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UNDERSTANDING CHANGE: THE CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMPLEXITIES OF WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

By: Susan Bourque
Advisory Panel Member, WID/PED Program
Professor, Dept. of Government, Smith College

Judith Helzner
Advisory Panel Member, WID/PED Program
Program Representative, PACT

Isabel Nieves
Advisory Panel Member, WID/PED Program
Staff Social Scientist, International Center for Research on Women

Bonnie Shepard
Program Coordinator, WID/PED Program
The Pathfinder Fund

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Documenting change has traditionally been the role of the historian, studying change the job of the social scientist and attempting change the task of the policymaker. Linking the findings of the academic community to the plans of policymakers is a challenging goal, one which both scholars and policymakers agree would make for better and more effective public policy and more relevant research. The Women and Development, Projects Evaluation and Documentation program (WID/PED), undertaken by The Pathfinder Fund, is an attempt in that direction. The WID/PED Program is an action-research program that is supporting a number of action projects in order to generate qualitative data on selected issues and problems related to women and income generation, and so that successful strategies can be replicated.

Specifically, five two-year income generating projects for women, located in four countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, have been selected as the data base for study. Projects were selected on the basis of their capacity to provide comparable data on central unresolved questions about factors influencing the success or failure of income generating projects, and about the effect of these projects on women. Results of this documentation effort should provide program personnel and policymakers with qualitative information that will be useful to them as they formulate development plans and projects, especially income generating ones, that aim to involve women.

The tasks for Pathfinder have been several: to identify the important questions for policymakers that surround women's income generating projects; to locate a series of income generating projects in which answers to those critical questions could be sought; and to develop a research methodology and design for studying projects. The main goal of the WID/PED program is to gather information useful to policymakers so that successful programs can be replicated in new contexts. The information is being gathered by local social scientists, referred to within the program as "process documentors," who visit the project on a regular basis throughout the life of the project. A Senior Research Analyst*, by training an economic anthropologist, is analyzing the data from the documenters, and writing up the results.

* Dr. Mary Elizabeth (Libbet) Crandon

There is now substantial evidence that development projects stand a better chance of success if women are involved--in all stages of the project. Information is still lacking, however, about how to incorporate women successfully. The projects which are currently being documented by WID/PED explore a variety of strategies for better utilizing Latin American women's potential productivity via the routes of private enterprise, technology transfer, and institution building.

The need for information on such strategies is fundamentally a pragmatic one. Researchers who have studied the impact of women's exclusion from development projects have consistently found important "cases in which rural projects are ineffective, irrelevant or result in a decrease in agricultural production because they ignore women's roles."[1] Barbara Rogers and Ruth Dixon make a very similar point in their reviews of international assistance programs. They, like a number of scholars, note that even the best intended programs can have negative consequences if the likely impact on each sex has not been adequately assessed. Dixon found a number of cases in which development efforts altered the distribution of incomes within the family leaving women absolutely or relatively worse off than before the projects' inception. In some cases this loss resulted in the failure of the project to meet production targets. Rogers notes that failure to estimate accurately women's contribution to agriculture programs and their time commitments have left planners with policies difficult to implement.[2]

Studies also indicate that women cannot be absorbed by larger scale development projects without careful attention to the causes of their prior exclusion. The evidence suggests if women's roles are not fully understood, new demands and new opportunities may overburden them resulting in negative consequences, both for the women and their offspring.[3] Policymakers cannot assume that programs based on male experience will necessarily work for women. Nor can they assume that one can assure the success of a women's income generating project merely by substituting women in the roles normally played by men. Important cultural, historical, economic, attitudinal and organizational issues are likely to influence gender related activities and consequently women's projects.

The goal of the WID/PED project is to provide information which will allow policymakers a more accurate view of what they might accomplish with women's income generating projects and how they might accomplish it. Based on a comprehensive perspective of women, the research will provide policymakers with relevant information about the effect of income generating projects upon women's lives, and the projects' influence on their attitutes related to fertility choices.

I. The Unresolved Issues

The research undertaken in the WID/PED program should help answer two central and as yet unresolved questions. First, what makes income generating programs for women work? Second, what is the impact of this involvement on the women who participate, their families and the rest of the community? The first question--what makes these projects work--addresses women's economic behavior and the technical and organizational issues related to that behavior.

A. Women and Productivity

Both scholars and policymakers agree that there is at present inadequate high quality data on women's labor force participation. Productivity, in the case of women, needs a definition much broader than output per hour to capture the full range of their economic contributions. Census data often miss women's contributions, and such macro data can seldom capture the subtle questions of how productivity is related to balancing the competing demands made upon women's time. It cannot tell us the effects of labor force participation on women's responsibilities for support, care, and sustenance of her family, the present and future workforce.[4] Since these are among the most important constraints upon women's time, the WID/PED program is designed to provide qualitative and comparative information on how this balance is struck. As Nieves has noted, "poor women in developing countries have no choice but to be increasingly more productive in the cash economy and at the same time fulfill their domestic responsibilities."[5]

One of the rural WID/PED projects has yielded rich data on this subject. It is supposed by many that extended family networks in rural areas absorb child care demands created by the mother engaging in agricultural labor. In this case the demands created by the project have turned out to be in excess of the norm, causing severe strains on this hitherto-adequate support system. Each woman involved in the project now works a full week of eight hour days for two weeks, and then has one week of "rest." The relatives taking care of the children have begun to balk at this schedule. Older children complain about being left cold food as opposed to the hot meal they are accustomed to and husbands are beginning to make jokes about their wives being married to the project instead of to them. In response, the project staff held extensive discussions with project participants about the issue of child care. As a result of these discussions, the grantee raised money from a local PVO to set up an informal child care center in one of the women's homes. However, this plan never got off the ground for a variety of cultural and practical reasons, and now a more restricted group of women is carrying the main responsibility for the chicken barns. This example demonstrates the importance of determining in the early stages of project's design the threshold beyond which the existing support systems can no longer absorb the demands created by new work outside the home.

1. Time Constraints and Opportunity Costs

Women's need to balance competing demands and the costs of excluding women from economic development are well established. What is problematic is how best to help women balance the demands upon them, while expanding their economic and social options.

The necessity of quick financial gain may at times be paramount, superceding all other potential or long term benefits from participation in income generating projects. Adequate time is necessary for most projects to reach a point where there are monetary returns--but time is usually very short for poor women. The WID/PED study of income generating projects should give us a more accurate timetable for estimating project development and insuring the participation of poor women. Our data reveals the costs and benefits of project participation as the women themselves assess the competing demands upon their time. Information from the projects should also help us identify the most promising solutions to this dilemma.

The opportunity cost of participation in the WID/PED projects is a significant factor in all of the projects. This issue is closely linked to women's access to cash. In some cases, time spent working in the project can preclude spending time earning cash from other sources, although most often those other sources are unreliable, seasonal and/or very low-paying. For urban mothers the income must at least meet their child care and transportation costs. To the extent that the project yields a sizable income for the participants, the benefits tend to outweigh the costs. In the initial phases of an income generating project, however, when training and start-up is in process, the only way for participants to earn a significant income is for the grant or loan to subsidize the costs of wages until the project begins to earn enough income. None of the WID/PED projects take this course. Rather, they are all set up on a strictly profit-sharing basis, and have to put income aside for future capital expenditures and production expenses. However, the urban projects have had to provide "transportation stipends," at the very least, to make it possible for participants to attend. One of the urban projects has had a lot of technical problems with their equipment, meaning that profits and wages are extremely low, and yet the other benefits of the project--group support, a sense of worth--have kept the participants committed.

In another project, production started almost immediately after the recruitment of the women. The income earned, however, has been so low that the piece-rate return for handicrafts work is almost negligible. The drop-out rate from the project has been high. In a third rural project, a cooperative chicken raising venture, the women's main source of cash income had previously been seasonal work for two months a year harvesting coffee on a nearby hacienda. Just when the chicken cooperative work schedule had been established and operating more or less smoothly, the coffee harvest began. The work schedule on the project was seriously disrupted, as women left their new obligations for the higher paying coffee harvest. This caused a great deal of tension in the group, which was eventually resolved by the women taking turns working on the coffee harvest during their "weeks off" from the project. This creative response, however, created additional strain on the child care system. How the women resolves such tensions has been documented in the WID/PED program. Over time, as the chicken project reaches the production stage and the chickens are mature

enough to lay eggs, the opportunity costs of project participation should be much lower and the coffee harvest should cause less disruption.

2. Access to Productive Resources

The differential access of men and women to cash has exacerbated women's poverty; in many cases men's access to cash (through commercial production and wage labor) has been enhanced by development programs that ignore women's needs. Studies have demonstrated that as the process of modernization takes place, and most especially as a cash economy replaces systems of barter and labor exchange, women's access to cash becomes a crucial aspect of how change will affect them. Women have fewer opportunities than men to earn cash. Moreover, if as a consequence of shifts in the economy, women lose decision-making power within the home and community, they will become increasingly subordinate and dependent. Some studies indicate that the reputed reluctance of women to accept change needs to be understood in light of their realistic assessment of the potentially negative impact of certain changes upon their lives.[6]

Another issue related to women's access to cash is the range of evidence suggesting that men and women expend cash income in different fashions. Because there is a greater tendency for women to spend their cash on food and necessities for their children, women's diminished access to cash may be more important for family welfare than male access. Scholars note the differing consumption patterns of the sexes accompanying from new cash incomes: "men tend to buy watches, radios and drink; women buy basic necessities for the family."[7]

The documentation in the WID/PED program will provide some of the much needed information on issues related to women's productivity, including an assessment of how women strike a balance between income generating activities and the other claims upon their time, and how access to income affects patterns of decision making, participation and family welfare. Information is being collected on what happens in the home, in the community, and to women's attitudes when they do gain access to productive resources.

B. Technological Transfer

When we turn to the issue of technological transfer the case has been made that women's more restricted access to technological assistance in both

productive and management skills has limited their productivity and contributed to their subordinate status.[8] At times the outside technical assistance agency is cited as the culprit and at times the traditional beliefs and practices of the local population are identified as the more important restraint. In this latter case, the question becomes, how much variation from women's appropriate roles, as defined by the community, is possible? A number of studies have argued that the "appropriateness" of an income generating activity will be a central element in the success or failure of projects in achieving technological transfer. The general conclusion of some experts is that unless a given activity is viewed as appropriate for women by the community and the women themselves, resistance will be too great, and the project will fail.[9] Yet, this would appear to pose a serious limitation on the opportunities available to women.

1. The Appropriateness of Income Generating Activities

The issue of the community's view of the "appropriateness" of an activity is a complex subject. Each process documenter will record specific data from her country that explain how the specifics of the historical-cultural context in which the project takes place interacts with the activity chosen. The data collected on this issue promises to make an important contribution to our understanding of how women might be more effectively included in income generating activities and how a broader range of activities might be identified as appropriate activities for women. The actual productive activities in the WID/PED project roughly fall into the categories of handicrafts, poultry-raising, food processing (2 projects), and metal-working, thus seemingly encompassing four traditional, appropriate activities and one non-traditional, hypothetically inappropriate one. There are, however, two elements common to all of the WID/PED projects, regardless of the activity, which could significantly affect the community's view of their appropriateness for women. These two elements are mass production, and managerial control by an all-women's cooperative. It is one thing to make ice cream in one's home, and it is quite another to set up a small woman-controlled ice cream factory. Similarly, the community's view of women raising a few laying hens in their home will probably differ significantly from their view of a peasant women's group setting up two large chicken coops with a capacity for 1600 laying hens each, administering the

packaging and marketing of the eggs, and sharing the profits. At what point do the men in the women's lives begin to perceive the project as being in direct or indirect competition with them? When that point is reached does the women's activity get redefined as "inappropriate"? Can women expand their options by participation in projects which are seemingly "appropriate" and in keeping with community expectations of appropriate sex role behavior, yet in effect, expand the scope of opportunities available to them?

Comparisons among the WID/PED projects will also allow us to test the influence of other variables on the community's expectations and flexibility with regard to the appropriate sexual division of labor. Urban environments may allow women more latitude than rural environments. The women's chapter of a politically active peasant union may be operating in an environment more supportive of a wide range of activities than that of the wives of members of a rural peasant cooperative. Members of a church congregation in the Caribbean are in fact doing the most "traditional" activity--handicrafts--and may face more obstacles than the other groups in efforts to set up completely independent cooperatives. The variety of settings in the five WID/PED projects will allow this kind of comparison.

Some of our data suggests that the amount of income earned may significantly affect the families' level of tolerance for "inappropriate" activities. Another factor emerges from recent data from one of the rural projects, which suggests that males in the community are less permissive in their attitudes towards younger, single women's participation in somewhat unorthodox activities than towards the participation of older married women. Whether these attitudes significantly affect the younger women's ability to participate fully in the ongoing project is a question that should be answered in the course of the documentation.

Information collected in the WID/PED documentation plan will be of use to policymakers concerned with overcoming the negative impact of occupational segregation on women by identifying where latitude and flexibility exist to expand women's roles. Unless methods can be found to introduce women to forms of income generating activity not traditionally available to them, workplace segregation and its negative impact will remain with us. Some studies suggest

that when new economic activities become available that are not sex-typed, women are able to move successfully into new arenas, particularly if they are not in direct competition with men.[10] Moreover, women themselves have been instrumental in adapting new activities to fit the categories traditionally assigned to them. The WID/PED documentation will examine both how groups within the community conceive of the income generating activity and how that conception may be related to the projects' successes or failures. As the early data indicate it will also identify men's reactions to women's income generating activities and some useful strategies for alleviating negative competition between the sexes.

2. Access to Technological Resources

Most observers agree that where the income generating project contributes to "an increase in family cash income, resistance is least." Because of the range of pressures upon poor women and the problems faced by income generating projects in developing countries, some projects may fail to generate a net income. Making sure that an increase in income occurs is directly related to the appropriateness of the technology that is introduced into the project. The word "technology" is used in this article to mean not only machines, equipment or a new breed of chickens but also production skills, appropriate organization and management practices. Scholars have identified the importance of ensuring that the technology available to women be adaptive to their needs. For technology to be useful it must assist women rather than remove them from the productive process. If the equipment, skills and organization of a project reduces employment opportunities or requires skills which women cannot acquire or which they are structurally prevented from acquiring, at the same rate as men, the effect of the project will have been negative. New forms of production and management must also remain in women's control, rather than transfer control to other groups and/or individuals.[11] Irene Tinker has begun to identify the most appropriate means for accomplishing this transfer successfully in the production of food, but policymakers need much more information about what technological transfers from sponsoring organizations to participants will be most effective for income generating projects. The issue is not only what technology, in the broadest sense of that word, is needed, but also how women

can gain access to it. We need to identify the obstacles to women's access and the route to eliminate those impediments.

The WID/PED research should help identify the technical resources women's income generating projecs will find most useful, the technical assistance that will be necessary and the points in the life of the project when it may be most important to provide it. The research will identify missing skills, and assess the importance of each missing element, e.g., knowledge of credit and marketing systems, education, literacy, management and organizational techniques. The research should also provide policymakers with information about how missing skills might be acquired.

One specific question that arises when examining the issue of technological transfer is the effect of the level of education of the women's group. Baseline data from the rural projects in the WID/PED Program indicate that the women in these groups have less formal education than their urban counterparts. How can training in administrative and managerial skills be adapted in this situation, and what would be the most successful strategy to adopt? In one rural project, the low level of education has meant that the group, temporarily at least, has two irreplaceable and younger members with sixth grade educations who were provided with intensive training in administration. The rest of the members receive a basic general course in bookkeeping in the hope that eventually the treasurer will be able to train other women in some of her duties. Members of another rural project have decided to teach the necessary administrative and bookkeeping skills to several women through on-the-job training linked to the specific tasks associated with their project. The other three projects have all chosen between these two approaches, on-the-job training vs. general courses combined with varying degress of on-the-job training, and the comparison should yield interesting results.

For example, while the preliminary data available from the program suggests that well-known factors such as low educational levels or illiterary pose a significant obstacle to technology transer, other factors ranging from lack of eyeglasses to lack of self-confidence have had to be specifically addressed in the allocation of program resources and in the training curriculum. Curriculum components and active support that counteracts women's socialization in the

direction of passivity and timidity are necessary if one expects women to assume active roles in administration, leadership, and marketing of products.

Another useful comparison related to technical assistance will be in the area of group formation. One of the projects is working with a women's group that existed as a separate entity before the project began. In a second instance there were three rival women's groups that amalgamated, upon the instigation of the grantee organization, to form one unified group at the inception of project activities. All of the other WID/PED projects recruited participants from the general community (although in one case the recruitment took place entirely among church members). Two of the projects have recognized the problems inherent in organizing previously unrelated individuals into a working self-managing cooperative and have given extensive technical assistance to aid in the process of group formation. One project has done nothing at all along these lines, while the other gave the women in the group a course in "group dynamics" but has only recently recognized the need to work intensively with the group to resolve the tensions that have arisen.

C. Institutional Development

Institutional development has been correctly identified by policymakers as a critical arena for study. Successful group organization is essential to insure that the gains of income generating activities have the greatest long term impact, and that the groups themselves are able to use their full potential. Ultimately policymakers need to know how to help groups become self-sustaining without continued assistance or subsidy from the sponsoring organization. An analysis of the inputs into each project as related to whether or not the project achieved both financial and managerial self-sufficiency should thus be extremely useful.

In the case of women, institutional development is even more important. For women, effective group action has been an element in expanding access to resources and achieving social change. As Hoskins has noted: "A group of women may be able to overcome traditional restrictions on mobility, control of money, and acceptable feminine activities more easily than any one women could overcome these alone." However, information on institutional development among women's groups is notably lacking. What data we do have indicates that women have less

organizational experience than men and that women's subordination is in some ways both related to this situation and exacerbated by it.[12] At the same time, some studies indicate that the impact of group membership tends to be greater upon women than upon men,[13] implying that institutional development may be an especially important area for research and documentation.

1. Women in Groups and Female Leadership

We have much to learn about women in groups. Because of the multiple demands on women's time, the costs of group membership, even in an income generating project, may be too high for some poor women. The competing demands for women's time often mean that women participate in projects at considerable personal sacrifice. On-site observations made to date indicate that this is evidenced by both difficulties in setting up and maintaining group work schedules, and a high level of tension within the group when individual members are unable, for a variety of reasons, to fulfill all the group obligations they have incurred. Furthermore, since mothers of young children tend to have the most demands on their time those projects that have sought their participation have had difficulties both in recruiting and retaining them. In one of the rural projects, the president of the newly formed women's group became pregnant at the beginning of the project. A recent project report cryptically announced that this woman was forced to resign from her duties as president due to "pressing family concerns." Another project is now almost entirely composed of older women and a few teenagers; the young mothers dropped out in the early stages.

Certain kinds of organizational styles may be better suited to institutional development among women's groups. We need information about which management and leadership techniques will have the most likelihood of success among different groups of women at different points in the life cycle. While in all the projects the women ultimately are the owners of the enterprise, there is a considerable variation among the projects in methods of profit-sharing or paying wages or piece-rates, and in the willingness of the project staff to encourage the women to act independently, as owners. It will be helpful to know whether projects structured along participatory lines, involving women in profit sharing are more successful than those in which women earn a piece-rate.

Alternatively, it will be useful to know if a highly participatory management strategy excludes the most marginal and needy women from participation because they have less flexibility in the time that can be allocated to group decision-making.[14]

In addition, policymakers need data about the leadership styles and techniques which prove most effective with women's groups. All of the income generating projects in the WID/PED program are geared toward having the grantee organization work to create a leadership base among the participating women, to ensure that the projects have some chance of long-term survival under the women's control. In the course of documenting these projects, lessons about the most effective ways of securing this leadership base should emerge.

The variety of leadership styles and techniques represented among the grantees in the five WID/PED projects promises to provide fruitful comparisons with which policymakers can begin to identify patterns in this underexamined area. In one of the projects the management style is definitely hierarchical, and the project director is not only resistant to including the participants in the decision-making process, but is also a charismatic community leader whom the members are not used to challenging or questioning. In three of the projects, the directors are making conscious efforts to have the most participatory leadership style possible; they have experience in training grassroots groups to function independently, and are providing whatever training they can to enable the group to develop an independent leadership base. In the remaining project, the staff has no experience with a participatory leadership style, but they understand that in order to be responsible to the group, the women must be trained to function on their own. The results to date in this latter case are somewhat mixed. The staff's lack of practical experience with a participatory style in their own organization leads them to be somewhat ineffectual in their attempts to create participatory leadership among the women's group. In other words, they are giving useful courses, but their routine interactions with the group have not yet transferred much leadership responsibility.

The WID/PED program addresses the issue of leadership styles and control by insisting that a goal of each income generating project be the training of participants to take over the process. A specific plan for accomplishing

this goal is built into each project design and the process documentors will keep careful note of the process. This information should identify both the obstacles to achieving this goal and the relative merit of the various strategies used to accomplish it.

2. Financial Independence

When analyzing the issue of institutional development for women's income generating projects, the question of financial independence from external funding has proved to be paramount. Too many women's projects in the past have been welfare projects in disguise, and they disappear as soon as external funding ends. In order to avoid repetition of these experiences, the WID/PED Program concentrated on this issue from its inception, and all of the projects were designed to achieve full independence in two years' time. Market surveys were mandated in most cases before production began, capital needs were scrutinized, and inputs adjusted accordingly, and the break-even point for each activity was calculated during the first year to see if profitability was in fact feasible. As all development planners know, a multitude of unforseen circumstances invariably interferes with the best-laid plans, and we cannot expect achievement of this goal to be 100%. However, in those cases which successfully reach the goal, the Program will analyze the inputs into the project to see how they contributed towards reaching the goal. When self-sufficiency has not been achieved, the project will be analyzed to see if the failure was due to lack of necessary program inputs, or to circumstances that could not have been planned for and offset. In either case, valuable lessons will be learned that can be passed on to development planners and policy makers to help them design programs and projects that have a better chance of achieving financial self-sufficiency.

2. Managerial Self-Sufficiency

The WID/PED Program also addresses one of the central institutional questions asked by and of policy makers, to wit, "once the income-generating project has been established, how can we make sure that it will endure once external funding and technical assistance are withdrawn?" At issue here is the viability of the administrative structure set up by the program, and thus the

survival of the new institution that has been established. This question becomes particularly crucial when the project's participants are mainly women, with many competing demands on their time, and with educational levels averaging around the fourth grade. The whole process of technology transfer, discussed previously, is important here, but there are other questions as well that are being examined by the research. Which inputs into the program foster or hinder the formation of a cohesive, smoothly functioning group? How are profits distributed in the most equitable way in situations where not each member works an equal amount of hours (because of sickness, maternity leave, and child care responsibilities, among other things)? With what regularity must participants be paid for their labor in order to best ensure their ongoing commitment to the project in urban projects? in rural projects? How can problems of inter-racial or inter-ethnic conflict best be dealt with? Which educational strategy during the training period was most successful in creating a group that is capable of making informed and rational management decisions? What degree of technical assistance will the groups need on an ongoing basis, after the funding organization has withdrawn, and can their profits cover the cost of this assistance?

To pick one of these issues as an example, the question of the policy of distribution of profits has arisen in one of the rural projects, which is officially a cooperative. According to the cooperative law in that country, profits from the cooperatives are only distributed to members once a year at the end of the year. This is a long time to work without compensation, and the project was designed so that 10% of the production would be distributed to the working members each week. This production (eggs) could either be consumed or sold. While in fact this amounted to a considerable amount of income relative to the norm in the community, the financial and health situation in the community as a whole was so desperate that considerable pressure mounted to distribute the profits before the appointed time. Cooperative members were dissuaded from distributing any more profits by the implementing agency, who was afraid that the necessary reserves would disappear, but what will happen once the cooperative is no longer dependent on the agency for capital inputs or technical assistance?

The WID/PED data will provide a rich source of information not just about the dynamics of forming a self-managing small enterprise, but about the ways in which gender influences those dynamics.

Institutional development is addressed and documented at several levels in this research effort. The women's groups themselves are the focus for study. Research will tell us how these groups can be strengthened and the kinds of leadership, organizational training and information that are necessary to keep the groups viable. Second, the evolving relation between the income generating group and the larger grantee organization will be an object of study.

3. Building Institutional Links

One of the controversies in the area of institutional development is over the question of what external organizations best foster the interests of women's groups. While there is substantial agreement over the importance of external support (and also widespread recognition that external groups can create new problems), the kind of organization that will best foster a women's income generating project is still at issue. The WID/PED projects have been chosen to represent a range of grantee organizations, including a church group, the women's branch of a peasant federation, and three different organizations--one a family welfare group, one a male-run cooperative training institute, and the third the vocational training institute of a state government, all of which have formed new groups by recruiting participants in their communities. The links between these external sponsors and the women's income generating projects are an important element in the ultimate impact and replicability of the projects.

Built into the design of each project is the requirement that contact be established and maintained with an appropriate agency of the government. The process documentors and project directors will record the nature and impact of these ties. These data will be useful to policymakers concerned with using bureaucratic structures in host countries for more effective replicability.

The preliminary experiences in establishing these government links are providing critical insights. The ultimate objective of these links--to ensure replicability and dissemination of the results among policymakers in the host

country--depends upon identifying local individuals who will be in a position to act on the lessons learned in these projects. This is not always an easy task. At the grassroots level, participants in certain of the countries view their governments and official bureaucracies with suspicion and hostility. The project directors, in some cases, have found themselves caught between the conflicting demands of the goals of the progam as a whole and the perceptions and fears of the participants. At the local level in such projects, the participants cannot understand any possible benefit that could accrue to them from having continuous contact with a government official or ministry. Furthermore, they are extremely nervous about the prospect of the project director giving information about their group to people at the ministerial level. In many cases, their fears are historically justified.

Even in cases where the participants' attitudes are not a problem, officials at the ministerial level in many countries are not reknowned for their responsiveness to and interest in women's income generating projects. Some project directors who have repeatedly tried to set up contacts have faced a frustrating series of unanswered phone calls and letters.

Faced with these problems, the project directors have exercised creativity to meet the objective of dissemination of results and possible replication of the projects. One has maintained excellent working relationships with other government agencies, and with officials, but at the provincial level. These individuals are both interested in and able to cooperate to help make the project a success. Another project director invited officials from entities such as the Inter-American Development Bank to the inauguration of the project, and has set up channels of communication with these people. A third project director is concentrating her efforts on providing information about the project to other chapters of the nationwide peasant union, of which her group is a member. Another, while fairly successful at setting up the government links specified in the program goals, is also disseminating the results of the project among the nationwide church organization with which he and the project members are affiliated.

The process documentors themselves are local social scientists, and several have direct links to their own governments. Hence their research into the

dynamics of income generating projects will both increase their own awareness of the possibilities of such projects and also make them valuable advisors and advocates for the best and most useful strategies for successful implementation of future projects. This is an important element in institutional development.

By looking at several levels of institutional relations the WID/PED program should provide us with a fuller understanding of both organizational problems and the range of solutions available at any given level. In the long run it is certain to increase our knowledge of the complexity of institutional development in Latin America.

II. What is the Effect of Income Generating Projects?

The second central question addressed in the documentation plan is the effect of the income generating projects. Effect is measured at several levels: the individual woman; her attitudes and choices; the family and the community; and the sponsoring organization and governmental groups. Research is again geared to resolve central debates about the impact of these projects on women's time, income, survival strategies, attitudes and goals.

Development planners have always been interested in the process of attitudinal change, particularly when dependency, passivity and resistance to change are the attitudes deemed to characterize a population. Since these terms are frequently used to describe women's responses, the impact of the income generating projects upon attitudinal factors will be of considerable interest. While no claim for causality is likely to be demonstrated, the possibility of exploring such relationships from a qualitative perspective should provide new insights into how employment opportunities and participation in an organization affect women's attitudes.

A. Changes in Self-Perception

One example of the kind of qualitative data coming from the projects is the self-reported effect of the inauguration of the poultry-raising project on the women involved. For the first time in her life, one of the women got up in

front of a huge crowd of people to talk about the women's project. After that, project staff noted a marked change in her willingness to speak out in the group. Other members composed a song about the history of a women's group and sang it during the ceremony (there had long existed a song commemorating the history of the men's cooperative). Later, the women spoke of pride in their efforts because the visitors had been impressed with the project. Many women said they felt "easier about speaking in a group." The importance of such findings should not be underestimated; one of the most frequently reported barriers to participation in community life is women's reports of their fear of men's ridicule of their efforts at self-expression.

Other testimonials from the two urban projects speak to the effectiveness of the training period in effecting positive changes in women's expectations of themselves and their role in society--

> "Participation in the project has helped me to deal better with family problems...The project has helped me express myself; little by little I have lost my fear of speaking aloud. Before I was useless, stupid, and ignorant, and now I know how to manage my affairs."
>
> "I think that I feel more sure of myself and less shy since participating in the project. I have learned many things that I had no idea of before; the lessons have helped me engage in dialogue and maintain better relationships at home. I think that my husband has changed as well."

B. Attitudes Towards Fertility

The WID/PED research design addresses some of the central questions posed by those wrestling with population policy. As the 1982 A.I.D. Policy Paper on Population Assistance notes, income and employment are among the four most important "indirect" determinants of fertility. The A.I.D. report also cites the complexity of interaction between direct and indirect determinants and the need for evidence from field programs which will offer specific programmatic suggestions; "The role of income *per se* in bringing birth rates down is less well understood."[15] Indeed, in many of the projects, attitudinal changes have been observed in some of the participants during the training and starting

period, before earning any cash income. The qualitative research offered by the WID/PED program on the relation between participation in an income generating project and attitudes toward fertility related issues should be of considerable interest and use to policymakers. Similarly the A.I.D. policy paper identifies women's social and economic conditions as among the most important factors affecting population policy implementation. It notes that low income levels "militate against acceptance or effective use of modern family planning methods."

Thus, the impact of participation in the income generating projects on women's attitudes toward fertility choices and behavior will be of particular importance in the WID/PED documentation. While the association between various indicators of development and fertility has been recognized, systematic data, of both a qualitative and quantitative nature, are still lacking. Data are needed to demonstrate how the various indicators of development are linked to fertility decisions in the actual lives of women and men. The WID/PED research design casts a broad net in the qualitative area to ensure that a range of attitudes toward fertility choices and behaviors are explored. As Tienda and Diaz note, decreasing levels of fertility will not be adequately understood until they are related to the factors which lead women to those choices.[16]

Reports from the projects indicate that some information on the factors influencing women's fertility choices will readily emerge, although the information about long-term changes in attitudes and fertility will not be available until an impact study is undertaken two to three years after the project's funding has ended. In one project women have begun to ask the project director and the documentor specific questions about family planning methods. In another project the woman who had to give up her post as president of the women's group due to pregnancy repeatedly told visitors that "after this, I will get an operation." In one of the urban projects, where most of the participants are adolescents, the sexual education and family planning components of the curriculum excited a lively interest, and in some cases this interest led to active practice of contraception.

The kind of information that is emerging from these projects is important because it is an unsolicited and spontaneous expression of fertility related

concerns, and also because, given what other studies might have led us to expect, this kind of change in behavior might have reasonably been expected only in the long term after the effects of participation in an income-generating project had been operating for two or three years.

While we know what macro associations can be demonstrated between levels of employment, education and a decline in fertility, the actual linkage in women's lives is less clearly understood. The WID/PED program may provide a more accurate report on fertility related choices than those elicited in response to hypothetical questions on structured questionnaires. The WID/PED program should provide us with the relevant framework for these women's fertility choices, thus giving us insight into the missing links in our understanding of the sources of change in women's attitudes toward family size.

C. Reliance on Support Networks: Family and Friends

In a related matter, researchers have recently recognized the importance of examining women's support networks. It is these networks which make income generating activity compatible with motherhood. The impact of such networks on making participation in income generating activities possible, needs to be better understood, as does the impact of such networks on fertility related choices. Relevant to this issue are the problems some of the projects have had in recruiting and maintaining the participation of mothers of young children in both urban and rural settings. Reports from one project are beginning to demonstrate some of the limits of such systems when demands on friends and relatives for child care assistance pass a critical threshold. Obviously we have a complex set of interrelated factors, all of which are likely to impinge on fertility related attitudes and choices.[17] Therefore, women's strategies and survival techniques will be examined in some detail in the WID/PED documentation, including the critical impact of participation in the income generating activity on the women's aspirations for their daughters.[18] Insight on the relation between these two issues is essential. Recent research has pointed out that in some instances older daughters are removed from school to provide child care so that the mother can engage in cash producing activities. The consequence of this pattern would, of course, be lower school achievement, lower levels of education for females and the continuation of a circular system

of limited opportunities and higher fertility for women. Whether or not this pattern is occurring, and how it might be avoided, are central concerns to be examined in the WID/PED program.

Summary

The WID/PED data will illuminate the impact of income generating projects on the economic and social well-being of women and their families, as well as examining the factors instrumental in the achievement of financial and managerial self-sufficiency. Research will examine the effectiveness of these projects for improving family welfare and achieving economic growth, and investigate the link between women's access to and control over resources and improvement in the welfare of their families. On the level of the individual, preliminary reports from the process documentors suggest that, in several projects, feelings of improved self-esteem among the participating women have already been evident since the early stages of projects, even before the women receive significant cash from the project.

Taken as a whole, the projects documented in the WID/PED program will provide, in a broadly comparative fashion, answers to the question of where women's productivity and labor force participation lead, and the meaning of such activity for women. Do they lead to new forms of accumulation? to wider involvement in the community? to a greater decision-making role in the family? to new forms of obligation? to new pressures on time? to active and direct participation in social change? to new aspirations for themselves and/or their daughters? to a decrease in stated ideal family size, or an increased desire to use contraception? to increased self-esteem?

These are, of course, the most challenging questions of development. This program is designed to capture the meaning of change for women themselves and the impact of that change. In addition, it will provide policymakers with answers to pressing and important specific questions, as well as help them assess some of the more far reaching consequences of their programs.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Ilsa Schuster, "Recent Research on Women in Development," The Journal of Development Studies. Vol. 18:4. 1982, p. 529.

[2]Barbara Rogers, The Domestication of Women: Discrimination in Developing Societies. New York: St. Martin's, 1979, p. 171. Ruth Dixon, "Assessing the Impact of Development Projects on Women." Office of Women in Development and Office of Evaluation Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination. U.S. Agency for International Development. Discussion paper No. 8. 1980, p. 65. Roxann Van Dusen, "Integrating Women into National Economics: Programming Considerations with Special Reference to the Near East." Office of Technical Support, U.S. Agency for International Development, 1977.

The literature on women in development is now rather extensive. A recent review of this material and a bibliography can be found in Jane Jaquette, "Women and Modernization Theory: A Decade of Feminist Critique." World Politics. January 1982, pp. 267-284. See also Schuster, op. cit.

[3]See for example, Mayra Buvinic and Nadia Youssef with Barbara Von Elm, Women Headed Households, The Ignored Factor in Development Planning. International Center for Research on Women. Washington, D.C., 1978; Susan C. Bourque and Kay B. Warren, Women of the Andes. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981, especially pp. 179-210. See as well Ingrid Palmer, The Nemow Case. Case studies of the Impact of Large Scale Development Projects on Women: A Sense for Planners, Working Paper No. 7.

[4]For an insightful discussion, see the report of the International Center for Research on Women, "The Productivity of Women in Developing Countries: Measurement Issues and Recommendations." April 1980.

[5]Isabel Nieves, "The Interface between Poor Women's Nurturing Roles and Productive Responsibilities." Paper prepared for the Second Annual Women, Work and Public Policy Workshop. Women and International Development Group. Harvard Institute for International Development, 1982, p.1.

[6]The literature on the importance of cash is rather extensive, including Ester Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development. London: Allen and Unwin, 1970. Bourque and Warren, op. cit.; Carmen Deere, "The Differentiation of the Peasantry and Family Structure: A Peruvian Case Study." Journal of Family History. 3:422-38. Ruth Dixon, Rural Women at Work: Strategies for Development in South Asia. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1978. June Nash, "Women in Development: Dependency and Exploitation." Development and Change. 8: 161-82. Anna Rubbo, "The Spread of Capitalism in Rural Colombia: Effects on Poor Women." In Toward an Anthropology of Women, ed. Rayna R. Restes, pp. 333-57. New York: Monthly Review Press. Rogers, op. cit.

[7]Schuster, op. cit., p. 529. Dixon, op. cit., makes a similar point, p. 65. There is also confirming evidence from Bourque and Warren, op cit., and in Marilyn Hoskins paper "Income Generating Activities with Women's Participation. Women in Development," Agency for International Development, December, 1980.

[8]A number of scholars have made this point beginning with Ester Boserup, op. cit. See as well Rogers, op cit.; Dixon op. cit. and Elsa Chaney and Marianne Schmink, "Women and Modernization: Access to Tools." In Sex and Class in Latin America, ed. June Nash and Helen Safa, pp. 160-82. New York: Praeger, and Hoskins, op. cit.

[9]Dixon, op. cit. See especially p. 32.

[10]On the impact of occupational segregation see the collection by Martha Blaxall and Barbara Reagan, ed., Women and the Workplace: The Implications of Occupational Segregation. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. The essay in this volume by Heidi Hartmann, "Capitalism, Patriarchy and Job Segregation by Sex," pp. 137-69, is especially useful. For the data on the impact of competition, see Schuster, op. cit. Dixon makes a similar point.

[11]Irene Tinker makes this case for the importance of gearing technology appropriately in the production, processing, preservation, and preparation of food in her paper "New Technologies for Food Chain Activities: The Imperative of Equity for Women." Office of Women in Development. U.S. Agency for International Development. Washington, D.C. 1979.

[12]For a useful discussion of the range of issues dealing with the importance of group participation for women see Kathleen A. Staudt, "Women's Organizations in Rural Development." Office of Women in Development. U.S. Agency for International Development. Washington, D.C. 1980. Also Hoskins, op. cit., especially pp. 13-15. For a related case study see Bourque and Warren, "Rural Women and Development Planning in Peru," in Women and World Change ed., Naomi Black and Ann Cottrell, Beverly Hills: Sage, 1981, pp. 183-197.

[13]See as well, Kathleen Staudt, "Bureaucratic Resistance to Women's Programs: The Case of Women in Development," in Women, Power and Policy, ed., Ellen Bonaparth, New York: Pergamon, 1982.

[14]See for example, the case study reported in Planned Parenthood and Women in Development: Lessons from the Field. Case Study 1: Costa Rica Women of Limon. London: International Planned Parenthood Federation, International Office.

[15]U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination, "A.I.D. Policy Paper Population Assistance," Washington, September, 1982, p. 4, 15.

[16]Marta Tienda and Violetta Gonzalez Diaz, "Ecological Effects, Education and Differential Fertility in Peru," April 1982.

[17]On this point see Ieda Siqueira Wiarda and Judith F. Helzner, "Women, Population and International Development in Latin America: Persistent Legacies and New Perceptions for the 1980's," Program in Latin American Studies, Occasional Papers Series No. 13. University of Massachusetts at Amherst, 1981. These authors provide a synthesizing discussion of current trends in the field of population.

[18]Dixon, op. cit., notes the importance of a project's impact on daughters. On the question of network and survival strategies see Isabel Nieves, op. cit.