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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women in Development Policy Discussion Paper

During the 1970's, partly because of U.S. leadership but also because of International Women's Year, there has been increasing emphasis on women's role in the development process. The Percy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act and the UN declaration of the Decade for Women (1976-85) with its World Plan of Action made women in development an international concept and activity.

A.I.D.'s policy is to support programs and design projects and activities which will help to integrate women as equal partners in the national economies and societies of developing countries. A.I.D.'s commitment to this policy means women's needs and concerns will be integrated into all projects as a major consideration.

Women in development policy, strategies and activity center on three basic themes: education and training, participation and organization, employment and production. Emphasis is placed on the poor rural woman and on the problems created by modernization which impact on women and girls.

To integrate women as equal partners in the development process requires a two-track system. Women-specific or women-only projects are one track while including a women's element or women's component in all projects is the second track. Both are needed. The first track is termed capacity building or "catch up"; the second track is a deliberate effort to make sure women's interests and concerns are included in all activities.

Building the capacity within A.I.D. and within LDCs to carry out the women in development concept must be a major priority. Technical assistance to missions through trained contractors and consultants should be one effort. A continuation of raising the awareness and the capability of all

A.I.D. personnel is essential and efforts should be intensified. Seminars and training sessions within A.I.D. and across sectoral and regional lines will be necessary and the provision of informational and guidance materials should be stepped up. Evaluation of past and present projects to see how and where a women's component could or should be integrated into particular projects is another priority. Reviewing PIDs, CDSSs and PPs with the aim of integrating women is a necessity.

We must move away from thinking of women as targets or beneficiaries to make a conscious effort to include women as participants both in the designing and implementing of projects and in the content of projects. A good reference document is the World Plan of Action for the Decade for Women with its sections on education, employment, health, the family, population, housing, research, the media and other social questions. (Copies of the condensed version of this Plan are available from the Women in Development Office.)

A major vehicle for development and for capacity building in LDCs are women's organizations. Women's groups exist in every community and within every level of society. They exist on the village level and internationally. Too little attention has been paid to these organizations as vehicles of development. Many women's groups are already doing small projects on a village level. An opportunity exists for donors to build on this already existing capacity. On the bilateral level, A.I.D. missions, possibly through PVOs or in collaboration with national ministries, could forge many small projects into larger ones in order to run a cost-effective program on the scale required by bilateral and multilateral donors.

The UN system also provides an opportunity for spreading the concept and implementation of women in development efforts. LDC governments find the UN a vehicle for presenting their views to the world. Paying attention to the women in development resolutions passed at various UN fora and assisting with information and advice is an important role for A.I.D. from the mission level to the international level.

Priorities and concentration of A.I.D. efforts on women in development should center on education and training, on women's role in food production, processing and storage and marketing, and on the rural woman and her daughters and their role in development within the context of the culture, the country and the family. Circumstances and conditions vary from country to country and within countries by region and economic class as well as by stage of development. The goal is development with equity. Ultimately we should be able to design totally integrated projects with women and their interests and concerns woven in automatically. Reaching this goal, like alleviating poverty, will require a long term effort.

A DRAFT POLICY PAPER ON

WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Women in development is a relatively new concept in development assistance although individual scholars and development practitioners have been looking at the roles, responsibilities and status of women in developing nations for years. And just as this is the Second Development Decade so is this also the Decade for Women. During the 1970's, partly because of the leadership of the United States and partly because of activities of individual women and women's organizations worldwide, there has been increasing emphasis on women's roles in the development process.

In 1973 the U. S. Congress added the following provision to the Foreign Assistance Act:

In recognition of the fact that women in developing countries play a significant role in economic production, family support, and the overall development process, (U. S. aid) shall be administered so as to give particular attention to those programs, projects and activities which tend to integrate women into the national economies of developing countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort.

This has been known as the Percy amendment because Senator Percy of Illinois authored the amendment.

In 1974 the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women adopted a proposal for a worldwide women's conference during International Women's Year (1975) and prepared a World Plan of Action. Development was a major theme of this plan and a major element at the IWY conference. Over 100 nations were represented at the conference and unanimously adopted the World Plan asking the UN General Assembly to declare 1976-85 as the Decade

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for Women. That fall the UN General Assembly proclaimed the Decade with its subthemes of Equality, Development, Peace and called upon member governments to give priority to the World Plan and to take special note of the 5 year minimum goals set forth in that Plan. These goals revolved around women's participation in decision-making, education, employment, health, research and international action.

Today women in development resolutions are submitted and passed at almost every international conference although substantive consideration of the subject and participation of women in these conference is often lacking. Still, the concept of women in development is a worldwide concept and not a U. S. imposition on the developing world.

Women in Development Policy

It is the policy of A.I.D. to support programs and design projects and help to activities which will/integrate women as equal partners in the national economies and societies of developing countries. A. I. D.'s commitment to the women in development policy is part of this worldwide effort growing out of International Women's Year and the U. N. Decade for Women. With Agency policy papers on a variety of subjects and with the World Plan of Action as guides, the Agency will develop projects that include women not simply as beneficiaries but as active participants in the development process. Women's needs and concerns will be integrated into all projects as a major consideration, along with men's, so that people will benefit from our assistance.

The women in development policy of the Agency is a flexible one of adapting to local conditions and situations as they currently exist, identifying

with host governments opportunities for constructive change, taking both a long and short term view. The policy involves defining what reality for women is, not dealing with the female half of society in an idealized or preconceived way. It involves listening to women as participants in the development process and including them in all aspects of the work of development. It involves considering them as equal partners with men in bringing constructive change into their communities and their countries. And it involves understanding what change means to a particular culture and its traditions, not assuming that one half of society can change and the other half keep the old culture intact. The women in development policy is not a static policy but part of a dynamic process of working with people as participants and partners in development.

Women in development policy, strategies and activity centers on three basic themes: education and training, participation and organization, employment and production. Emphasis is placed on the poor rural woman and on the problems created by modernization.

Strategies

To integrate women as equal partners in the development process at all levels requires a two-track system. First, women-specific or women-only projects aimed at capacity building or "catch up" with men are needed. In too many places for too long a time women have been considered the second sex and thus do not now, in many cases, have the same capabilities as do their male peers. Thus special attention is needed to close the gap between men and women where it exists so far as access to opportunities

or developing capabilities is concerned.

A second track is that of including a women's element or women's component in all projects. This requires a deliberate effort because women's needs and concerns are too often ignored if not specifically addressed. The world, for centuries, has been conditioned to think of woman as mother only or wife confined within the home. She has not been thought of as a major factor in the outside world. This now must change if development is to occur and if population problems are not going to overwhelm us. Thus a conscious concern and deliberate effort must be made in order to include women and women's needs and concerns in all activities.

A specific example of how this two-track system might operate is illustrated in the field of education and training. Women and girls, in most developing countries, have not received the education and training that men have. Often this was because it was believed women did not need education--they would only marry and have children and what training they needed could be given at home by their mothers.

Now special efforts must be made to improve the education and training of women while also making sure to include women and girls in all education and training programs for which they are qualified. There is both a "catch-up" need and a general need.

The World Plan of Action spells out this problem and lays out goals:

Access to education is not only a basic human right; it is a key to social progress. Illiteracy and lack of education and training in basic skills contribute to the vicious circle of underdevelopment....In a great many countries illiteracy is much more widespread among women than among men, and the rates higher in rural than in urban areas.

As long as women remain illiterate and are subject to discrimination in education and training, the motivation for change so badly needed to improve the quality of life will fail--for in most societies it is the mother who is responsible for the training of her children during their formative years.

Among the five year minimum goals addressed primarily to governments in the World Plan are:

A marked increase in literacy and civic education of women, especially in rural areas.

Coeducational technical and vocational training extended to women and men in the industrial and agricultural sectors.

Equal access to education at every level, compulsory primary education for all, and action taken to prevent school dropouts.

Increased provision for health education, sanitation, nutrition, family education, family planning and other welfare services.

Direction of formal, nonformal and lifelong education toward the reevaluation of men and women in order to ensure their full realization as an individual in the family and in society.

While all these goals may not fall within A.I.D.'s education policy, the list does provide ample guidelines for the direction education and training must take if it is to contribute to development. It will be noted also from the list above that there is both an emphasis on women only and on women's inclusion in education matters.

This two-track system of women-only and women-inclusive projects must always be amplified to make sure that the idea of women in development is put into practice as well. This might be called adding both the physical and intellectual component of women in development. That is, while the presence of women does not guarantee that women's interests and needs are

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taken into account and while men can frequently be excellent advocates for women's concerns the consistent absence of women in development planning and implementation usually results in the ignoring of women's interests. Thus, it is necessary to include women as participants as well as to make a conscious effort to include women's needs and interests in development activities.

Capacity Building

To meet the goal of equal partnership and the integration of women will be a long term effort, just as alleviating poverty is a long term effort. There is no simple formula and few model projects. Each country, region, culture and class differs in some respects. And there are few women in development specialists or technicians. Current or future A.I.D. personnel ceilings cannot include/women in development experts in every mission or office even if that were desirable which it is not. Attention to the needs and concerns of women must be a priority of all Agency personnel. Thus building the capacity to carry out the women in development concept is a major priority.

This capacity building within A.I.D. and among its contractors and consultants will be an on-going process and can take the form of seminars and conferences, development of materials and resources, including checklists and review guidance. It should include the evaluation of past and present projects to see how and where a women's component might be or might have been integrated into the particular project or program and where a women-only project is needed. Another part of this capacity building process should take place during reviews of PIDs, CDSSs and project papers. This should not be considered an adversary process but an educational and development process.

Some individuals and organizations including some Title XII universities are beginning to develop the ability to design, implement and evaluate women's projects and women's components of projects. There are individuals who are members of other organizations--consulting and contracting groups and PVOs as well as international and LDC organizations--who have already developed an expertise in this area, but the pool is still small. The Women in Development Office is beginning a project of recruiting and rostering available technical assistants for women in development activities and will continue and expand the development of materials and resources centers--clearinghouses of information and technical assistance. In cooperation with regional bureaus and other bureaus, a program will be begun to provide technical assistance to missions for the women in development effort.

There is still a great need to build in-house capacity to deal with the women in development concept though some good work has been done already. A continuation of raising the awareness and the capability of all A.I.D. personnel is essential and efforts should be intensified. Seminars and training sessions within and across sectoral and regional lines will be necessary and the provision of informational and guidance materials should be stepped up. Under this approach we must move away from thinking of women as targets or beneficiaries to make conscious efforts to include them as participants in development. Evaluating past projects and examining project papers should be a fruitful endeavor in this capacity building exercise. Also, adding a serious women in development component to all other training activities is essential, along with developing special women in development training seminars and conferences.

It will also be necessary to use technical assistants--contractors and consultants--who can work to plan, design, implement and evaluate projects or to gather data, analyze background materials, study women's culture and circumstances in a given region or context. These technical assistants should also be aware that as they provide technical assistance they should be training or raising the awareness of Agency personnel on the women in development issue. During all stages of the project and programming process a series of questions should be constantly asked:

- a. what do we know about women and their situation that is relative to this project?
- b. what are we doing about it?
- c. who do we know that can help us?
- d. what are they or others doing about similar situations?

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- f. what did we do that benefitted, disadvantaged or included women?
- g. did what we tried to do work? if not, why not?
- h. is what we did right replicable?

A good reference document for this kind of training and capacity building is the World Plan of Action for the Decade with its sections on education, employment, health, the family, population, housing, research, the media, other social questions and international action. (A copy of the condensed version of this document is attached. Additional copies can be obtained in English, French or Spanish from the Women in Development Office.)

In addition to capacity building within A.I.D. to carry out an expanded women in development effort, an effort is needed to help develop LDC capacity. Currently, women are an integral part of subsistence level economies, providing much of the food and labor in the poorest households. What is needed is not only to help raise the incomes and productivity of the poorest segments of developing societies but also to include women, along with men, in all strata of developing societies. Only with the integration of women in all strata will long term results be achieved.

Women's groups provide a vehicle for this kind of capacity building. Women's groups--informal and formal--exist in every community and within every level of society. Links need to be forged between women's groups within LDCs, internationally and bilaterally. Some of these links are already established but they are almost universally on a very small scale and frequently underfinanced. Little attention has been paid to these organizations as vehicles for development. Organizational and participatory skills are as necessary for women to learn as for men. Talents and skills are discovered, developed, exercised and tested through work in organizations. Working in groups brings women and girls a sense of control over their own destinies and provides support for a common purpose. Women's organizations can thus serve a dual purpose of teaching and ^{developing} individual skills while they enhance the possibilities for the group and provide a vehicle for development.

Many women's groups are already doing small projects on a village level or have programs underway aimed at reaching the village level. An opportunity exists for donors to build on this already existing capacity. On the bilateral level, A.I.D. missions, possibly through PVOs, could forge

many small projects into larger ones such as the two women in development projects in Upper Volta or the Africa Regional projects. Putting a series of small projects into one large umbrella project may offer one of the best solutions for getting to the village level and still running a cost-effective program on the scale required by bilateral and multilateral donors.

Another opportunity exists, during the Decade for Women, of supporting efforts on the international level of women assisting women across class, national and regional lines. Other donors beside the United States are becoming increasingly active in the women in development effort as a result of International Women's Year and the Decade's activities. Two or three donor meetings, partially sponsored by DAC, have been held. Building an international women in development effort through DAC and the donors with international women's organizations or an umbrella organization of women's organizations active in developmental projects in LDCs should be studied as a possibility. International auspices for such an effort would minimize the occasional charge that the women in development effort is an American imposition and using the World Plan for the Decade as the basis for activity should also help to dispel that idea.

The United Nations system offers another opportunity for spreading the concept and implementation of women in development efforts. Requests are coming in for assistance from various agencies within the UN system and increasingly resolutions of these bodies include women in development language. As women in development resolutions and implementing actions are taken by these bodies, requests for assistance, information and advice come to U.S. A.I.D.--both in Washington and in the field. A.I.D.

representatives at these agencies, field workers in missions and Washington must be responsive to these requests.

Priorities and Concentration of Efforts:

In order to maximize both short term and long term efforts, priorities should be established in accordance with A.I.D. priorities and the World Plan of Action.

The first priority, as indicated earlier, should be an emphasis on education and training in all its aspects--from assuring that little girls get equal access to schools wherever we can, to providing female as well as male agricultural extension agents, to non-formal education programs for village women, to the training of mid-level technicians and managers who are female, to making sure that we train some female PhDs in necessary, specialized, developmental fields just as we do males. Not to be overlooked are the foreign students from developing countries and their spouses who are already in the U.S. and whose training could include a women in development dimension. Action in this area will probably receive the most support from LDC governments if done in the context of the Decade for Women and the World Plan and not as an imposition of U.S. interest. Again, to quote the World Plan:

Governments should provide equal opportunities for both sexes at all levels of education and training within the context of lifelong education, and on a formal and nonformal basis, according to national needs. Target dates should be set for the eradication of illiteracy, and governments should be joined in this effort by social institutions, such as cooperatives and voluntary organizations.

Women, food and agriculture should be a second priority. In many parts of the world women are either farm workers, farm wives or agricultural producers or are responsible for the kinds if not the quantity of food set out for families. Thus one area of concentration must be women's roles in food production, processing, storage and preparation. Again, because this is often on a household level, project design may be difficult, time consuming and costly. However, community projects are feasible and governments interested in preventing hunger and malnutrition should be cooperative in schemes to alleviate those conditions on a household level. Gardening projects, small livestock and ruminants, community plots and cooperatives for marketing or processing food are all possibilities. These small scale projects may seem expensive in the short run but if benefits such as training and education are computed along with prevention of disease or migration, the costs should be outweighed by the benefits.

A closely related third priority is the rural woman, her daughters and their role in development within the context of the culture, the country, and the family. If we are to assist the poor majority in rural areas, we must deal with the fact that increasingly women, girls and the old are the people being left in rural areas while men migrate to the cities or to other countries in search of employment. In some areas, however, young women are also migrating. If development is to take place the consequences of this migration must be dealt with and prepared for. One deterrent to migration might be enlightened, intensive rural development. For this to succeed women's participation must become a major factor. Employment of women outside the home or self-employment income earning

opportunities for rural women must somehow be provided. Attention must also be paid to women's productive roles which are not ordinarily compensated--food production, storage and processing, child care, domestic and community activities including the health and education of the family. Legal restrictions on women's access to land and credit will need to be studied and dealt with. Cooperatives may provide marketing, employment and financial opportunities.

Finally, in order to deal with development and modernization it will be necessary to know the effects of modernization on the culture and the family. Are old traditions breaking down? What does this mean for the young and the old--women as well as men? Can the extended family continue to provide the benefits welfare systems provide in more modern societies? Are young women and girls being prepared for roles other than motherhood? Are some urban slums as well as rural areas increasingly composed of female headed households? What does this mean to a national economy? Is urbanization a necessary part of the development process? Can small industries employ the often secluded woman in the countryside? Again, circumstances and conditions will vary from country to country and within countries by region or economic class but women's increasing movement from household production to becoming a factor in the cash economy will intensify worldwide. Developers must take this major change into account.

Conclusion:

The women in development policy and strategies for A.I.D. should be aimed at including women as active, equal participants in the development process. Integration implies one group allows a second group to come in.

Partnership means a joining together for a common purpose and implies some measure of equality based on ability. The goal must be development with equity. To achieve this goal requires capacity building in USAID and in LDCs. This capacity building must not be confined to women only. It must make men aware of women's roles, needs, concerns and their fair share of the responsibilities. In the short run this will require a two track project system--women-only or women-specific and women-inclusive projects. Ultimately we should be able to design totally integrated projects but reaching that goal, like the goal of alleviating poverty, requires a long term effort. The Agency is not alone in this effort but we are one of the leaders. We must accept our share of the responsibility for helping to realize the goals of the World Plan of Action. It will take more than a decade but we have begun.

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