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THE ROLE OF WOMEN  
IN  
THE THAI ECONOMY

by

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## PROJECT DATA SHEET

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### Scope of Project

To provide an analytical study of the role of women in the Thai economy and identify the constraints which prevent their increased participation.

### Project Purposes

a) identify and examine the current role of women principally in the agricultural, industrial, and service sectors. The report also, secondarily and to the extent possible depending on the availability of relevant studies, identify and examine women's roles in the commercial and financial sectors of the economy. It also provides an overview of the role of women in both public and private sector organizations, political organizations, trade and worker organizations etc;

b) identify and analyze the constraints limiting participation of women within the areas and sectors stated in a) above;

and

c) develop and present recommendations for USAID strategies, projects and programs to enhance the involvement of women in the Thai economy and to increase the share of benefits of the Thai socio-economic development process accruing to women.

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## INTRODUCTION

This report analyses the role of women in various sectors of the Thai economy. It is presented against the background of social, historical, cultural and political settings that either facilitate or constrain the participation of women in economic activities and their enjoyment of the benefits from Thailand's achievements.

Although many constraining factors are deeply rooted in the fabric of the Thai society and would require long-term and intensive efforts for their removals, some of them are amenable to immediate program manipulations. The report therefore attempts to provide suggestions on the potential for USAID goals, programs and projects to affect women in Thailand. By documenting the role of women, the report will serve to support modifications of current, or development of new, programs and approaches undertaken by USAID.

## PART I : BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

#### Changes in the Structure of Employment

The role of women in the economy of Thailand has always been highly visible and significant, dating back several hundred years. In 1960, the year when Thailand officially embarked on the road to planned economic development, women already comprised 48.4 percent of the total labor force. That figure was not only much higher than in most countries in the Asia-Pacific region but also higher than in many developed western countries. Employment of women continues to accompany economic expansion as both demand for and supply of labor have increased, and since the latter half of the 1970's, female labor force growth rate has exceeded that of male.<sup>1</sup>

Labor force participation rate of Thai women consistently ranked among the highest in the world. Since 1971, it has remained relatively stable at around 67 percent, eleven percentage points below participation rate of Thai men. The two younger age groups(11-14 and 15-19) and the oldest age group show a downward trend, while there are slight fluctuations in the other groups. A comparison between rural and urban areas during the years 1971-1986 shows a notable increase in female labor force participation rate

in urban areas from 39 to 52 percent, whereas in rural areas<sup>2</sup> they remain at the same level of around 71 percent.

The female labor force participation rate in developing countries is usually higher in rural than in urban areas due to the nature of subsistence farming. Every member of the family can take part and women's work role can be easily arranged to make it compatible with their family role. This is true for Thailand, where the participation rate of rural women was higher than that of urban women by as much as 32 percentage points in 1971. The changing nature of rural women's work reduced this differential to<sup>3</sup> 19 percentage points in 1986.

As economic development proceeds, the structure of women's employment changes. Although the role of agriculture in the Thai economy in terms of its contribution to gross domestic product has substantially declined through the years, from 40 percent to 16 percent of GDP during 1960 and 1986, it remains the most significant sector in terms of its absorption of labor. In 1986, 67 percent of female labor force was employed in agriculture, followed by 14 percent and 19 percent in industry and service respectively. This distribution has undergone a considerable change from a decade and a half ago when the figures were 82 percent in agriculture, 4 percent and 14 percent for industry and service.<sup>4</sup>

The occupational pattern of female employment in Thailand has also been changing. Between 1971 and 1986, the percentage of women in "white collar" occupations, has increased, although still accounts for a very small part of total employment. Women professional and managerial workers more than doubles their representation during that period. This reflects partly the large number of women in teaching, nursing and other "traditionally feminine" professions. Less than 1 percent of Thai women held administrative, executive and managerial positions in both years. The proportion of women engaged in clerical jobs rose from less than 1 percent in 1971 to nearly 3 percent in 1986. Only about one in twelve women worked in sales jobs in 1971 but the figure now changes to about one in eight. The decline in the number of Thai women engaged in agricultural occupations has occurred slowly despite the rapid industrialization that has been taking place for more than two decades, from slightly more than 80 percent in 1971 to a little under 70 percent in 1986. During that same period, the proportion of female production process workers and laborers increases from 5.2 to almost ten percent.<sup>5</sup>

## Factors Influencing Women's Economic Activities

Several factors--social, cultural, economic and historical--are responsible for the high incidence of Thai women's labor force activities. Among the most important are the followings:

1. Social and cultural attitudes in Thailand have been favorable towards working women. The male head of household generally does not consider having female family members going out to work to be a negative reflection on the men's earning ability or a threat to the women's virtue or reputation. The additional income brought in by the women is gladly welcomed, particularly if they can manage to keep their home-making duties largely unaffected.

Marriage and childbearing do not necessarily become a disruptive influence on the women's career because they can usually rely on the extended family and kinship networks which still characterize both rural and urban societies. The social acceptance of women's dual role is evidenced in several old Thai sayings, for example, " A woman's hand both rocks the cradle and brandishes the sword. "

2. Thailand's predominant agricultural sector with the prevalence of small family plots, together with the low level of mechanization in farming activities make it both possible and necessary to use the labor of every available

both possible and necessary to use the labor of every available family member, including women and children, particularly during the peak periods of planting and harvesting.

Similar situation applies in the industrial and service sectors which consist mainly of the micro and small scale family enterprises, with the entire family unit staying in the business premise. Such set-up makes the participation of all family member an inevitable part of daily life from an early age. It also makes child-care and other homemaker's responsibilities compatible with market activities.

3. Historically, with the exception of women in the royal court and noble families, Thai women have been encouraged by economic necessity to work alongside the men. For certain periods they even had to assume the role of family providers. The root of this situation lay with the corvée labor system which were in use during the Ayudhaya and early Bangkok periods whereby all male peasants were compelled to offer free labor services to the king, princes or noblemen for several months of the year. These duties not only required the men to be away from their farms and families, but they were also expected to bring their own food and working tools.

Peasant women who were left behind on their own or with children to take care of therefore had little choice

but to quickly learn to manage the farms and to seek other ways of supplementing farm income, such as by taking up handicrafts and trading.

## WOMEN IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In contrast to their economic activities, women's role in administrative and political activities was historically that of "followers." While they were allowed to take active part in various kinds of work, they had no rights for active participation at any level of administration for a long time. The influence of cultural values inherited from the Chinese and Indian traditions, together with the attitudes prevalent in Brahminism and Buddhism, put women in an inferior social status relative to men. Examples of male superiority were that during the Ayudhaya period, husbands were allowed to inflict corporal punishment on their wives, which they could acquire as many as they pleased. Married women, however, faced severe punishment by law if they were found to be unfaithful. Up to the early Bangkok period, women were expected to be under the care and protection of the male members of the families all through their lives. The men had legal rights even to put the women up for sale.

The effects of such an inferior status imposed on Thai women for a long time were likely to cause them to lack self-confidence, to prefer having someone else plan their future for them and to be hesitant in taking up tasks or positions involving important responsibility or decision-making.

Gradually, social development with the influence of Western ideals began to have positive repercussions on the status of Thai women. Studies on the role of women in public affairs in the last decade showed significant improvements in their activities and attitudes. The advance made in the last decade has been greater than in any other periods since the 1932 coup d'etat.<sup>7</sup>

#### Women as Civil Servants

Under the absolute monarchy, women's role in public service was limited to those of teachers and nurses. The political change to constitutional monarchy, the wider availability of education for women and the modernization of the bureaucratic system encouraged an increasing number of women to enter public service. However, they were initially concentrated in clerical positions and the conventional jobs in the Ministries of Health and Education.

At present, the proportion of women civil servants among the various ministries still shows a distinctive pattern. The male to female ratio varies from 2.7 to 1 in the Ministry of Communications to 0.4 to 1 in the Ministry of Public Health, while the Ministry of Science, Technology and Energy employs almost equal number of men and women.<sup>8</sup> Such pattern should not be interpreted as a result of sexual discrimination in the hiring practices of government agencies. Rather,

it reflects women's entrenched preference for certain fields of education and certain types of job, which in turn is a reflection of their socialization process since childhood. The enrollment figures in private colleges show that although there about the same number of male and female students in the Natural Sciences, there are three times more female students in the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities. Male students almost completely dominate in Engineering with female comprising less than 10 percent of the total enrollment.<sup>9</sup>

In 1988, 54 percent of civil servants are women but the majority of them are in the C-1 to C-6 levels, with only 30 percent among the C-7 to C-11 levels. Women represent 22 percent of the 900 division heads but their responsibilities are mainly in the areas of finance and accounting, research and information rather than planning and implementation. At the top levels of civil service, women are almost invisible, accounting for only 3.7 percent of deputy director-generals and 2.7 percent of director-generals. No woman has ever reached the post of permanent secretary, the highest level in the ministry attainable by non-political officials.<sup>10</sup>

Does women's career aspirations have any effects on their actual achievements ? A survey among female Thai government employees revealed that most of them accepted the faster promotion of their male colleagues as " natural

or even " appropriate ". At the same time some of them felt that their own abilities were not properly recognized by their superiors, colleagues and society. Such feelings led to low level of confidence and general attitude towards their works.<sup>11</sup>

A factor that can have a strong influence on women's career advancement is the way women regard their responsibilities in bearing and raising children and taking care of the husbands' needs as being more important than their own career. A study by the Civil Service Commission on the " Working Attitudes of Civil Servants " rated women's performance quite high both before and after their marriage.<sup>12</sup> Once they have children to take care of, however, they tend to put the family's interests before their own career future. Women may choose to decline certain promotions that bring with them heavier responsibilities requiring them to spend more time away from home.

### Political Participation of Thai Women

The first Thai Constitution of 1933 granted men and women equal rights to vote and run for parliamentary election. It took another 16 years, however, before a woman became a candidate and was subsequently elected to Parliament. As of 1988, only 40 women have become members of the House of Representatives in its 55 years' history. In the latest nationwide election held in July 1988, women candidates represent only 10 percent of the total and the proportion actually elected was discouragingly small, being only 2.8 percent, with 10 women out of the total 357 members.

Twelve years ago, a milestone was reached when the first two women were appointed to the top political posts in the Ministry of Communications and the State Universities Bureau. Since then, the ministerial posts have been awarded to two more women. One was for the Ministry of Education, and most recently, a popular four-time M.P. was appointed Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office. Her first major task is to set up a body responsible for planning and overseeing government policies relating to women's affairs.

Women play a small part in the administration of political parties. There appeared to be another milestone this year when a well-known and successful businesswoman became head of a newly-formed party, consisting of dissident

members of Thailand's most respected political organization. Unfortunately, in less than a month, she announced her resignation in favor of her husband.

The opportunities given to these women and their handling of the various duties have proved that women can be men's equals in politics. Such occurrence was, however, so rare that women in politics are still being treated as an exception. Their political achievements so far are not enough to erase the belief that the goal of increasing the participation and power of Thai women in the political sphere is still elusive.

For women to be active in politics, they need special qualifications such as extreme confidence, high education or wide experiences and strong political background. For example, the first woman M.P. in 1949 who won with the highest number of votes in the country, was the first woman teacher in that province and had been actively involved in her husband's political campaign in all the previous elections. This factor of family connection with influential men in politics seems to hold true for many other female M.P.'s or candidates as well, who decided to enter politics to carry on the family's tradition.

Growing up in politicians' families, they learned the intricacies of the political world naturally. Having

helped out in political campaigns since their younger days, by the time they become candidates themselves, they would have enjoyed a headstart by possessing a wide networks of friends and acquaintances.

At the local level, a change in the Local Administration Act in 1982, allowing women to take up the post of Pu Yai Ban( village head ) and Kamnan ( sub-district head ), has brought a stratling improvement of women's participation in local politics. Diring 1984-1986, the number of women Kamnans increased from 7 to 16 and women Pu Yai Ban from 43 to 288. As a proportion of the total, women's representation in local politics is still very small with only 0.3 and 0.4 percent of the total number of Kamnan and Pu Yai Ban respectively.<sup>13</sup> Several of them have performed their duties so conscientiously that they received commendations from the Department of Local Administration for their outstanding records. A notable characteristics of local women's leaders is the skills in planning, co-ordinating and communicating with the villagers, although they may be slower and less confident than their male counterparts in dealing with crisis situations.

Participation of rural women in the village council is extremely low which could partly result from the male attitudes treating the council's meetings as "male business".

Since important economic decisions, such as location of a new well or selection of representatives from the village to participate in training programs on new farming technology are made by the council, women's interests are often negatively affected.

## PART II : CURRENT ECONOMIC STATUS OF THAI WOMEN

### EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME GENERATION

#### Women in the Rural Sector

Among the 12.7 million women in the workforce in 1986, 67 percent are engaged in agricultural occupation. Most of these women are also performing their household duties all year round, although these works are not counted as labor force activities. Furthermore, when they work for the family enterprise, women's labor are taken for granted and they are not paid. Almost seven out of ten women in agricultural sector are officially classified as " unpaid family workers " and only one in ten receives cash payments in return for their labor.<sup>14</sup>

Unemployment rate for rural women is 5.2 percent in 1986, compared with 3.6 percent for rural men. Among rural residents who do not have work while waiting for agricultural season, 68 percent are women.<sup>15</sup> The fluctuation of labor force participation rate is also much higher for women, with the difference between rainy and dry season being as much as 40 percent in some years.<sup>16</sup>

There is no rigid sexual division of labor in agriculture, both sexes are familiar with each other's tasks, and if necessary can carry them out equally well. It is

not considered a loss of prestige to be seen doing a job usually performed by the other sex. Women are, however, mainly confined to weeding, sowing and harvesting.

The introduction of new farming technology seems to be biased in favor of reducing the men's workload. Operation of farm machinery, even a simple one such as water pump, is normally assigned to men. Since such task increases the worker's productivity, it is assumed to require more skill and thus command higher wage. Women agricultural workers continue to remain in the low productivity jobs and consequently to receive low pay.

Regardless of what they do outside the home, rural women are still expected to bear a large share of the work burden inside the household, including the physically demanding tasks, such as fetching water from the wells that requires several kilometers' walk. The time that rural women spend performing household chores, if added on to the time spent doing outside work, invariably show that the total daily hours of work done by rural women tend to be higher than that of the rural men, in some case by as much as 40 percent.<sup>17</sup>

If women's status is to be indicated by their responsibility in household management or participation in decision-making about family finance and children's education, then women can be considered as having relatively high status

in the rural economy. Women also take part in business decisions concerning the household, such as in purchasing equipment and tools, dealing with merchants and pricing of products.

Although rural women can become as equally involved as the men with the works around the house and the village, the situation is different when it comes to works outside the village. Non-farm employment opportunities that become available in the dry season are concentrated in manufacturing and construction, most of which go to the men, while women non-farm works are mainly those in commerce and services. One example of male advantage in access to non-farm employment can be seen in the Rural Employment Creation Project, which has been in existence for more than a decade and which aims at raising income for rural people and slowing down rural-urban migration, with a national budget allocation of several billion baht each year. Slightly more than 10 percent of the workers in this project are women, eventhough the tasks involved do not required much skill.<sup>18</sup>

### From the Farm to the Cities

Declining returns from agriculture, hard work in the fields, few opportunities for paid employment outside the farm, and the attraction of jobs in the cities combine to make rural-urban migration a perceived way out of poverty or at least a chance at a better way of life for an increasingly large number of young women from farming families. Migration rate of women is not only increasing but it also outnumbered that of men in certain age groups. The female dominance is particularly striking for rural-Bangkok migration stream where recent evidence indicates that among the 10-19 age group, there are two women for every man leaving rural areas for the capital city.<sup>18</sup>

These women do not simply move passively as part of the household, following their husbands or fathers, but they migrate independently. Such situation is especially true for women migrants to Bangkok among whom three quarters migrated alone, the majority being single and actively looking for employment.

Participation rate of women migrants in the cities' labor force is higher than non-migrant women, and unemployment rate is lower. This could be the result of their being too poor to afford choosing. They would rather accept the first jobs that come along no matter how small the returns

or how low the status. For young girls in their teens, their families would not allow them to make the journey unless they are assured that there are jobs available and waiting for them.

Such easy entry into the labor market should not be interpreted that all is well for the migrants. Examination of occupational pattern reveals that an overwhelming proportion of women migrants are employed in jobs that are low paying and low status in the informal manufacturing and service sectors, such as domestic helpers, waitresses, factory workers and prostitutes. Almost 70 percent of female migrants in bangkok are employed as service workers.<sup>19</sup>

Domestic service occupation is disproportionately found among recent women migrants because of the easy entry and relative safety, as it is often used as a stepping stone to other types of employment, the turnover rate among domestic servants is therefore very high. Recent development and technological changes that make labor-saving equipments more widely available have begun to reduce the demand for live-in servants, while other job opportunities have attracted young unskilled women away from this low status service job.

Those opportunities, however, are mostly in small-scale, owner-operated service or manufacturing enterprises

which also involve long hours, unpleasant conditions and not much better pay. Although migrants may change jobs; quite often most of them remain in the informal sector for the entire length of their temporary sojourn in the city which is about 2 years on the average. An important implication of the short duration of their stay is that it is economically unfeasible for them to remain unemployed for any length of time or to undertake training that would equip them for higher-skilled, higher-paid jobs. Only those who plan to become permanent members of the urban labor force are willing to invest their time seeking modern sector employment.

At the same time, employers are unwilling to arrange training to upgrade the skills for workers who they consider to be unstable and highly mobile because employers cannot be guaranteed of returns to their training investment. Employers also feel there is no justification for offering high wages as a means of holding migrants to their jobs since most of them perceive that these migrants behave as "target workers", who would only quit their jobs sooner when they succeed in collecting the amount of money they had come to the city for.

The connection between women migrants and their home villages remain close, both in the social and economic sense. Most of them make several visits, usually during

the religious festivals, while a small percentage make the trip specifically to help their families during the planting or harvesting seasons. Women migrants bring money or goods for the families when they return for a visit or they would send the money by mail. The remittances are used to improve the economic conditions of migrants' families by supplementing their basic consumption needs. The small amount of land that they own are mostly of poor quality and unirrigated and they have little cash income from other sources. It is therefore neither efficient nor possible for them to use remittance for agricultural investment. The major form of investment for rural people, both migrant and non-migrant households, is building or improving their houses.

### Women in Non-Agricultural Employment

Industrialization process during the past three decades with emphasis on labor intensive manufacturing and service activities has created unprecedented demand for female labor. Women who were formerly out of the labor force or had been working unpaid for their family enterprises have begun to take up employment outside their homes, both in the formal and informal sectors.

A variety of new employment opportunities were opened up for women and they are considered to be better workers than men in several industries, such as textiles, garments and electronics. Women's share of employment in textiles, clothing and footwear industries is almost 80 percent, which is twice as high as their share in manufacturing industry as a whole.<sup>20</sup>

Earnings data of workers in non-agricultural employment show a substantial difference between male and female workers. Average earnings of women is only 70 percent of the men's. The inequalities are particularly large in manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade where the female share of employment are 40 percent and 37 percent respectively.<sup>21</sup>

It is often suspected that the " feminization " of a job may lead to its downgrading. The larger the number

of women entering a certain type of employment, the lower the wages are expected to become. traditionally female dominated industries such as textiles and clothing, earnings disadvantage of women workers is found to be higher than in all other industries. Their average earnings is only 61 percent of the men's, while in the communication and transport industries where women's share of employment is 11 percent, women's average earnings is 1.2 times that of the men's.<sup>22</sup>

Obviously, several other factors can contribute to the earnings differences between men and women, for example, educational qualifications, experiences and hours of work, It will therefore be too early and pessimistic to conclude from the above evidence that women are discriminated against. Although it should be noted that one study on the sources of wage differentials among manufacturing industries in Thailand found the sex composition of the workforce to be the most significant determining variable. A higher proportion of women workers in an industry was thus associated with lower wages.<sup>23</sup>

It was not possible to determine conclusively in that study whether the earnings gap was due to productivity differentials between the sexes or to some institutional forces which favor male workers and result in lower pay for women, because no other personal information was available.

But there is no reason to believe that male productivity is higher than that of female, particularly in the textile or clothing industries where in fact the reverse seems more plausible. It was suggested by the researchers that there is a distortion in the Thai labor market where institutional forces are such that " males are paid higher wages than female workers merely because it is the socially accepted practice unrelated to their contribution to output " <sup>24</sup>.

Among the various regulations of the Ministry of Labor, there is one specifying that employer shall pay the same wage to male and female for work of similar nature. In practice, it is difficult to prove that the work performed is of " similar nature ". More importantly, in view of the current labor market situation, it may even be detrimental to workers if that regulation is strictly enforced since employers can always choose not to hire women at all. If their preconception is that women's productivity is less than the men's, employers can only be induced to hire women if the wages they are required to pay women are less.

In addition, women workers themselves may hold the same attitude accepting male's superiority if they have been raised under traditional beliefs leading them to view their proper place as being in the home while outside work are more appropriate for men.

Other regulations which aim at providing protection to women workers include prohibiting employers from having women engaging in such tasks as mining underground, cleaning machinery while in operation, or working on scaffolding higher than 10 meters above the ground. Employers also are forbidden to have female under 18 years old working in a night-club, bath and massage house or hotel.

Women workers can turn to the Labor Unions for the protection of their rights and to help them bargain for better wages and working conditions. But these unions are active only in the large companies or in government enterprises where the working conditions are already well above average, they are not likely to be a significant factor in improving conditions in small and medium scale factories where women are concentrated.

Participation of women in Labor Unions, either as members or administrators, is very small in any case. For example, women comprise less than one-third of members of the Bank and Finance Company Labor Federation of Thailand, and 15 percent of the Metropolitan Electricity Authority. Only in industries that are heavily female dominated such as textile and garments that women constitute a majority of union members.<sup>25</sup>

Women workers also need to be educated about the functions of Labor Unions and effective bargaining strategies.

In the past, they had a tendency to rely on strikes or asking for public sympathy by using such tactics as going on hunger strike or threatening to inflict injuries on themselves.

## HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

### Women's Access to Education

A major cause underlying the myriad of problems facing Thai women is their low level of education. Compared with men, women have less access to education at almost every level and type. Although the illiteracy rate of women has declined substantially during 1937-1980, from 85.1 percent to 17.6 percent, and the improvement that occurred during the decade 1970-1980 was even better than the men, the sex differentials remain wide. Regional figures show higher illiteracy rates of women in all regions in both rural and urban areas. There are more illiterates among urban women than among rural men. For the whole country, latest census figures show that women account for two out of three illiterate population.<sup>26</sup>

In the modern economy, with increasing use of technology in all types of employment, the ability to read simple instructions is a prerequisite for successful job application. If an employer uses literacy test as a screening device for selecting unskilled workers, women will have a higher probability of losing out. Training courses for skill upgradings invariably use written words as medium of instruction and give little emphasis on audio-visual or other non-traditional means. Illiterate women thus cannot benefit

fully from such courses.

Under the formal system of education, there is only a slight difference between the sexes at the primary level which is compulsory, but the difference becomes greater at the secondary level and above. This is partly the result of traditional attitudes giving priority to the education of male children. For any poor family having to make a choice between sending either sons or daughters to school, the choice is almost certain to be in favor of the sons. The sacrifice made by the girls is clearly seen from evidence showing that a major use of remittance sent from women migrants working in brothels or factories is to support the education of her male siblings.<sup>27</sup>

Discrimination against women in education caused by parental attitudes also applies in other cases. The common belief is that girls and boys should be raised differently--girls to be polite and domestic while boys are encouraged to be more adventurous. Therefore, some innovative attempts to introduce new elements into the school curricula, such as allowing schoolgirls to experiment with carpentry and the boys to try their hands at embroidery receive regular complaints from parents.

### Women's Access to Training

The Thai government has been undertaking job training programs to improve the skills and job opportunities for women by expanding or modifying the course contents of compulsory education and non-formal education to cover vocational training suitable to the local conditions.

The four major ministries responsible for training programs for women are: Ministries of Interior, Agriculture, Education and Industry. The Ministry of Interior has set up a number of Job Training Centers--the most important one being the Institute for Skill Development, under the Department of Labor. The program covers basic, upgrading, and on-the-job training. Participants are charged minimal fees since the large part of the expenses are borne by the participating employers, and the rest comes from the annual budget.

It is Discouraging to find few women enrolling in these programs. The Institute is expected to raise women's participation from the currently low level of under 5 percent to around 10 percent but so far has not been successful. Apart from the employers' unwillingness to invest in training for women workers, part of the explanation for low participation of women could be in the type of courses offered which are mostly oriented towards " traditionally male " interests, such as auto-mechanics and plumbers.

Programs organized by the Department of Public Welfare and Community Development Department cover similar areas, that is, dressmaking, weaving, food preservation and handicrafts. After completing the course, the trainees often ran into difficulty when trying to turn their new knowledge into an occupation because they lack initial capital to start up the business. Some training programs which focus on the development of the individuals and which does not ensure immediate jobs locally have also caused problems of unemployment or out-migration. The rural community therefore does not benefit from such training but may instead suffer from the brain-drain problem.

Rural women are the target group of the Job Training Programs run by the Department of Agricultural Extension which have courses focusing on home economics, such as mulberry production, silkcloth-weaving, and several other handicraft items. The Department of Industrial Promotion under the Ministry of Industry put emphasis on handicrafts and cottage industry products, such as woodcarving, gemstone cutting, furniture, artificial flowers and doll-making. Most of the expenses are from the national budget with trainees bearing a small fraction of the total costs. As the Department also manages the Thai Handicraft Venter and can use it as the marketing outlet for these products, the programs have proved to be popular and successful.

Leading non-government organizations involved in

training programs for women are: the National Council of Women, the Young Men/Women Christial Associations and the Council on Social Welfare. Courses offered are usually repetitive of those run by government organizations, with orientation towards traditional women's roles and occupations. marketing of the products remain a major common problem for all these programs.

Among the 3,081 Thai participants trained under USAID sponsordhip during 1980-1987, about 20 percent had been female. A breakdown of figures show the annual proportion of women to vary from a low 12 percent in 1981 to 40 percent in 1985. One in three participants trained last year was female.<sup>28</sup>

## WOMEN'S ACCESS TO PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES

Women's share in productive resources is closely related to a long-standing custom in Thai society. At the time of marriage, it is a widely practice tradition for the man to move in and become part of his wife's social group. The early period of married life is spent at the wife's family compound. The control of property and other economic resources along with major economic decisions would therefore depend on the woman and her family.

Access to land is not a constraint for Thai women as properties of deceased parents are normally divided equally among sons and daughters. If the husband dies first, it is common for his wife to take control of all his properties and only pass them on to the children after her own death. A daughter, usually the youngest or the unmarried one, would inherit the land on which the family home is situated.

Unlike their urban sisters, rural women are not particularly concerned about registering their marriage. Living in such a close-knitted social setting, a wedding celebration which in most cases would have the whole village population attending, is considered sufficient to announce their marital bonds. Consequently, land and any other assets owned by a woman before marriage remain in her name. The law currently also requires the approval signature of the

spouse to make any legal documents valid.

Given the absence of legal and social constraints for their access to land holding, women still represent only 12 percent of agricultural land owners.<sup>29</sup>

As for the access to credit, there is a clear difference between informal and formal credit market. In the informal rural credit market, most moneylenders prefer that the wife acknowledges and approves of the husband's loan. But if the woman herself makes a loan request, her husband's approval is not considered essential. Women's influential role is thought to have been built on the responsibility and control they have had in the handling of family finance for a long time which is related to the marriage custom of bringing the man into his bride's home.

When asking for a loan in the informal credit market, a woman may first sound out the possibility and the husband only finalise it. Even when the husband makes the first approach, moneylenders will most likely demand that the wife become aware of the loan. This practice can be attributed to the desire to reduce the risk of incurring bad debts. Women are thought to be much more conscientious financially while the man is likely to spend his money for drinking and gambling, neglecting the obligation to repay the loan.

The situation changes drastically in the formal credit market, where the general practice is to deal only with head of household--male, if possible. Discrimination may play a part but the reluctance of women to deal with formal credit institutions also has a significant influence. The main factor explaining such behavior is their unfamiliarity with formal financial institution, even some well-educated and well-off urban women have never bothered to have a bank account in their own names.<sup>30</sup>

#### Women's Access to Technology

Apart from participating actively in all aspects of farming, rural women take major responsibility for certain tasks, such as marketing of the products and managing the family finance. In spite of their involvements, women benefit very little from technological improvements because they are routinely excluded from training programs concerning new methods of production. Government officials often take for granted that men, as head of household, are better informed about farming matters, especially if farming is the family's major occupation, and women are rarely consulted for information.<sup>31</sup>

When farmers are selected to receive specialized training and dissemination of technological information, men invariably was given priority. This result both from

the prevalent attitude that women know less about the technical aspect of farming and from the nature of the selection process which is done at village meetings composed almost entirely of men. The village headman tends to choose his friends, better-off farmers, or the male head of households.

Furthermore, even in the routine training sessions about new crops, fertilizer application methods, use of equipment, or marketing situation, women's participation can be severely limited by several factors, such as childcare constraint, location and schedule of the sessions. For example, if the sessions are held in the mornings, or away from the village, requiring participants to leave home for a few days, domestic responsibilities will prevent women from participating while posing little problem for men.

### PART III : IMPLICATIONS FOR USAID PROGRAMS

Before suggesting any modifications of USAID's role, it is necessary to look at the current efforts of various government and non-government organizations and agencies to address the problems mentioned in the preceding pages. USAID's role can be directed at supplementing and filling in the gap left by the existing arrangements.

#### WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN THAILAND

The government of Thailand started to incorporate women's development plans as part of the Five-Year National Economic and Social Development Plan following the U.N.'s declaration of the Women's Decade. A special committee was also set up to formulate a detailed twenty-year women's development plan covering the periods between 1982 to 2001. The main objectives of both plans can be summarized in two categories.

1. To provide women with opportunities to expand and develop their potentials in order that they may learn not only to be self-reliant, but also to be supportive of their families and to make greater contributions to the national economic and social progress.

2. To encourage women to become more involved in

all aspects of national development and at all levels of decision-making process.

### Women's Development Activities and Programs

Women's development activities and programs under the various government and non-government organizations can be grouped into four categories.

#### 1. Basic Education and Vocational Training

This is by far the most common type of program. It comes under many differently stated purposes, such as, to supplement family income, to encourage women to use their spare time productively and to prevent rural-urban migration. The curriculum normally includes traditionally female activities, such as, cooking, food preservation, hairdressing, dressmaking and weaving. A few agricultural activities are gradually being introduced, for example, silkworm raising and animal husbandry.

The major problems encountered in these programs are as follows.

a) The programs are not 100 percent effective if some of the trainees are illiterate.

b) The programs do not fulfill the women's economic

the skills learned cannot be used as major occupations. One survey conducted by the Community Development Department found that rural women are interested in receiving training which will enable them to have a main occupation in agriculture and which will provide substantial income, instead of training to enhance their domestic role.

c) The programs lack follow-up support in marketing, management and capital investment. In many cases, the items produced may be left unsold for a long time due to lack of quality control, or the designs do not suit the consumers' tastes.

d) Some programs suffer from inefficiency at various stages, such as, curriculum planning, specifying qualifications of trainers, selection and maintenance of equipments , and the feasibility study of the products.

## 2. Women's Leadership and Organization Training Program

The main aim of this type of program is to train women, particularly in rural areas to gain self-confidence and to express their needs and opinions, to participate more fully in local organizations and to prepare them for the role of community leaders.

The major problems are as follows.

a) Most programs remain temporary and have little chance of becoming permanent due to lack of initiatives for appropriate activities. In addition, there are not enough incentives and common benefits to hold the women together after the programs ended.

b) Despite the training received, women still do not participate in the village development council which is a local body responsible for major decisions involving the villagers because it is still controlled by men. In many cases, the women themselves cannot overcome the traditional attitude of submitting to male dominance.

### 3. Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Program

These programs aim at providing service and assistance to various groups of underprivileged and distressed women, such as rape victims, former prostitutes and victims of violence.

The major problems encountered are lack of funds to maintain qualified permanent staff and to support regular training programs to enable these women to start a new life and profession.

### 4. Personality Development Program

Included under this type of program are courses

on traditional Thai values and customs under which women's domestic role receives high priority. Examples of the course contents are: flower arrangement, embroidery, cooking, make-up technique and social etiquette.

The obvious problem with these courses is that they tend to perpetuate the attitudes viewing women's proper role as that of a good wife and mother, irrespective of the trainees' objective needs for economically productive skills. The emphasis on such superficialities as beauty and ceremonial functions are likely to encourage women to prefer luxurious lifestyle and to look down on hard work or manual jobs. Rural women may become so dissatisfied with life in the village that they decide to leave home in search of a more exciting time in the city.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR MODIFICATIONS OF USAID PROGRAMS

USAID's stated strategy is that its program must be closely linked with Thailand's Sixth National, Social and Economic Development Plan in order to ensure their relevance and usefulness. Furthermore, since traditional proven USAID programs have been turned over to other donors, new ones must be increasingly innovative.

Women's development has been part of the last two national development plans but was not included in the current one. Presumably, the previously stated objectives are still in effect since it has already been translated into the programs and projects of the respective agencies dealing with women's development activities. Therefore, to fit in with the national plan, women's development strategy of USAID must follow the objectives summarized earlier in this part.

Within the framework of existing USAID projects, it is possible to include several projects aiming directly at women's economic and social development. Some modifications and detailed specifications may be required to allow more women's participation, or entirely new projects may be introduced to ensure that women, either individually or as part of a group, will become major beneficiaries.

However, in the context of the Thai society, the

method and system of work that will be used in these " Women in Development " programs must receive special attention in order to avoid social and cultural conflicts that may arise, particularly in the rural society where traditional and social factors are still asserting strong influences on women's economic activities.

The following suggestions will focus primarily on five USAID projects:

1. Emerging Problems of Development ( No. 493-0341 )
2. Private Voluntary Organizations Co-Financing II ( No. 493-0342 )
3. Rural Industries and Employment ( No. 493-0343 )
4. Science and Technology for Development ( No. 493-0340 )
5. Natural Resources and Environment ( no. 493-0345 )

## Emerging Problems of Development II

The project's major aim is to expand U.S. support of the Thai government's policy development, program planning and pre-project analysis in key problem areas. It will provide responsive and timely funding which will facilitate policy dialogue, promote policy studies, support development seminars, help meet technical assistance and training needs directed toward resolution of crucial development problems.

Women development programs can be brought under this project in various ways:

### 1. Exchange Programs

Currently, funding for human resource development is being spent on academic and on-the-job training, observatic tours to the U.S. and to the third countries. It could be slightly modified to include exchange programs which provide opportunities for women leaders in various branches of the economy and different professions or fields of work to gain first hand experience in similar areas of work to neighboring or developed countries. Even exchange programs within the country can be very useful, giving women participants fresh ideas and insights of how their works can be differently and more efficiently performed under basically the same social and cultural settings of Thai society.

The emphasis of these programs should be on rural women's development and practical implementation.

## 2. Support Research on Women

Solving women's problems requires several basic policy and program changes. However, existing research literature that planners rely on are mostly based on limited data source, for example, the Population and Housing Censuses, the Labor Force Survey, the Socio-Economic and Migration Surveys. These are supplemented by specific, small sample, one-time surveys which are not generalizable and therefore are of limited use for planning purposes.

USAID could assist in improving research capability in the area of women's development by:

a) Supporting various women's studies programs currently going on in four universities: Chulalongkorn, Thammasat, Chiangmai and Songkhla. Emphasis could be placed on funding research which are appropriate for local problems and settings. For example, migration is a special problem of women in the North and Northeast, while religious constraints are significant problems in the expansion of employment opportunities for Muslim women in the four Southern Provinces. It should therefore be the policy of this research support to encourage these types of special studies by researchers in regional universities.

b) Supporting Improvement of Data on Women

All researchers interested in women development issues should be able to have access to improved data and information on women's economic roles and status. USAID can support the improvement efforts by making use of existing regular surveys under the responsibility of the National Statistical Office ( NSO ) in the following ways:

i) Questions concerning women's problems can be included in existing surveys such as the Labor Force Survey which is conducted three times a year. The questions should be selected to allow comparison between men and women or highlight women's issues. They can be modified each year and adapted to suit regional problems or specific problems encountered each year. Expenses incurred will be much less than sponsoring totally new surveys.

ii) Report on details of women's economic status drawn from NSO data should be funded. Information contained in regularly published government reports are too broad and usually not disaggregated by sex. Special tabulations can be made as have been done in the past on the subject of migration and economic characteristics of the population, based on a 2 percent sample from the census data.

Currently, crucial information for an analysis of

women's economic situation such as earnings data by occupation and industry are not published. Special request can be made to NSO by interested researchers on a case-by-case basis, but the procedure is costly and time-consuming. If such information can be made publicly available, it will definitely stimulate much wider research on women and subsequently generate better information for policy decisions, project design and evaluation.

### 3. Study Tour Program to Conference on Women Development

To keep Thai researches in touch with women's issues in other countries, the study tour program should expand their coverage from the present emphasis on long-term study to include short-term attendance at international conferences on women development , at well-known institutions offering courses in women's studies or at training courses for women development workers.

At the national and regional levels, conferences on women's issues should include local women's participation to encourage them to express their needs and opinions and to establish dialogues with academicians and policy planners. Whenever possible , rural women groups could be sponsored to attend such conferences.

## Private Voluntary Organization Co-Financing II

The purpose of this project is to promote private and voluntary organization activities that address the self development needs of socially and economically disadvantaged groups. USAID assistance to Thai PVO's have already included programs on women and development, educational and vocational training and rural micro-enterprise promotion. Further efforts should continue in that direction.

Women's access to non-formal education and training has been arranged through various government and non-government organizations but there are several problems and constraints as mentioned earlier. USAID training support in the future should be in the following framework:

1. Encouraging women to take up non-traditional jobs, such as small electronic goods repairers or plumbers, to provide them with wider choices of occupations, allowing them to choose the ones that suit them best or give them the highest income. These types of training will replace many of the existing programs which aim at supplementing women's domestic roles.

Women have been reluctant to enroll in such courses because of their view that those are male's territories and some young women who would like to try were simply shy

away from classes dominated by men. If the courses can be provided in a familiar environment of their own sex, especially if competent female instructors can be found, such problems can be overcome.

2. Training programs should not be free of charge for those who can afford to pay. They should be self-supporting and, if possible, designed for short-term pay back period. Initial capital investment required should also be within the financial capability of the target individuals or groups otherwise it would cause the trainees to incur unnecessarily large debts.

3. To keep down the prices of the final products, training programs should select products that can make use of raw material inputs available locally.

4. If the skills learned from training courses cannot find the market locally, the women may choose to migrate to the cities where the demand for their skills are greater. Therefore, to prevent the problem of excessive out-migration, training programs should be linked with local labor demand in order to ensure immediate jobs within the region. Attempts should be made to gain direct support, both financial and technical, from local enterprises which will become the direct beneficiaries of the well-trained workers.

5. Existing women co-operatives within the areas should be linked with the training projects to enable the groups to share the burden of the capital costs.

6. There should be training programs specially designed for women who have been out of the labor force for some time and who wish to make a re-entrance. Very often these women find that their skills have become obsolete. In order to enable them to compete with younger, more recent graduates, they would need to undergo special intensive training. Since most of the women in this category are in the middle income group, they should easily afford to pay the full costs.

This group of women usually find it difficult to accept younger persons as their superiors, so they would prefer setting up their own business. One of their special needs is therefore learning the techniques of modern financial management and marketing.

## Rural Industries and Employment

The purpose of this project is to sustain expansion of small and medium scale rural enterprises outside the Bangkok Metropolitan Area. It is expected to increase rural employment and income. Among the major elements of this project are Small Industry Guarantee Facility and Training for Rural Entrepreneurs.

Small-scale rural industries are more likely to employ women workers than the large or medium scale, although not as much as the micro-enterprises. Therefore, the probability of women benefitting from this USAID project is relatively high. However, the following suggestions should be considered.

### 1. Support Service Business owned by Women

A major problem facing women small-scale entrepreneurs is the difficulty in gaining access to formal credit because they lack the required collateral to guarantee their loans. For women in service business, that problem is multiplied because all the formal credit institutions evaluate loan collateral on the basis of net fixed assets, which is generally very small in service business.

At present, USAID provides funding to guarantee 50 percent of loans of \$ 38,000 or less to industries with

less than \$ 20,000 in net fixed assets which are located outside Bangkok. In addition, the banks are required to limit the collateral to half of the usual requirement.

To support women entrepreneurs and to increase their share of the benefits from this project, USAID should consider the following modifications:

a) Increase the proportion of its guarantee if the loans are made to women entrepreneurs.

b) Request the participating banks to lower the collateral required from women applicants.

c) Encourage and facilitate efforts to devise an alternative method of evaluating the credit-worthiness of service business owners. For example, cash flow may be a more appropriate criteria than net fixed assets.

## 2. Management Training Program for Women Entrepreneurs

One of the most urgently needed programs is a long term provision for business and personnel management for women of all status and background in rural regions. This could be incorporated under the " Training for Rural Entrepreneur " program which is currently being managed by the Institute for Management Education in Thailand ( IMET ).

The IMET program is not controlled directly by USAID but by the IMET board which considers and funds proposals of qualified educational institutions. But under the existing arrangement, IMET is supposed to consult with USAID and the managers of other project components before determining the location of each training program and its focus. Therefore, it should be possible for USAID to put in suggestions specifying special programs for women entrepreneurs who may require different course content and focus than men.

Initially, a small experimental program could be introduced as part of a market survey on the type of needs by women for management training program.

### 3. Support Women-Oriented Rural Industries

To ensure greater and more direct participation of women, USAID should consider specifying categories of industry to be targeted for funding priority. This should be industries that women have a natural advantage in handling, such as, textiles and garments, ceramics, domestic utensils, small tools, electronic parts and electrical appliances. Such emphasis on women activities that put them within the framework of the general program already in existence will be more beneficial than segregate women as project beneficiaries.

Some of these women-oriented industries fit in well

with the export strategy that Thailand must adopt in order to survive in an increasingly competitive world market., that is, to make full use of its own natural resources, within its own social and cultural framework. Introduction of new technology is needed to enhance the existing tradition and culture and to develop regional resources into high quality industrial output.

The world market may now be saturated with certain items resulting from mass production technology but there is still plenty of room for high value-added products which could be handled by women workers, such as health food products, cosmetics, herbal medicine and industrial arts and crafts.

The last category of products has just received a big boost from the decision of the Thai government to proclaim " Thailand Arts and Crafts Year " starting from the Queen's birthday in August 1988 and lasting through 1989. The increased production of handicraft items with their high female labor content should do much to reduce seasonal underemployment of rural Thai women, but much of the human and material resources could be wasted due to lack of quality control and inefficient use of new technology.

USAID should sponsor efforts to bring some of the already popular arts and crafts items, such as imitation antiques and ceramics into line with international taste and quality requirement.

## Science and Technology for Development

The project purpose is to enhance the effectiveness and extent of public and private sector application of science and technology to Thailand's development. It is designed to initiate innovative services, particularly those which aim at activating greater use of existing science and technology capabilities and creating linkage systems for the generation and transmission of knowledge.

Several research activities ( within the areas of bioscience, biotechnology, material technology and applied electronic technology ) have been financed under this project with participation from many women scientists and technicians. To effectively disseminate the benefits of those researches to other women, particularly in the poor rural areas, the following modifications to existing programs can be made.

1. Support research on low-cost technology that will help reduce women's work load, and technology that are appropriate to their living environment and their present livelihood. For example, in village textile industry, new technology could be applied to natural dyes to improve its quality and attractiveness. This would also create among villagers an appreciation for local natural resources.

Dairy farming is another new area of women's work

in which science and technology can play an important role, such as in artificial insemination and processing of dairy products which now enjoys a rapidly expanding market.

2. Although USAID has sponsored several useful and innovative laboratory experiments, the findings are still not sufficiently distributed to potential beneficiaries, especially in remote rural areas. One possible solution is to encourage direct contacts between research scientists and the target groups. Research grants should make allowance to provide funding for future implementation of scientific discoveries in the field and necessary follow-up activities. This would not only give researchers the satisfaction from seeing their work being used and benefitting others, but would also allow them to obtain feedbacks to improve their future works and generate ideas for projects that would directly address local problems.

For example, in the case of the successful experiment on tissue culture of teak at Chiangmai University, the woman scientist in charge of the project should follow up by becoming part of the team that handles its distribution instead of simply handing over her result to her colleague at the Forestry Department.

3. There is evidence that women are normally excluded when new agricultural technology is introduced, due to their

secondary family status, low education, and the selection process of trainees by the village council. In order to ensure that women receive the intended benefits from new scientific and technological developments, suggestions should be made to the agencies responsible for disseminating USAID-sponsored research findings to devise a method that would include as many qualified women as possible in the training program.

Given women's lower literacy rate, they will have greater problem than men in understanding written instructions. This problem increases in the case of scientific and technical information. USAID should give consideration to funding the use of audio-visual materials and performing arts as media of instruction to rural women.

## Natural Resources and Environment

USAID's project on " Management of Natural Resources and Environment for Sustainable Development " arose from recognition that Thailand's economic Growth has been characterised by serious exploitation of the country's natural resource base. This project supports long term natural resources planning and management of forests, fisheries, soils, water and biological resources.

Among the main purposes of the project are :

1. To slow or reverse current trends in resource depletion and environment degradation.
2. To improve information available to public and private decision-makers for greater understanding of sound environmental and resource management.
3. To expand capacity for policy research and formulation, program planning, and pre-project analysis.

In order to bring women into this project and to include them among the beneficiaries, the project should make the following specifications:

1. Support research studies to collect base line information on Thai women's current role in the use and

management of natural resources and the different types of constraint that prevent them from becoming major actors in the protection of natural resource base. Findings from this study should be used to shape the natural resource and environment preservation program.

2. Women should be encouraged to use appropriate technology in preserving natural resources which are related to their domestic and income-generating work, such as trees, water, soil, fuelwood, and to make practical use of these resources in the local arts and crafts industries. For example, the use of natural dyes in textile industry, herbs in medicine, and natural fertilizer from plants and trees in place of chemical products which are dangerous for health.

Suggestions of the type mentioned above often faced criticism that they run counter to the quest for productive efficiency and cost minimization. Therefore, it is crucial to establish a link between such projects and science and technology programs, such as , experimentation on new technology that will upgrade the quality of local natural dye.

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Table 1

Female Labor Force Participation Rate by Age Group  
and Area of Residence, 1971, 1981 and 1986

	(Percentage)		
	1971	1981	1986
All ages	66.2	69.1	67.2
11 - 14	26.7	25.3	23.7
25 - 29	74.3	72.0	70.5
20 - 24	78.9	81.9	80.4
25 - 29	81.2	84.2	79.8
30 - 39	80.6	85.8	83.1
40 - 49	80.8	86.8	84.1
50 - 59	72.1	76.5	71.1
60 +	36.7	29.2	24.8
Urban Areas			
All Ages	39.0	51.9	52.0
Rural Areas			
All Ages	71.1	72.4	71.0

Source: National Statistical Office, Report of the  
Labor Force Survey, 1971, 1981 and 1986  
(Round 2)

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Table 2  
Female Employment in Thailand  
by Broad Economic Sectors  
1971 and 1986  
(Percentage)

1971			1986		
Agriculture	Industry	Service	Agriculture	Industry	Service
82.0	4.4	13.5	66.2	13.5	20.3

Source: National Statistical Office, Report of the Labor Force Survey,  
1971 and 1986 (Round 2)

Table 3

## Industrial Structure of Female Employment in Thailand, 1971 and 1986

Industry	Year			
	1971		1986	
	All areas	All areas	Urban	Rural
Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing	82.0	66.8	3.8	79.1
Mining and Quarrying	.04	.16	.02	.18
Manufacturing	3.9	8.4	19.8	6.2
Construction, Repair and Demotion	.25	.8	1.2	.72
Electricity, Gas, Water and Sanitary Services	.02	.12	.55	.03
Commerce	7.8	12.2	32.3	8.3
Transport, Storage and Communication	.09	.4	1.8	.16
Services	5.7	10.9	40.1	5.3
Activities not Adequately Described	.05	.04	.3	.003

Source: National Statistical Office, Report of the Labor Force Survey, 1971 and 1986  
(Round 2)

Table 4  
Occupational Structure of Female Employment in Thailand, 1971 and 1986

(Percentage)

Occupation	Year			
	1971		1986	
	All areas	All areas	Urban	Rural
Professional, Technical and Related Workers	1.6	3.4	10.5	1.9
Administrative, Executive and Managerial Workers	0.2	0.6	3.0	.14
Clerical Workers	0.8	2.8	12.4	.99
Sales Workers	8.5	12.4	32.9	8.4
Farmers and Related Workers, Miners and Quarrymen	82.1	66.9	3.8	79.1
Craftsman, Production-Process and Laborers	5.1	9.6	19.2	7.8
Workers in Transport and Communication	.06	0.3	1.2	.13
Service and Related Workers	1.5	3.9	16.5	1.4
Occupation not Reported	0.1	0.01	.37	.003

Source: National Statistical Office, Report of the Labor Force Survey, 1971 and 1986  
(Round 2)

Table 5  
Female Civil Servants in Various Ministries  
1985

Ministry	Male		Female		Ratio
	Number	%	Number	%	M/F
Agriculture and Cooperatives	32,068	9.8	11,911	3	2.9
Communications	7,535	2.3	2,819	0.7	2.7
Interior	37,054	11.4	15,754	4	2.4
Industry	2,388	0.7	1,370	0.4	1.7
Foreign affairs	715	0.2	471	0.1	1.5
Finance	10,730	3.3	7,968	2	1.4
Office of the Prime Minister	4,006	1.2	3,713	0.9	1.1
Science, Technology and Energy	920	0.3	864	0.2	1.1
Commerce	1,483	0.4	1,733	0.4	0.9
Independent Public Agencies	1,453	0.4	1,670	0.4	0.9
Education	194,896	59.8	266,483	68.3	0.7
Justice	1,589	0.5	2,378	0.6	0.7
University affairs	11,703	3.6	21,660	5.5	0.5
Public Health	19,622	6.0	51,225	13.1	0.4
Total	326,162	100	390,019	100	0.8

Source: Office of the Civil Service Commission, Report on the Number of Civil Servants, 1985.

Table 6  
Civil Servants by Levels, 1985

Levels	Civil Servants		%
	Male	Female	Female
C1 - C6	315,661	385,387	60.0
C7 and above	10,501	4,632	30.6
All levels	326,162	390,019	54.5

Source: Office of the Civil Service Commission,  
1985.

Table 7

Civil Servants at Executive Level (C9 and above)

Level	Number		%
	Male	Female	Female
Permanent Secretary (C11)	22	-	-
Director - General (C10)	107	3	2.7
Deputy Director-General (C9) and Others	356	16	4.3
Total	485	19	3.8

Source: Office of the Civil Service Commission, 1988.

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Table 8

## Participation in National Politics 1983, 1986 and 1988

Year	Candidate			Elected		
	Number		%	Number		%
	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female	Female
1983	1,826	54	2.9	311	13	4.0
1986	3,451	362	9.5	335	12	3.5
1988	3,612	366	9.2	357	10	2.8

Source: Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior.

Table 9  
 Women in Local Administration  
 1984-1986

Position	Year		
	1984	1985	1986
Kamnan (Sub-district head)	7	15	16
Assistant Kamnan	36	80	84
First-Aid Man	6	23	32
Pu Yai Ban (Village head)	43	185	288
Assistant Pu Yai Ban	107	450	523

Source: Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, 1986.

Table 10  
 Unemployment Rate by Sex  
 and Area of Residence  
 1986

Sex	All areas	Urban	Rural	Bangkok
Male	4.0	6.2	3.6	6.4
Female	5.3	5.7	5.2	5.5

Source: National Statistical Office, Report of the  
 Labor Force Survey, 1986 (Round 2)

Table 11

Sex Ratio (Number of men per 100 women) of Migrants  
in Bangkok, aged 10-19 years, 1974-1985

year	1974	1976	1978	1983	1985
Number of men per 100 women	84	64	49	49	42

Source: National Statistical Office, Report of the Survey of Migration  
in Bangkok Metropolis, 1974-1985.

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Table 12  
 Average Earnings of Full-time Workers (15 years and over)  
 in the non-agricultural Sectors by Sex and Industry, 1983

(Baht per month)

	Male	Female	Female/male ratio	Female share of employment
All non-agricultural sectors	608.1	430.9	0.70	34.02
Mining and quarrying	572.6	495.9	0.86	2.53
Manufacturing	558.6	396.3	0.70	40.09
Food, beverages, tobacco and snuff	563.4	375.0	0.66	36.84
Textile, clothing and shoes	653.6	405.2	0.61	76.55
Others	546.1	394.4	0.72	26.88
Construction and utility	604.8	480.4	0.79	16.28
Wholesale and retail trade	674.9	430.7	0.63	37.07
Finance, property and business	1,047.9	926.8	0.88	35.25
Communication, transport and storage	650.2	855.7	1.31	10.57
Government services	571.7	570.5	0.99	10.80
Other services	596.1	385.5	0.64	53.18
Activity not adequately described	1,379.5	476.1	0.34	19.70

Source: National Statistical Office, Report of the Labour Force Survey, 1983  
 (Round 2)

Table 13  
 Percentage Distribution of Member  
 of Selected Labor Unions  
 1988

Unions	Male	Female
Bank and Finance Company Labor Federation of Thailand	26.8	73.2
Telephone Organization Labor Union	27.4	72.6
Metropolitan Electricity Authority Labor Union	14.7	85.3
Thai Blankets and Textile Industry Labor Union	91.7	8.3
Far East Knitting Labor Union	100.0	-

Source: Department of Labor, Ministry of Interior,  
 1988.

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Table 14  
Executive Member of 254 Labor Unions  
in Bangkok Metropolis, 1987

	Executive Number	Members Percentage
Male	2,935	83.5
Female	579	16.5
Both Sex	3,514	100.0

Source: Department of Labor, Ministry of Interior,  
1987.

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Table 15  
 Literacy Rate of Thai Population aged 15 years  
 and over, in urban and rural areas  
 1970 and 1980

	Male		Female	
	1970	1980	1970	1980
Urban	94.5	95.5	84.4	90.7
Rural	88.0	92.4	73.2	84.5

Source: National Statistical Office, Population and  
 Housing Census, 1970 and 1980.

Table 16

Educational Attainment of Population  
Aged 11 years and Over, 1971 and 1986  
(Percentage Distribution)

Level of Education	1971		1986	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Non	10.9	18.5	4.8	11.3
Elementary and Kindergarten	82.7	78.5	76.9	75.7
Secondary and Pre- University or Equivalent	5.02	2.1	13.3	8.8
University	.5	.4	2.5	1.8
Teacher Training	.7	.51	1.7	1.7
Short Course Vocational	.004	.006	-	.05
Others	.01	.04	0.3	.09
Unknown	.005	.003	0.5	.5

Source: National Statistical Office, Report of the  
Labor Force Survey, 1971 and 1986 (Round 2)

Table 17  
Undergraduate Students in Private Universities  
by Major Disciplines, 1984

Discipline	Male		Female		Ratio M/F
	Number	%	Number	%	
Humanities and Religion	550	3.9	1,463	6.5	0.4
Applied and Fine Arts	31	.2	12	.05	2.6
Law	2,613	18.4	676	3.0	3.9
Natural Sciences	156	1.1	144	.6	1.1
Nursing	-	-	355	1.6	-
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery	135	.9	61	.3	2.2
Social Sciences	10,719	75.5	19,744	87.9	0.5
Total	14,204	100.0	22,455	100.0	0.6

Source: State Universities Bureau, Report on Private Universities, 1984.