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SEADAG REPORTS

SEMINAR

on

*Women Wage Earners in Thailand*

*April 13-20, 1975  
Asia Hotel  
Pattaya, Thailand*

*This seminar was organized and held in cooperation with the U.N. Asian Institute for Economic Development and Planning, Bangkok, and the Thai Committee for International Women's Year.*

*SEADAG Reports are intended to inform the reader of the general content and the major conclusions of SEADAG meetings. They do not attempt to recapitulate all of the discussions or to specify all of the contributions of individual participants.*

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AGENDA

Friday, April 18, 1975

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Opening Remarks

Khunying Ambhorn Meesook  
Jane R. Hanks  
Vinyu Vichit-Vadakan

Chairman: Khunying Ambhorn Meesook

*The Traditional Role of Women in  
Thai Society*

by M. L. Boonlua Debyasuvarn

Discussants: Kanok Samsen Vil  
Yut Sakdejayant

2:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Chairman: Jane R. Hanks

*Women Workers in Thailand*  
by Chitchan Hansasuta

Discussants: Anuri Wanglee  
Snan Vongsuthee

*Job Opportunities and Social Mobility  
of Young Labor Force in Chonburi Town:  
A Case Study*

by Amara Pongsapich

Discussants: Kanitta M. Meesook  
Phisit Pakkasem

Saturday, April 19, 1975

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Chairman: Khunying Ambhorn Meesook

Discussion Continued

*Problems in Health and Nutrition Among  
Female Poor Leading to Malnourished  
Children*

by Euwadee Kanjanasthiti

Discussants: Paula S. Harrell  
Chuan Leekpai

Saturday, April 19, 1975

2:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Chairman: Jane R. Hanks

*Education and the Poor*  
by Khunying Ambhorn Meesook

Discussants: Saisuree Chutikul  
Kowit Vorapipatana

*Assessment of Daycare Centers for  
the Working Women*  
by Boonchuan Hongskrai

Discussants: Chira Sakornpan  
Roger Ernst

Sunday, April 20, 1975

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Chairman: Khunying Ambhorn Meesook

General Discussion

Summary

Juree Vichit-Vadakan

Concluding Remarks

Khunying Ambhorn Meesook  
Jane R. Hanks

## REPORT OF MEETING

The process of socioeconomic and political development and change has brought into focus the role of women in society. This is particularly true with respect to Thai society, since Thai women have traditionally assumed a notable role in the nation's social and economic life. Thai women have had a long history of active participation in business and the rural agricultural sector. In recent years, as a result of the ongoing process of industrialization and urbanization, they have come to play an increasingly significant role in the industrial sector. Women now comprise an important part of the labor force in various industries. However, rapid industrialization and urbanization have been accompanied by certain social and economic problems affecting women wage earners. The seminar reported on here, while recognizing the importance of problems and issues related to the rural poor, focused particularly though not exclusively, on the plight and problems of women workers.

The economic, social, and psychological dimensions of industrialization and urbanization reflect an intricate web of factors affecting the status of women in the labor force. Any attempt to understand the nature and complexity of the position of women wage earners must be based on a consideration of a large number of interrelated social and cultural factors which condition and circumscribe the socioeconomic environment in which women workers survive and struggle for improvement. Hence, the seminar covered a wide range of issues: traditional Thai social values, occupational opportunities for women, educational needs, problems of health and nutrition among the female poor, and the provision of such services as day care centers to free women for economic activities.

Because the past and the present are inextricably intertwined, it is important to understand the sociocultural foundation upon which the role of women in Thai society has developed. Hence, the seminar began with a discussion of the social and cultural values underlying the traditional role of Thai women.

### *SOCIAL CONCEPTS RELATED TO WOMEN'S ROLE*

M. L. Boonlua Debyasuvarn's paper on *The Traditional Role of Women in Thai Society* adopted a controversial position arguing that men and women are naturally unequal in their abilities, talents, and interests. Thai society assigns to women the roles which nature assigns them -- i.e., those associated with child-rearing -- and assigns to men the protector roles which are natural to them. Thus, there are few non-natural impositions upon the determination of social roles for Thai women.

Although Thai law places women in a legally inferior position to men, Thai social customs are far more important in determining the status of women. With the possible exception of those in high strata of Thai society, women have had a social position equal to that of men in several areas of life. They have always participated in the family's livelihood, have helped manage property, and have had similar educational opportunities as men. Particularly in the villages and small towns, Thai women have always led a free life with few artificial restraints. Although women may not enter the monkhood, they play a prominent role in *wat* activities, and Thai Buddhists recognize that women are more important than men in the upbringing of children. While not explicitly stated, Boonlua's paper implied a complacent view of the status of women in Thai society. This controversial position sparked a lively discussion focusing on four major issues: the legal and social status of women, power and decision making in the family, social role differentiation according to sex, and the impact of economic development on women's roles in society.

#### The Legal and Social Status of Thai Women

While agreeing that women's legal rights are less important than underlying social values in the determination of the status of women in society, seminar participants nevertheless discussed the legal status of Thai women. Thai law grants unmarried women the same legal status as men, but retracts several of these rights when a woman is married. One participant pointed out, however, that some legal provisions exist which could be used to protect married women, although women generally are not aware of their existence. For instance, if a woman registers her own property before marriage, she retains total control over it after marriage, and may manage the property without having to secure her husband's consent. In addition, it is possible to draw up premarital agreements stipulating the manner in which post-marriage administration of property is to be carried out. Since the modern Thai legal system is based on the Napoleonic Code, a foreign system which does not incorporate various important aspects of Thai social and cultural life, legal discrimination against married women thus reflects the fact that Thai law is not generic to the society in which it functions. Many participants felt that Thai law should be changed to reflect prevailing social beliefs. If Thai women are socially recognized as equal to men, then the legal system should support this social recognition. However, one panelist commented that it is highly debatable that Thai women are recognized as social equals to men. While most participants felt that Thai women have a social position inferior to that of men, a few cautioned against the deceptive image of women's social status since, in Thai society, appearance and reality may be quite different. That is, although women may verbally accept and act out the demands of their socially inferior role, in actuality they have always been, as it were, "the power behind the throne."

Power: Decision Making with the Family

Boonlun noted that the family was an arena in which women reigned supreme and made most of the important decisions. However, one participant felt that although this was probably true among the upper classes, it was not true of families of the rural poor. Rural women often do not make decisions pertaining to family planning. Even though rural women take an active part in the economic life of the family, the husbands make the important decisions. Another panelist agreed with this view, but cautioned that it is extremely difficult to determine who actually makes decisions in the family. Hypothetically, one could imagine situations in which the person appearing to make decisions is not in actuality the decision maker. For instance, a wife who orders her servants to prepare her husband's favorite dish may appear to be making the decision, but, in fact, she may simply be following her husband's wishes. However, most participants felt that neither sex held a clear monopoly on decision making within the family. Thus, there exist no socio-structural impediments against women (or, indeed, men) making important family decisions.

Social Role Differentiation According to Sex

Several participants emphasized that although men and women are biologically different, their physical capabilities are equal or at least similar. Women have been employed in construction work requiring strenuous physical labor. Thus, biological differences between the sexes should not be used as criteria for de facto differentiation of occupational roles.

Although women's role in modern Thai society may not be drastically different from traditional society, significant changes have occurred in certain areas. Women wage earners now assume a much larger role in the economy. They are more politically aware and active, and are more conscious of the need for relevant and practical education.

One participant noted the scantiness of data on Thai women and called for in-depth study of women's occupations, role expectations, and wants. He suggested that our understanding of social role differentiation in Thai society is based on highly subjective interpretation and selection of data; significant differences probably exist in women's roles in different socioeconomic settings -- urban versus rural, higher versus lower socioeconomic status. Another participant questioned the desirability of women abandoning their roles to assume those of men. She pointed out that the values of the society are inculcated in the family; women should not assume masculine roles to the exclusion of feminine, nurturant roles which are so crucial to family life and to the whole society. Other panelists stressed that a distinction should be made between the kind of role differentiation which perpetuates social

inequality between men and women and that which does not. For example, the role of the mother is different from that of the father, but Thai social values recognize about equally the contribution of both parents to the socialization of the children. However, another kind of role differentiation requires women to adopt a social position inferior to men; it is the latter type which should be changed.

Role differentiation according to sex is inculcated from a very early age. A boy is reared differently from a girl because of higher expectations attached to sons than to daughters. A male participant observed that the socially inferior status of women might be due in part to misconceptions which women themselves harbor and propagate. Women adopt myths and social values which confirm the notion of male superiority. Thus, they as well as men must begin to find ways to change their attitudes and beliefs.

### The Impact of Economic Development on Women's Roles in Society

Economic development has caused, and is causing, fundamental changes in the traditional roles of Thai women. Industrialization, urbanization, the commercialization of agriculture, and the consequent movement of the female labor force from agricultural to nonagricultural activities -- these are the major forces which could induce significant changes in the social position and role of Thai women. Even the nature of economic development policies and strategies might determine the type of change in the role of women in society. For instance, a development policy favoring labor intensive industrialization would affect women workers differently than one favoring capital intensive industrialization.

Given the controversial nature of the issues raised in the discussion, a simple summary of the positions taken by participants concerning the relation of social concepts and women's roles is not possible. It is significant, however, that the seminar recognized the relevance of social variables in the determination of women's status, and the inevitability of change induced by developments in the economic and political environment.

### *Job Opportunities for Women Workers*

Noting that Thailand has a high percentage of women in its labor force, Chitchand Hansasuta pointed to basic changes in the scope of employment for women. Rapid industrialization has led to a decline in the number of women working in agriculture and a sharp increase of those in industry and other nonagricultural sectors. Chitchand noted that more married women are entering the labor force than before. She cited legislation concerning the employment and protection of women workers and called attention to the need for better education of women wage earners.

Against this general background, Amara Pongsapich presented a case study of the impact of industrialization and urbanization on job opportunities and social mobility of the young female labor force. She argued that sex differences had little impact on job opportunities at the lower levels of the occupational structure. Furthermore, upward occupational mobility within these levels was greater for females than males. Amara concluded that, according to her data, women wage earners have not been deprived of opportunities for employment, self-improvement, and social mobility.

The discussion which followed centered on a variety of issues reflecting both macro- and micro-perspectives on the problems of women wage earners. The first issue raised was the impact of economic development upon job opportunities for women. Some concern was expressed over whether the economy could expand at a fast enough rate to absorb approximately a million new entrants into the labor force every year. Because recruitment preferences are likely to be biased in favor of those who have received a certain amount of job training and education, there might develop a built-in system of covert discrimination against women. It was suggested that the NESDB\* include in its next development plan distinct policies regarding the provision of job opportunities and training for women.

One participant cautioned against overestimating the efficacy of economic development planning in solving the varied problems of women workers. He hinted that the present political atmosphere might not be favorable to development planning since democratic governments are normally less responsive to planning than dictatorial ones. However, he noted that current policies on industrialization and urbanization have had a negative effect upon job opportunities. Industrial policy has not complemented agricultural development, and urbanization, has not been equitably distributed, resulting in distortions in job mobility and opportunity, regional disparities, and migration. He cited as an example cases of "hot house" urbanization generated by demands stemming from the maintenance of American airbases. To correct these undesirable consequences of current policies, the same participant emphasized the importance of decentralizing both industrial and urban growth, particularly around Bangkok, through the creation of secondary cities. Urban growth must complement rural growth and development, and the private sector can and should share in the responsibility for reorienting industrial and urban development. The participant also expressed concern over the government's emphasis on the tourist industry and the consequent encouragement of the development of the service industry -- i.e., bars, massage parlors, and prostitution. He cautioned against moving into an "optimal" tourist industry at the expense, often quite considerable, of negative developments in other spheres. Another participant added that industrial promotion policy should be reoriented accordingly to promote labor intensive rather than capital intensive industry in order to provide more jobs. In other words, the employment aspects of industrial

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\* National Economic and Social Development Board

promotion should be given priority consideration.

References to what was euphemistically termed the service sector stimulated interesting discussion of the problems of females employed in this industry. The process of industrialization and urbanization, and the aggravating situation of a deteriorating land-labor ratio, have had a "push effect" upon the recruitment of women into such occupations. The seminar focused on both the economic and social contexts of problems related to female employment in the service sector.

It was agreed that prostitution and other related service occupations should not be viewed in isolation but in the larger context of economic and social change. The question was then raised as to what could be done to avert a deteriorating situation in this regard. It was suggested that emphasis should be put on reorienting policy priorities. As long as the government focuses on the promotion of the tourist industry without due consideration to possible negative consequences in other sectors, the service industry will continue to prosper. Thus, alternative job opportunities must be made available to women. Education and training programs should be given to potential recruits as well as to those already engaged in the industry who wish to leave. It was observed that once a woman has entered prostitution, it is difficult later to dissuade her from the occupation. It is therefore more rational to approach the problem at its inception, to attempt to redirect those who potentially may enter prostitution into other types of occupation.

Prostitution was regarded as a complex problem which could not be explained purely in economic terms. Its causes are also social, cultural, and psychological; hence, a single factor analysis of the problem is inadequate. One panelist hinted at the futility of fighting against prostitution, given the cultural and social values of Thai society in general, and of Thai men in particular. It was pointed out that prostitution offered poor women a chance for social mobility and economic advancement; many have made use of the occupation as a stepping stone toward a more respectable life.

Distinction should be made between voluntary and involuntary prostitution. The nature of problems involved in these two forms are significantly different. Voluntary prostitution should perhaps not be considered a social ill to be cured. One participant recommended the legalization of prostitution, but the issue was not taken up for consideration by the seminar. It was generally agreed that the government should attempt to eliminate involuntary prostitution for moral and humanitarian reasons, and that preventive measures should be adopted to avert the forced recruitment of women into prostitution.

On the issue of labor laws and the protection of women workers, it was observed that the primary problem involved the enforcement of the

laws. Many factories and shops do not abide by the various regulations aimed at guaranteeing suitable working conditions for women wage earners. The problem is complicated in two respects. First, there are not enough labor inspectors to assure enforcement, and those who are currently employed as inspectors are often young university graduates with no experience working in factories. Second, and perhaps more important, the workers themselves do not speak up for their causes, generally do not have a concise idea of their interests and wants, and are not aware of the means by which their grievances could be redressed.

The question was raised as to why there should be labor laws designed specifically for the protection of women workers, one participant suggesting that, despite their intended purpose, such laws could actually be used to discriminate against women. For example, given a job market which is biased in favor of men, a law requiring equal pay regardless of sex for work of the same nature, quality, and quantity would place women at a disadvantage since it would deprive them of the opportunity to work for less in order to be able to compete with men for employment. Furthermore, restrictions against employing women in certain types of work and at certain hours, while intended to benefit women workers, might actually be important sources of discrimination against them. Participants agreed in principle that the legal approach to problems of female laborers -- i.e., providing further protection in the form of more specific legislation -- might not be a viable one. Indeed, it might be premature since reforms in other areas related to workers -- particularly land reform -- should take precedence, both in policy priority and timing, over reform in labor legislation. One participant suggested that in order to cope effectively with the problems of workers more than labor legislation should be emphasized; an attempt should be made to involve workers in the decision making processes which affect the economy. Another method of involving workers in the protection of their own welfare is to train them to inspect their own factories.

#### *PROBLEMS OF HEALTH AND NUTRITION AMONG THE POOR*

Euwadee Kanjanasthiti discussed the problems of health and nutrition among the female poor. While recognizing that these problems pertain to the entire society, they are of particular concern to women since women are, for the most part, responsible for the eating patterns of the family. In addition, the health and nutritional status of the pregnant woman directly affect the health and potential growth of the unborn child.

The problems of malnourishment among the poor stem mainly from poverty and ignorance. Low income families cannot afford to purchase highly priced quality food. Their food choices being limited, these families confront the compounded problem of undernourishment and mal-

malnourishment. The health care of the mother during pregnancy, the mother's eating habits, and infant feeding patterns are further complicated by lack of knowledge about nutrition and by incorrect beliefs about the value of food. What then is the most effective method to alleviate and combat problems of health and nutrition among the poor? Euwadee's solutions centered primarily around practical consumer and nutrition education.

One participant observed that Thailand as a whole could still provide adequate food for its population, but that regional disparities distort the distribution and availability of food. He noted that problems of health and nutrition among poor families may sometimes be due not to financial reasons but to misplaced patterns of spending. It is not infrequent that women and children go without proper food while the father spends the family's income on daily consumption of liquor. Nutrition education should be directed at those who can afford to purchase food, since it would be futile to discuss the problem with those who can hardly afford to feed themselves. It was noted that the existing curriculum in nutrition education was quite inadequate and oftentimes totally irrelevant to local conditions and problems. Furthermore, though education and the dissemination of knowledge about nutrition and health are operative in the fight against malnourishment, they are not sufficient. Social values and beliefs must also be changed in order to cope with problems arising in these areas. Social values among the rural poor might at times be very inconsistent with what would be regarded as rational economic behavior. For example, a poor family might reduce itself to even greater poverty by selling off its landholdings in order to procure enough money to pay for a lavish marriage party. It was suggested that the regular monthly meetings of villagers at the subdistrict (*tambon*) level be used to educate people on nutrition and health as well as to attempt to change misconceived values and beliefs which hinder the fight against malnutrition.

On the problem of food availability, one participant cited FAO statistics which showed Thailand to be one of the few countries exporting food. It was predicted that in ten years Thailand would become only a food sufficient country and, by the turn of the century, would become a food deficit country. Current problems of malnutrition, it was observed, are due in part to a distorted and poor food distribution system. It was suggested that to cope with problems of health and nutrition, the possibility of implementing inexpensive and relatively simple projects should be explored. Local people should be used to educate their neighbors about health and nutrition. An attempt should be made to step up and build upon already existing local projects in order to combine nutrition and food education with such projects.

*DAY CARE CENTERS*

The issue of day care centers is highly relevant to the problems of women workers. A woman worker assumes two demanding roles -- that of a mother and wife responsible for the management of family affairs, and that of a provider of income for the family. In order to facilitate her role in the latter category, it is imperative that she be relieved of the problems and demands of child rearing. Day care centers free the mother to undertake economic activities.

In her assessment of day care centers, Boonchuan Hongskrai stressed their importance in the proper socialization of children of working mothers. The centers must be structured and organized to cater to the needs and problems of working mothers; these differ from one occupational group to another as well as from one locality to another. It was suggested that day care centers be established and promoted under joint effort of public and private sectors, and that the funding be pooled from various sources. One participant noted that under Proclamation No. 294 of the Revolutionary Party, the Minister of Interior, the Director General of the Public Welfare Department, and the Provincial Governor were assigned the responsibility of promoting child care centers. He lamented that nothing had been done to implement this law. Other participants agreed that government support of day care centers has been lacking. Even the Department of Public Welfare has not been successful with its two pilot projects on day care centers because it had failed to secure enough volunteer teachers to join in the effort. There was also the problem of too many agencies involved in promoting the centers, with little coordination among them. It was suggested that an agency be assigned the task of acting as coordinating body.

The failure of day care centers could also be due to the absence of definite government policies regarding this issue, so that attempts to coordinate day care programs were often frustrated. One participant proposed that day care centers be sponsored in the same manner as government schools. This proposal met with objections from other participants who cautioned that it would involve day care centers in a complicated web of bureaucratic and legal confusion and result in retarding or reversing rather than promoting day care centers. Another participant recommended that there should be legislation requiring the compulsory establishment of day care centers under certain conditions -- e.g., when a factory employs a certain number of women with children. This proposal too met with objection from a participant who was concerned that such legislation would discriminate against women workers who have children; factories would avoid hiring them and would attempt to fire those employed who are about to become mothers. He noted that Singapore has such legislation but is now seriously considering reversing it for this very reason.

### EDUCATION FOR THE POOR WAGE EARNERS

Khunying Ambhorn Meesook, in her paper *Education and the Poor*, presented a framework for the discussion of problems related to the provision of relevant and useful education for poor wage earners. She noted that there were two basic ways in which education could help the poor improve their quality of life. The first involved provision of indirect services in the form of assistance and advice by trained doctors, health workers, housing advisors, and social workers. The second consisted of direct education programs designed to provide the wage earner with relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes, and ideas which are necessary in solving daily problems. Such programs should: (1) help participants to identify and become aware of the causes of their problems, and help them find solutions which immediately improve the quality of their lives; (2) help to develop *kid pen*\* (problem identification and solving) abilities so that participants are better equipped to solve problems when they arise; (3) encourage participants to consider education as a life-long process, not merely as a short term affair; (4) offer some immediate returns to participants either economically through skill upgrading, or socially through providing certificates; (5) not offer prescriptive solutions, but instead should consider teachers and participants as equals, and should involve the latter in a dialogic inquiry so that they themselves find solutions to their problems and thus have their self-confidence enhanced; (6) be flexible in content and methods, and in time and place.

Ambhorn raised several issues and problems for consideration by seminar participants. These were posed in the form of questions and were designed to serve not only as a framework for discussion, but as a basis for educational reform to benefit poor wage earners: (1) Why is so little attention paid at present to the education of poor wage earners, particularly women? (2) Given the wide diversity of backgrounds and activities of women wage earners, how can certain common learning needs be identified? How can programs best be designed to serve people from such widely differing environments? (3) What are the most important types of knowledge women wage earners in differing situations should learn? (4) Given employment and family commitments, at what time of day should education programs best be scheduled for women wage earners? (5) How can women wage earners be motivated to participate actively in education programs in light of their other commitments? (6) Given the migratory characteristics of many wage earners and their unsatisfactory living conditions, how and where can education programs best be organized? (7) What teaching methods should be used in the programs in order not to alienate potential participants, and to inculcate *kid pen* abilities? (8) What role can the mass media play

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\* Lit., "think and do."

in the education of poor wage earners? (9) How can the education of the children of migratory wage earners be improved?

The discussion which followed centered around two major questions: what is meaningful and relevant education for poor wage earners, and how can such education be provided? It was generally accepted that a changed concept of and attitude toward education is needed on the part of both the educator and the educated. The following observations, made by various participants, converge in an attempt to redefine education in a perspective more relevant to the problems of poor wage earners: (1) Education should not be solely concerned with book learning and rote memorization -- however necessary these are, they are not sufficient by themselves. (2) Education should be a life-long experience, enabling one to evaluate situations, to think critically, and to solve problems. (3) Education should be designed to suit diversified needs and be relevant to divergent sociocultural environments -- hence, the need to decentralize the educational system to have it be more congruent with local needs and variations. (4) Education should not be an end in itself but a means to economic and social development. (5) Because intellectual capabilities and development are formed early in life, the quality of primary education should receive priority consideration. (6) Education should lead to the formation of right attitudes, such as those which would break down mistrust and divisiveness in society. (7) Education should generate a concerted effort to solve social problems.

On the issue of implementation, it was noted that the existing pattern of education favored urban schools for the higher socioeconomic strata of Thai society. The poorest people, including the poor wage earners, have been neglected in the past and therefore should be given the highest priority in the present effort to alter the educational system. It is also imperative that educational policies and plans take into consideration the beneficiaries' views of their problems, needs, and aspirations. Workers should be consulted in the formulation of education programs, so as to make the latter relevant to their lives. Also imperative is the adoption of the guiding principle of "self-help" as the key concept in the orientation of such programs. It was further suggested that implementation of education programs should attempt to involve employers in order to assure their support for such programs.

Regarding the question of the appropriate time of day to hold education programs for women wage earners, participants made various suggestions applicable to specific types of workers. The underlying rationale, however, was that the time should vary with the work schedule, and that programs should be flexible enough to accommodate the periods of free time of workers in different occupations.

On the issue of how women workers could be motivated to participate actively in education programs given their other commitments, four suggestions were made: (1) The motivation could come from among the female

workers themselves. Initially, a small group of workers could be selected for education and training, in the form perhaps of seminars, and sent back to try to motivate others to join in the programs. (2) Trade unions could be invited to participate in the programs. (3) Special steps could be taken to facilitate worker participation -- e.g., by making the training location easily accessible and providing all of the necessary program equipment. (4) Education programs could be made as informal as possible. For example, reading rooms and materials could be provided in the factories.

### *SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS*

Because the seminar covered a variety of complex and interrelated issues, it is impossible to make a simple summary of the discussions. Divergent views and varied suggestions were expressed. These differences of opinions reflect the intricate nature of the problems discussed and an awareness of the various dimensions of a multifaceted issue. The following is a summary of recommendations made by the seminar. It should provide a means to integrate conceptually the issues, problems, and solutions dealt with by the seminar. It should not however be read as an independent statement, but rather in relation to the discussions presented above.

#### Social Concepts Relating to the Role of Women

1. There should be legislative action to reflect changes in the social recognition of women's status in society.
2. Education and the provision of information about health care, nutrition, financial management, family planning, legal rights, etc., should be considered of primary importance for lower income people, especially those in the rural areas.
3. Women should correct the myth of male superiority.
4. Men must change their attitudes toward the social roles of women.
5. Government officials, political leaders, and members of parliament should be made aware of the needs of low wage earning women.

### Job Opportunities for Women Wage Earners

6. The needs of women wage earners should be incorporated into and emphasized in the next economic development plan.

7. There must be better coordination among government agencies, and between government and the private sector, to improve conditions for low wage earners.

8. Ways should be found to employ women in new jobs which are being created by the rapidly expanding economy, jobs which are so new that they are not yet sex-linked.

9. Training should be provided for the female labor force which is shifting from the agricultural to the nonagricultural sector.

10. Vocational training should be made available for female factory workers facing mandatory retirement at age forty-five so that they may expand their future job options.

11. The Board of Investment should promote industries which are labor intensive.

12. Workers should be consulted in decision making processes pertaining to the economy.

13. Policies (tax, fiscal, interest rates, transportation, investment opportunities, etc.) should be realigned to make jobs available locally for rural women.

14. Ways in which voluntary agencies may enhance opportunities for women wage earners should be explored.

### Health and Nutrition Among the Female Poor

15. Special programs should be set up to provide health, nutrition, and consumer education. These should be integrated with existing programs of governmental and nongovernmental organizations, such as adult education programs, non-formal education programs, parent teacher associations, school meal programs, and day care centers.

16. The role of mass media in providing nutrition, health, and food education should be increased.

17. *Kaman* (sub-district) meetings should be used to disseminate nutrition and health education for villagers.

18. Ways of involving local people in teaching their neighbors about proper nutrition and health should be explored and evaluated.

19. The possibilities of implementing inexpensive, relatively simple projects which could help alleviate malnutrition and lead to better community health should be pursued.

20. Ways of correcting the distorted or poor distribution of food must be found in order to help alleviate malnutrition.

21. Positive actions should be taken to bring about population control.

#### The Importance of Establishing Day Care Centers

22. Budgetary allocation for the establishment of day care centers should be given high priority by both public and private sectors.

23. Both the public and the private sectors should coordinate their respective efforts to create more day care centers.

24. An agency or coordinating body should be assigned the responsibility of promoting and supporting day care centers, as well as integrating the efforts of governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

#### Problems of Education for Women Wage Earners

25. The use of mass media in training workers should be improved and increased.

26. The Ministry of Education should give more adult education to rural and urban illiterate housewives so that they can understand their country's social, economic, and political problems.

27. Education should be designed to suit diversified needs and be relevant to divergent sociocultural and physical environments. Hence, the educational system should be decentralized.

28. The quality of primary education should receive priority attention since intellectual capabilities and mental development are either stimulated or retarded at this early age.

29. Educational policies and plans must include the beneficiaries' views on their problems, needs, and aspirations. Hence, educational programs should be designed around the problems of the wage earner, her family, and her community.

30. "Self-help" should be a key concept in educational programs for the poor.

31. Management should be motivated to grant support to educational programs for women wage earners.
32. Trade unions can play an active role in motivating wage earners to participate in educational programs.
33. The nutrition and health curricula used in schools should be revised.

Subjects Recommended for Further Study

1. The impact of urbanization, commercialization of agriculture, and development policies upon the role of women in society.
2. The current status of women's occupations, role expectations, and aspirations in both rural and urban areas.

*OBSERVATIONS*

The following observations and suggestions were made by one or more participants but did not receive the endorsement of the seminar as a whole.

1. The feasibility of establishing an agency responsible for women's affairs should be seriously considered. The scope of the work of this agency would be to advise the government on women's affairs, to coordinate and follow up activities related to women which are undertaken by governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and to collect and disseminate information on women as well as on women-related activities and programs carried out by various agencies and organizations.
2. A survey should be conducted on women in rural areas.
3. NESDB should include in its next development plan distinct policies regarding the provision of the job opportunities and training for women.
4. Prostitution should be legalized. Health care and birth control should be provided for prostitutes.
5. The Labor Department should be elevated to ministerial level, and the number of competent labor inspectors increased.
6. Ways should be found to utilize existing projects and institutions at the local level for nutrition and health education.

7. Government funding should be provided for day care centers.
8. The establishment of day care centers, in factories and in rural areas should be legally enforced.
9. A study should be conducted on the educational, nutritional, and health needs of migratory wage earners and their children.
10. The Department of Labor should be allocated a larger budget to expand its adult education program for factory workers.
11. More seminars should be set up for women workers on such topics as the role of women workers as leaders, the role of women in the family, women's legal rights, health and nutrition, and the like.
12. Minimum welfare standards should be legally established for dormitories housing women workers.
13. A sociological study should be made of the patterns of affiliation of women wage earners, i.e., the nature and function of bonds between people. This study would focus on four areas: the factory (relations between co-workers and between employers and employees); the neighborhood (especially migrants in the slum area); the school; and rural and urban links. In each of these areas, the study would attempt to determine whose interests are served, who are friends, protectors, and helpers, and what are the satisfactions and dissatisfactions of affiliation.