husband may take a second wife and then reduce the first wife's land (Correze 1976, Curley 1973) may also be a deterrent to a woman's investing a great deal of capital or labor in making permanent improvements on land allocated to her. If insecure tenancy is recognized as a deterrent to tenant cultivator incentive and thus to increased productivity among male cultivators, then to the extent that women are also in the position of insecure tenants, their incentives and productivity may also be constrained.

In order to determine whether women's access to land and water resources in any given situation is sufficient to enhance their participation and productivity in agriculture, several different aspects of the current situation can be examined as a first step. Only then will reasonable and

feasible measures to enhance women's productivity through increased access be devised.

1. Do women have legal rights to own and inherit land as individuals?

The incentives for increased production which are assumed to apply to male owner/operators could also be assumed to apply to women. To make an analogy with the appropriation of surplus, several observers have noted a decrease in women's productivity when men, through membership in cooperatives, control the fruits of women's labor marketed through those institutions (Apihorpe 1971, Hanger and Morris 1973).

2. Does a redistribution of land in a proposed land reform take into account women's traditional access to land as well as their access in the modern legal code?

This may be especially important to consider when a reform facilitating a transition from traditional to modern tenure forms is involved. If in theory "all citizens" may secure title to land under a modern legal code, but if in traditional practice women only secure land use rights through male relatives, it is likely that women will not interpret "all citizens" to include them. Their participation may not be enhanced as envisioned by the reform designers. Even in a matrilineal area where a settlement scheme was created, patrilineal land rights were introduced (Brain 1976).

3. In more general terms, are there grounds for women participating in land redistribution schemes in their own right? Two specific possibilities might be considered:

(1) Where women are members of household units with no active male members, can these women get access and/or title to land and water rights?

(2) Where women participate in household production units which also contain active male members, will women's productivity be increased if they also have legal access to land in their own right?

4. Under what conditions does the introduction of cash crops spur competition for the land used for food crops?

In many countries, production of cash crops is the province of men while women concentrate on food crops. By developing cash crop opportunities, women's access to quality land for food crop production may be restricted with a consequent drop in food crop cultivation seen.

5. A related question on current status may be posed from a slightly different perspective: What proportion of good agricultural land is held or controlled by women? Are they consigned to marginal land, i.e., characterized by rockiness, or hillsides or slopes, with poor access to water, at long distance from home, or conversely, confined to the worn out soils near home? Are women poor farmers because they have poor resources?

6. Do cultural taboos work to deny women access to land and water? Or do the stereotypes of "weakness" and sexual "vulnerability" prevent women from participating in certain agricultural tasks, thus limiting their productivity?

A study in Peru notes that women are not allowed, for cultural reasons attributed to their sex, to open the main sluice gates for irrigation. Nor can they go out if irrigation takes place at night because of cultural perceptions that being abroad at night is "dangerous." This limits their abilities to adopt irrigated agriculture techniques independently and their access to irrigated land. The same study in Peru also shows that women are not allowed to touch the plow for reasons of sex in certain regions (Bourque and Warren 1976). In some areas of China, a country which has stressed the integration of women in agricultural production, menstruating women are not allowed to work in fields, reducing their total number of work days as well as rewards in the form of work points (Diamond 1975).

7. Do women's competing demands for time bar them from effective access to use or ownership rights in land and water resources?

Women in most developing countries have many domestic tasks in addition to any remunerative tasks outside of the home which they may undertake. In some cases, a considerable amount of time is often needed to

complete land registration -- time to go to the provincial capital to see people, to fill out papers, and to secure necessary documents. Men spend many fewer hours on domestic tasks and are thus able to afford to take the time needed to acquire land rights. In a situation of land scarcity, women may be confined to tenant or landless cultivator status even though they in theory have equal access.

AGRICULTURAL INPUTS, CREDIT, AND SERVICES

In more subsistence-oriented societies, women play an active role in agricultural production that is equal to or greater than that of men (Boserup 1970, Martin and Voorhies 1975, Mynttie 1978, Spencer 1976, Whyte 1978). According to U.N. estimates, women undertake a major part of cultivation in over half of all societies, and an equal part in a quarter of those societies. In India it is estimated that female labor accounts for a fifth of family labor and a third of agricultural labor, though case studies suggest women contribute not less than half of all labor (Ashby 1979). Women tend to plant, weed, harvest, store, and process crops, while men clear land, as well as plow.

The commercialization of agrarian societies, concentration of land ownership (and concomitant scarcity of land), and extension of agricultural information and support services appear to be associated with a marginalization of women's agricultural roles (Boserup 1970, Garrett 1976, Hull 1976, Staudt 1975-76). Moreover, there appears to be an inverse relationship between rising economic status and women's contribution to household maintenance (Deere 1977, Stoler 1977). Men increasingly take responsibility for growing cash crops, which has, in densely settled areas, intruded on scarce land available for food production. In some areas, this has adversely affected family food consumption (Correze 1976, Nash 1970, Rubbo 1974, Stavrakis and Marshall 1978). In many parts of Africa, commercialization has also drawn men away from agricultural areas, thus increasing women's work responsibilities as they take on what were formerly men's tasks.

Women's Limited Access

As growing documentation demonstrates, rural development

planners and staff neglect not only the economically disadvantaged and politically less powerful segments of rural society, but most women as well. Male preference in institutional support to farmers, such as in extension, credit, and cooperative membership, reduces women's access to such support. This may have an adverse impact on female heads of households and on women living in disadvantaged households. Like any other farmers, women farmers are motivated to participate in and expand productivity by stake, return and need. Over time such systematic exclusion from institutional support is expected to take its toll on women's productivity and, ultimately, on program effectiveness.

A variety of reasons explain such neglect. First, program assumptions are made that information and benefits will trickle down from men to women within households, an assumption impossible to sustain in female-headed households. Moreover, very little is known about the degree to which husbands transmit information to wives, though one study in Tanzania indicates divergent information levels between husbands and wives in households reached by extension (Fortmann 1977). Second, staff are primarily men, and in many societies there is a reluctance to initiate contact between unrelated men and women. Finally, institutional procedures and legal restrictions may make it difficult or impossible for women to obtain loans. One study found that the percent of households with a man present was fourteen times as likely to have detailed information about loans than the percent of households headed by women (Staudt 1975-76).

Women farmers' exclusion from the mainstream of

agricultural extension not only compromises the principle of administrative equity, but administrative effectiveness and efficiency as well. Women often have independent income-earning sources, such as from trading or beer brewing. Women heads of households, numbering what some estimate to be a third of rural households in the developing world*, constitute a varied group -- some widows, some abandoned by migrant husbands (a category in which sex and poverty intersect quite visibly), and others who receive cash support from migrant husbands. In this latter category, there are available cash resources with productive investment possibilities if there were appropriate institutional support.

Examples of Limited Access

Two studies in Kenya illustrate that women's potential productivity goes unrealized because of early presumptions orienting services both to men and to cash crops, staff prejudice, and institutional biases preventing most women from getting access to credit. The relationship of land to credit is worthy of added mention. Credit is usually available to those with sureties for loans, and land reforms which place individual title deeds in men's names have the effect of limiting farmers with migrant or disinterested husbands from obtaining loans.

In one study, the maize output per acre of women farm managers was compared to that of men managers. Women managing farms constituted a third of the sample -- about the same proportion estimated to be in the population of Kenyan

* Tinker, Boulding, and Buvinic, et al, note that the lack of standardized definitions of household head make comparative analysis difficult.

households. Women's output equalled men's, but when access to education and extension was controlled, women's output surpassed men's (Moock 1976). In another study comparing two administrative units, women farm managers (two-fifths of the sample) were earlier adopters of maize and had a more diversified set of crops on their land than on farms with a man present. This was an area with minimal, but typical, levels of agricultural services. In the other area, with historical and contemporary advantages in agricultural services, staff members, and cooperative activity, women's timeliness of adoption and diversification was less than men's. Ironically, more services and support (virtually always meaning more services and support channelled to men) may reduce women's productivity relative to men's (Staudt 1978).

Over time, the systematic neglect of one group at the expense of others results in lower productivity, whether it be among nations, ethnic and racial groups, or women and men. A structurally-induced lowered productivity over time becomes increasingly difficult to correct. It is exactly this kind of problem that planners and staff face in some parts of the world where women's productivity has been undermined over the course of several generations or decades of time. In such cases, questions of remedial, special attention to women may be raised. Such attention had greater administrative costs and, initially, less return. Ultimately, however, it equalizes opportunity and enhances productivity of all persons for development.

America, Sri Lanka and the Philippines).

Given these inequities, extension systems staffed predominantly by men must consider ways to design projects so that women are reached, as well as to induce male staff to serve farmers more equitably. At the same time, attention to sex disparities in literacy, educational achievement, and incentives to draw more women into agricultural extension work are required to address inequitable extension delivery. According to UNESCO figures published in 1977, the proportion of women who are agricultural graduates range from none (in countries which do not provide agricultural training for women) to nearly 30 percent in Thailand (Ashby 1979). More information is needed on the extent to which male staff contact women, female staff contact men, and one sex group contacts members of their own sex group. The quality of contacts needs attention as well. Under what conditions, and with what kinds of programs, is the sex of an intended beneficiary important for explaining access patterns?

Sex Segregation in Extension

Ironically, the very attention to building up female staffs and specialized extension for women has often resulted in a sex-segregation of extension services into home economics, either compartmentalized in the Ministry of Agriculture or lodged in a completely different ministry. A focus on women's domestic role in extension is pervasive (UNESCO studies cited in Ashby 1979). According to one study comparing programs in Africa, "the goal of extension services has frequently been not the increase in farm level productivity of women but rather finding ways to reduce their

participation in agriculture through promotion of more homebound activities (Lele cited in Ashby 1979)." The compartmentalization is in part a product of the wholesale transfer of a U.S. extension model to many parts of the world, despite the distinctly different sexual division of labor, as well as the small proportion of women available for recruitment into an extension system. Although home economics has undergone some transformation in parts of the world, it has all too often promoted an image of women based on ideals of Anglo-American Victorianism. Remnants of such a thrust are found in emphases on table decoration, embroidery, and sewing in areas of the world where income-earning prospects for such products are virtually nil (Lele 1975). One part of this image involved removing women from the fields and agriculture altogether and into home and domestic specializations. Such an image cannot either be assumed as desirable or preferred from the perspective of both development needs and peoples' obligations and preferences, nor is such an image practical for alleviating poverty or making best use of all human productive resources. This is particularly true in many areas where women have the responsibility by custom and practice to provide the family food supply, and often children's clothing and school fees as well. Nevertheless, the home extension service may be the only outreach program reaching women, and efforts to improve the service and incorporate more agricultural content may be in order.

Home economics programs tend to be sparsely staffed, operating with few resources and focusing on domestic training. One study found that one to two percent of all

agricultural field staff in a Kenya district were women and all, save one, were home economics assistants, with a geographic area and set of job responsibilities that contrasted greatly from ordinary agricultural staff (Staudt.1975 -76). The "women's programs" are often relegated to low status (Ashby 1979). Home economists are responsible for teaching women a wide variety of subjects, including sewing, nutrition, prenatal care, and gardening, among others. This broad range of subjects matches the kind of training women farmers receive when attending a short course at the farmer training centers. An examination of course content revealed that only one-third of class time was devoted to agricultural subjects. Men farmers who attended the farmer training center, in contrast, are provided with concentrated and specialized subject material relating to, for example, cattle care or coffee production (Staudt 1975-76).

Ultimately, an integrated extension system that is based on peoples' economic needs without regard to the sex of intended beneficiaries or of staff would appear to offer the best prospects for development and equity. In the meantime, however, sensitivity to separate communication networks and sex-divided work responsibilities is necessary for designing extension systems that reach women as well as men.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NONAGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT

It was assumed by development planners in the 1950s that members of the rural labor force who could not be absorbed productively into agriculture (because of increased mechanization, rapid population growth, excessive pressure on a limited stock of physical resources, etc.) would move gradually into urban areas and be absorbed into the manufacturing and tertiary (trade, sales, services) sectors. This transition has been neither complete nor painless. Some urban areas (e.g., Nairobi) are coping with a large number of unemployed job-seekers; and in other countries (e.g., Sri Lanka) the unemployed rural labor force has grown to include major proportions of certain age groups. There is an increasing concern with developing opportunities in nonagricultural employment (e.g., World Bank, UNIDO). A search for strategies for increasing labor-intensive industrial job openings has begun in earnest (Dixon 1978). The development of the "appropriate technology" perspectives is one part of this search.

For women, the move to develop nonagricultural employment opportunities has special dimensions. First, there is much less specific information about women's current participation and productivity in nonagricultural than in agricultural jobs. It is therefore more likely that a development program which substitutes visible, unemployed male labor for unseen, employed female labor may be mounted. Second, women generally are less literate than men and fewer are enrolled in schools and training programs which give them salable nonagricultural skills. Their competitive position is thus somewhat weaker than men's for the more skilled, more

profitable jobs. Third, women's abilities to accept and benefit from enhanced nonagricultural employment opportunities are to some extent conditioned by the compatibility of such opportunities with their roles as wives, mothers and housekeepers. The costs of producing a job vacancy for women may also be higher if facilities which increase role compatibility are included in the job creation costs -- day care centers, maternity benefits, etc. (Boserup 1970, Chaplin 1970). Fourth, a focus for improving productivity of those nonagricultural jobs which women already hold may demand a technology ladder or organizational approach which differs from those which would be developed if the participants were all male. If women are restricted in their movements outside of their houses for religious reasons, for example, technology must be very divisible if they are to adopt it in the very small-scale firms operated out of their houses. Skill teaching must be done almost on an individual basis, and/or basic social and cultural changes implemented. Opening a second or night shift for women in an electronics factory already employing women in the day shift may be possible only if transportation is provided. A technological change to increase production efficiency which requires an increase in firm size and a separate work place may be simple for a male entrepreneur to adopt. For a woman trying to combine domestic and entrepreneurial roles, this technological change may be impossible to adopt without a major reorganization of her domestic life. Finally, women may be consigned to the less-skilled, lowest-paid jobs in the service sector because of beliefs that they cannot be entrusted with highly complicated machinery (Chaney and Schmink 1976).

In sum, the effective enhancement of rural nonagricultural employment opportunities for women has to be based on analysis of the answers to three questions:

1. What nonagricultural jobs do rural women currently perform?
2. What factors will facilitate women's abilities to take advantage of nonagricultural employment opportunities?
3. What factors work to prevent women from improving productivity of current nonagricultural jobs or from taking newly-created opportunities?

ORGANIZATION AND PARTICIPATION

Participation includes involvement in the decision-making processes, implementation, benefits and evaluation of development programs. Unless local people are involved in the process, committed to its goals, and able to develop a stake in the outcomes, development is not likely to be successful or self-sustained. Participation is increasingly recognized as a basic right, because development interventions affect peoples' life chances, standard of living and access to other resources. Participation is also recognized as a tool which allows better planning and implementation, as knowledge of local conditions is incorporated into development programs. From an administrative point of view, organizations as vehicles of development represent a cost-effective means to implement projects. Moreover, extension contact with groups rather than individuals will, in all likelihood, extend the distribution of services. Organizations provide a context in which people can solve their own problems in self-sufficient and self-sustaining ways. Organization facilitates the use of size, scale and cohesion to build on, and enhances economic resources which translate into political resources.

In political institutions, decisions are made which affect the value of work and the distribution of resources, and women's virtual exclusion from international, national and community decision-making partly explains the invisibility and undervaluation of their work and their exclusion from development benefits (Staudt forthcoming, Boulding 1975, Putnam 1976, Bourque and Warren 1976). Ultimately, women's access to land and water, to agricultural inputs, to productive training, education and extension

opportunities, and to compensated nonagricultural employment which takes their special needs into account, depends on broad and representative participation in decision-making processes.

Women form a substantial portion of the intended beneficiaries of all rural development programs; in many areas women are the primary food producers and thus constitute part of the farm clientele. As growing documentation demonstrates, planners and staff not only neglect the economically disadvantaged and politically less powerful segments of rural society, but the majority of women as well, both as spouses and particularly as female household heads. This occurs for various reasons: a reluctance to initiate contact between unrelated men and women, inadequate knowledge of women's work, prejudice, and program implementation that assumes information and benefits will trickle down within households from men to women. The tenuous and indirect nature of the relationship between staff and women is perpetuated by regarding women only as wives and mothers, rather than also as farmers, traders and cooperative members. One AID agricultural information program, for example, is built around a radio program called "Señor Agricultor" - Mr. Farmer. Household structures around the world are neither uniform, nor universally equitable. Assumptions made about trickle-down effects are increasingly hard to sustain.

The Relationship of Organization to Government

Distinctions can be made about women's organizational mobilization for development, both as autonomous from government and as interacting with government programs. On the

latter, women's organizations can activate direct relationships with development staff, or, through pressure, create contexts in which staff have more incentive for and greater stake in interaction with women as well as men. It might be argued that women are indirectly represented as members of households, yet documentation of development's adverse impact on women suggests that women's interests have been unreflected or not represented at all. On the former distinction - mobilization autonomous from government - women's self-help organizations have many precedents in all areas of the world. Various organizational activities and organizational structures provide numerous examples of development possibilities (and actualities) already existing, ranging from credit societies to communal agriculture, and mutual aid societies (Brana-Shute 1976, Hull 1976, Kaberry 1952, Klingshirn 1971, Seibel and Massing 1974, Leis 1974, Watchel 1975-76). Autonomous sometimes by preference, these organizations are often invisible to persons outside a community.

Networks Among Women

In societies with long histories of female exclusion from overtly productive activities or with tendencies toward female social exclusion, communication among women may flow in an informal network pattern where ideas, information and resources are exchanged. Though research on informal networks is limited, worthy questions might be raised about the way in which ideas spread within networks, how spread in women's networks differs from that in men's networks, and the implications those findings have for development. In some societies, the near-universal subordination of women, separate communication networks for the sexes (and exclusion

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of women from community decision-making), and the possibility of multiple wives suggest a greater degree of egalitarianism among women than men (Correze 1976, Curley 1973, Rosenfield 1975). A more rapid, equitable diffusion of development ideas among women is a strong probability in certain contexts. A study in Botswana supports this assertion (Bond 1974).

Organizational Support From Where?

Another issue is whether, or to what extent, organizations can or should be supported with resources external to the community, also termed "built from above." Women, like other subordinate groups, face obstacles when mobilizing for collective action; the essence of subordination is less access to economic resources, contacts, and information that foster successful collective action. With a long-standing tradition of exclusion from community participation, some catalyst may be necessary to foster both men's and women's acceptance of women's organizational activity and provide support for its sustenance. Consideration must also be given to the effects of external support on the character of groups, as well as to whether external intrusion either preempts or provides a context in which locally generated leadership and awareness emerge.

Building Organizations on Women's Existing Roles

The lines along which women organize, and who defines those lines -- be it outsiders to the community, an elite within the community, or members -- are crucial issues to consider as well. Building roles unacceptable to a community appears counterproductive as Soviet strategy in Central Asia demonstrates (Massell 1974); yet building on

and strengthening roles which exist in societies with marked sex disparities may simply perpetuate inequity. Past home economics programs which emphasized women's domestic roles to the exclusion of others illustrate this prospect. Depending on the local context, some combination of building on acceptable roles and providing income-earning opportunities appears to offer greatest prospects for success. Women's cooperatives in India and Bangladesh, and Mother's Clubs in Korea illustrate some of these possibilities (Dixon 1978, Kincaid, et al n.d.). Issues defined by elite women can be just as external to the needs of members as outsider-defined issues. Just as the recurrent male elite capture of local participatory institutions constitutes an obstacle to equitable development, so also do similar processes and blocks occur among women.

Separate or Integrated Organizations

Questions are invariably raised about the issue of whether women's organizations ought to be separate from men's, or whether organizations should be sexually integrated. In societies with existing, separate-sex communication networks, continuing the tradition of separation would allow skills and resources to be built for eventual integration. Separation also forestalls confrontation with cultural patterns found in some societies opposed to mixing unrelated men and women.

Early organizational integration of the sexes may mean a submergence of women's interests, or participation by a minute proportion of women, with dim prospects for either representation or integration of key issues. Numerous

committees have a lone representative of women, an individual facing as many obstacles to representation as did the lone African on colonial committees in Kenya or the lone tenant on land committees. In one peasant union, ostensibly "integrated," calculations of the proportion of women involved figured to less than one percent; these women are furthermore confined to a women's program within the union. (Salvadoran Communal Union, cited in Staudt, forthcoming). Frequently, a cooperative with "household membership," considered an ideological advance over male-only membership, is simply a continuation of male appropriation of cooperative benefits (Apthorpe 1971, de Wilde 1967, Hanger and Moris 1973). It cannot be assumed that the benefits of cooperative membership are shared equally or according to labor inputs. When men in Ujamaa villages were questioned about whether women should have part of the cash proceeds from the communal plot on which women labored, three-fourths of the men said women should receive at least ten percent (Brain 1976). Unless steps are taken to involve women, or recruit individual women, the fruits of women's labor may be appropriated by others with eventual negative implications for women's work incentives and productivity.

Women in Development IS Development

There is a certain cost to establishing separate-sex organizations and institutions. The cost is the difficulty of mainstreaming and widening what are too easily seen as "women issues." In many cases, terming something a women's issue simply reflects a semantic problem. The need for increased food production and potable water, as well as for more equitable access to resources, credit and work opportuni-

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