

Conference Proceedings

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Women, Economic Growth and Demographic Change in Asia, the Near East and Eastern Europe

May 14-15, 1991
Washington, D.C.



U.S. Agency for International Development
Office of Women in Development
Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination
Office of Development Resources
Bureau for Europe and the Near East

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CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

**WOMEN, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE
IN ASIA, THE NEAR EAST AND EASTERN EUROPE**

*May 14-15, 1991
Washington, D.C.*

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U.S. Agency for International Development

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The views and interpretations expressed in this report are those of the authors or conference participants and should not be attributed to the Agency for International Development.

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FOREWORD

The context of changing demographic, socio-economic and political conditions in Asia, the Near East and Eastern European regions as well as policy shifts within the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) pose increasing challenges for development assistance. The purpose of the research agenda and the Conference on *Women, Economic Growth and Demographic Change* held May 14-15, 1991 in Washington, D.C., was to expand our dialogue on how A.I.D. policies and programs in these regions might directly or indirectly affect women's economic participation and family planning program performance.

The potential for A.I.D.'s programs to benefit women in Asia, the Near East and Eastern Europe is considerable if women's evolving roles are properly analyzed and considered in the development of policies and programs. Although data deficiencies complicate the task, greater research interest and support for methodological improvements are gradually enhancing the depth and quality of available information on women's productive and reproductive roles.

The papers presented in this conference attempt to provide state-of-the art data and analyses on the linkages between women's labor force participation, education, fertility and legal status. The focus of the conference papers and discussions was to demonstrate the particular opportunities presented by women's participation in the labor force and in public life, to identify the constraints they face at their varied market and nonmarket activities, and to suggest ways in which women can be more fully and effectively integrated into A.I.D.'s development assistance efforts in the 1990s.

This Proceedings Report begins with a conceptual overview that highlights the main discussion themes as well as the interlinkages among the key issues in each paper. Following the conceptual overview are executive summaries and discussion points on each paper to give the reader a glimpse of the exchange of ideas generated during the conference. We hope that the proceedings serve as a valuable summary of the papers and discussions at the conference and facilitate the consideration of gender issues from a broader programmatic perspective.

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Paula J. Bryan

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**WOMEN, DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN
ASIA, THE NEAR EAST AND EASTERN EUROPE**

May 14 - 15, 1991, Room 1105 NS

Tuesday, May 14

8:45 - 9:00 a.m.

Registration

9:00 - 9:15 a.m.

Introduction

Paula J. Bryan, Office of Technical Resources
Bureau for Europe and the Near East (ENE/TR/HPN)

Tulin Pulley, Office of Women in Development
Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination (PPC/WID)

Opening Remarks

Dr. Carol Adelman, Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Europe and the Near East (ENE)

Ambassador Judy McLennan, U.S. Representative to
U.N. Commission on the Status of Women

9:15 - 10:30 a.m.

**"WOMEN'S INCOME, FERTILITY AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY
IN ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST"**

Dr. Boone Turchi, Associate Professor of Economics,
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and
Fellow, Carolina Population Center

Mary Mulhern, The Futures Group/GENESYS Project

10:30 - 10:45 a.m.

Break

10:45 - 12:00 p.m.

"INVESTING IN FEMALE EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT"

Dr. Jere Behrman, William R. Kenan Professor of Economics,
University of Pennsylvania

12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Lunch break

2:00 - 3:15 p.m.

"WOMEN AND LAW IN ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST"

Lynn P. Freedman, J.D., M.P.H, Development Law and Policy Program,
Columbia University School of Public Health

3:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 - 4:45 p.m.

**"WOMEN IN EVOLVING AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIES OF ASIA AND
THE NEAR EAST: IMPLICATIONS FOR A.I.D.'s STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING"**

Dr. Ruth Dixon-Mueller, Senior Research Associate,
Graduate Group in Demography, University of California, Berkeley

Inji Islam, The Futures Group/GENESYS Project

Wednesday, May 15

- 9:00 - 10:15 a.m. **"LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE ADVANCED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES"**
Susan Joekes, Economist, Institute for Development Studies, Sussex
- 10:15 - 10:30 a.m. Break
- 10:30 - 11:45 a.m. **"WOMEN IN THE NEWLY EMERGING DEMOCRACIES OF EASTERN EUROPE"**
Sydney Lewis, Ernst & Young
Marian Gibbon, Ernst & Young
- 11:45 - 1:00 p.m. Lunch Break
- 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Panel Discussion with Authors:
**"TRANSLATING DATA INTO POLICY AND PROGRAMS:
IMPLICATIONS FOR A.I.D."**
Moderator: Maurice Middleberg, The Futures Group/OPTIONS Project
- 3:00 - 3:15 p.m. Closing Remarks

Dr. Chloe O'Gara, Acting Director, Office of Women in Development
Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination (PPC/WID)

CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW OF CONFERENCE THEMES

A Focus on Choice

The advantage of economic growth is not that wealth increases happiness, but that it increases the range of human choice. The case for economic growth is that it gives [people] greater control over [their] environment and thereby increases [their] freedom.

Sir Arthur Lewis

Economic growth, as equated with increased GNP per capita, has come to be seen as an end in itself. It is certainly desirable that economies expand their capacity for generating output and become more dynamic in structure. In the narrowest sense, economic growth is the improved ability to produce goods and services; more broadly, growth encompasses issues of resource allocation, technology, employment, income distribution and demographic change, each of which has implications for national income and wealth. As important as economic growth is, however, it is insufficient to bring about all the changes that development entails.

The human dimension of economic growth and development, arguably the most important, is too often neglected in favor of more measurable aspects. For the citizens of a nation, economic growth should mean improved standards of living. Since people are much more than just economic agents, improving their standard of living will require attention to both economic and non-economic considerations, that is, to health, education and political rights, as well as employment and income. Ultimately, "quality of life" is measured differently by everyone, but each individual should be allowed to improve it as he or she chooses. Development must create an environment that enables individual choice in the pursuit of a better life.

"Progress", then, cannot be rendered meaningful without consideration to how the range of human choice is affected, be it in the sphere of education, employment, population or law. It implies both the presence of options and the capacity to exercise choice among those options. Furthermore, a focus on how and why individuals make certain choices, based on a range of incentives, opportunities and constraints, provides a means of understanding current problems and identifying appropriate policy responses.

It is often assumed that the benefits of "freedom" and choice which emerge with development are enjoyed equally by all individuals. In reality, different groups experience disparate impacts of growth and development. It should not be presumed that women and men gain equally whenever

national measures of income, literacy, etc. show improvement, because aggregate statistics hide inevitable disparities between them. In the countries of Asia and the Near East, the range of productive, reproductive and other activities from which women can choose is often severely limited. Removing constraints and opening opportunities to participation is an integral part of improving the status of women and enhancing their contribution to economic growth.

Access to opportunity

Women's access to resources and decision-making power is often constrained by socio-cultural, institutional, legal and policy-related factors, as well as purely economic ones. These factors restrict their capacity to exercise choice, and thus deprive women of the autonomy (freedom) and decision-making authority (control) that development is intended to bring about at the individual level. The conference papers examined these factors in the context of education, employment, fertility and legal status.

Education

In education, girls and women do not always have the same opportunities as their male counterparts. In Asia and the Near East, large gender differences in enrollment and attainment rates at all levels, and numbers of secondary school and university graduates, reveal wide disparities between men and women. Incentives to invest in female education are critical in determining how much education families will choose for their daughters. Gender gaps in education often result from households' differential demand for girls' education versus boys' education, due to differences in the perceived benefits of educating daughters and sons (it is often assumed that educated boys will contribute more to household income), higher opportunity costs of sending girls to school (they can no longer care for younger siblings or carry out household chores), or a socio-cultural setting which makes girls' schooling less feasible. In Pakistan, for example, the policy of single-sex education and public provision of more schools for boys than girls is cited as largely responsible for gender gaps in school enrollment (Behrman, 1991). Decisions about girls' and boys' education are made in the context of a household's perceived costs and benefits, be they in the form of income, labor, or a daughter's virtue.

In Asia and the Near East, policy interventions to address the imbalance in male and female education are warranted not just on grounds of equity, but of efficiency as well. Because average educational attainment is lower among women, marginal returns to female education are higher than for males. The empirical evidence for positive externalities arising from female education, such as

improvements in child health, is not strong enough (from a strictly macro-economic perspective) to support greater emphasis on educating females over males. However, the fact that rates of return are higher for investment in women than men does signal a misallocation of educational resources and hence inefficiency (Behrman, 1991).

Employment

Women's lower educational status is often a constraint to their employment and earning options. In Eastern Europe, the policy of providing women with "general academic education" and men with more vocational skills has resulted in the latter having access to higher-paying jobs: women are concentrated in light industry while labor markets favor manual skills and heavy industry. Elsewhere, educational differences are insignificant, yet women have access only to jobs with the lowest returns. This situation is apparent among agricultural wage laborers in most of South Asia. Labor markets are highly segmented, with women hired for off-season tasks that pay far less than men's peak season jobs. Women face greater uncertainty and irregularity of agricultural employment, and even where they carry out the same tasks as men, women are paid lower wages (Islam and Dixon-Mueller, 1991).

It is imperative that women have access to adequate employment opportunities. Women's participation in the paid labor force often provides a significant source of household income, affects reproductive behavior favorably, and contributes directly to national economic growth, especially in cases where women are drawn away from unpaid work into relatively attractive jobs. In much of South and Southeast Asia, female labor force participation (LFP) is fairly high, but only as a result of women being forced by poverty into low-paying marginal jobs in agriculture, microenterprise and urban services (Islam and Dixon-Mueller, 1991). Therefore, the issue is not merely one of participation in the labor force, it is also of access to employment that provides income above subsistence levels. Providing women with such employment opportunities has become more urgent in light of evidence that their income is critical to the survival of poor households, and that the number of households where women are the main providers is increasing. The increase in the number of female providers is especially prominent in parts of Asia, where rates of divorce and female abandonment are rising rapidly.

The importance of women's income is not limited to the context of the nuclear family or female-headed household. In Korea, Taiwan, and other advanced developing countries (ADCs), remittances by unmarried female migrants to their natal families played a large role in supporting rural households, and today this pattern can be seen in the Philippines and Thailand. In Bangladesh, young women working in garment factories may contribute more to household income than their

fathers, but they are generally not from the poorest families. The experiences of the four "Asian Tigers", Taiwan, Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong, also illustrate the important contribution that female LFP can make to national income. In these countries, women's employment in the export sector was critical to the success of labor absorption strategies which fueled rapid economic growth. Similarly in the rest of Asia and the Near East, it can be expected that policies which increase employment opportunities for women (as well as men) will also further other economic objectives (Joeques, 1991).

Equally important as women's employment opportunities are the remuneration they receive and conditions of work. Women deserve the opportunity to earn the same amounts of income as men with similar training. However, wage differentials between men and women are found in ADCs, South Asia and Eastern Europe. In each case, the differential has approximately the same magnitude--one third, which is in fact also the case in the U.S. (Joeques, 1991). There is no evidence that these gaps are justified by differential attachment to the labor force of men and women, i.e. women being more likely to leave jobs and the workforce because of childbirth, husbands' relocation, or any other reason. Although some component may be explained by an over-representation of women in low-paying sub-sectors, evidence suggests that such occupational crowding is not a reflection of women's preferences, but rather of barriers to women's entry into more lucrative fields. Women are steered into certain occupations and away from others by biases in educational provision and discrimination in the labor market. The resulting gap further reinforces women's lower educational status because it makes expected returns to education vary by gender.

It must be emphasized that increasing women's access to paid employment opportunities expands their range of choice; however, it does not mean that women must work in the formal labor force in order to be better off. Indeed, under socialism in Eastern Europe, women like men have been active participants in the labor market as both a right and a duty. It would be misleading, however, to claim that women have been unambiguously better off because they can work outside the home. In fact, Eastern European women continue to bear a double burden: they maintain both jobs and households without many of the labor-saving devices readily available in the West, and without much assistance from men. Preliminary studies also suggest that women may leave the workforce if they can afford to once reforms have been instituted (Lewis and Gibbon, 1991). This example underscores the need to establish not simply whether women participate in the labor force, but whether it is a matter of choice that they work outside the home, and whether their dual roles as income earners and homemakers are recognized and supported.

Fertility

Women's labor force participation may also contribute to lowering national fertility rates in Asia and the Near East, as better employment opportunities for women are correlated with fertility declines in the region. This relationship can be explained in part by the conflicting demands of paid employment and childrearing. Interventions in the labor market which increase returns (monetary and psychological) to women's employment may induce women to have fewer children by raising the opportunity cost of having a child (i.e., foregone wages) and by increasing their decision-making power within the household. Some policy measures, such as the provision of childcare or flexible working hours, actually reduce the tension between childrearing and women's formal labor force participation and thus increase the range of choices available to women, so that childbearing and employment are no longer mutually exclusive options. A review of the evidence for the region finds that only at higher income levels do we see reductions in a woman's fertility, reflecting a change in preferences, increasing opportunity costs of children, and improved access to and knowledge of family planning. In Asian and Near Eastern countries, if reduced fertility is a policy goal, not only is an increase in the number of women in the formal labor force necessary, but also an improvement in the status and wages of jobs available to them.

While the empirical evidence on the relationship between LFP and fertility has been the subject of a number of investigations, there is a critical need to focus attention on policies which support or constrain women's dual-role options. Policy-makers must have access to the tools for assessing employment and population policies from a cross-sectoral perspective, such that the numerous linkages through which they can affect change and expand women's choices are evident. Enabling women to maintain both jobs and families enhances their ability to exercise choice in the spheres of reproduction and employment.

For female heads of household, policies which facilitate women's dual roles can be critical for family survival, because such measures can potentially reduce women's burden and allow them greater income (Turchi, Mulhern and Mahal, 1991).

Legal and Socio-Cultural Status

The manner in which individual preferences are translated into household preferences, and how community standards and ascribed roles affect household preferences, is critical to a woman's ability to exercise choice. In the case of education, one or both parents usually decide whether their daughter will attend school or not, and for how long. Similarly, if a husband's preferences override those of his wife, and he (or society at large) holds women's childbearing role to be more important than her working outside the home, female participation in the labor force will be low regardless of

what individual women want for themselves.

Religious traditions and taboos may also restrict women in many domains. This is especially true wherever religious traditions are deeply entrenched in law, as in many countries of Asia and the Near East where religion-based personal status law governs private relations while secular, civil law governs public life (Freedman, 1991). In such a dual system, changes in civil law or government policy designed to enhance women's participation in development through expanded employment or education, may have only limited impact if the personal status law operating at the household level does not guarantee women the right to choose to take advantage of such opportunity. For example, in many parts of Asia and the Near East, Islamic law gives male guardians the legal right to control a woman's education, labor, marriage, sexuality and fertility and so her access to resources and decision-making power. In this context, A.I.D. programs designed to expand women's choices in the public sphere collide with the reality of women's lives, if they do not simultaneously address the legal obstacles to women's participation in development that operate in the private sphere (Freedman, 1991).

Designing Better Policy

Better policy requires an understanding of the constraints which impinge upon both women and men, with statistical evidence to support conceptual arguments. In many instances, public policies are developed without adequate attention to gender issues and thus directly and indirectly constrain men's and women's ability to effectively participate in the development process. Evidence suggests that women are usually more constrained than men. For example, several countries have legislated working hours for women which has discouraged employers from hiring them. In Pakistan, where sex-segregated schooling is mandated, boys' schools receive a larger share of the national education budget. Polish laws governing which physicians can prescribe contraceptives provide another example: although contraceptives are physically available, only Ministry of Health officials rather than general practitioners can administer prescriptions, in effect limiting contraceptive distribution and partly depriving women of control over their fertility. If a couple desires to space their children and limit family size, their efforts will be undermined by restrictions limiting their ability to obtain contraceptives. As the ones responsible for bearing and raising children, women are disproportionately affected by this policy.

As two of the conference papers illustrated, decision-making models (which depict how decisions about various aspects of women's lives are made) present a useful framework for identifying women's options, the constraints under which women operate and the implications at the national

level. To understand the LFP-fertility relationship, for example, it is necessary to understand the multiplicity of factors which determine how many children a woman will have; to reduce fertility it is necessary to affect the "demand for completed family size" (desired number of children). Policy implemented at the national or regional level only has an impact once it influences variables underlying household or individual behavior. The perceived opportunity costs of childrearing interact with factors such as cultural norms, desire for parenthood, likelihood of child survival, need for old age security and availability of contraceptives to determine the demand for children. Policies which improve women's employment options increase those opportunity costs, as well as increasing savings for old age, and can thereby contribute to lower fertility and improved child health. Similarly, policies which provide incentives for educating girls (that compensate households for the costs of sending daughters to school) will reduce gender gaps in education by affecting household-level decisions. In addition, policies which mandate school enrollment might be effective in promoting the value of female education, especially in restrictive cultural settings.

Data deficiencies unfortunately complicate the tasks of identifying problem areas and evaluating specific impacts of policies on women. A focus on choice implies that the desired outcome is access to resources and opportunities (for education, employment, family planning services), as well as their control and use. However, most available data measure only use and participation. Furthermore, data on the status of women may not be sufficiently reliable or comprehensive for prudent policy design and evaluation. Efforts to design better policy definitely require better compilation of both qualitative and quantitative gender-disaggregated data.

For policy-makers and A.I.D. officers, adopting a gender-sensitive approach to policy design that focuses on the range of choices faced by men and women can be effective in reaching strategic objectives. Any given policy intervention may have myriad gender-differentiated consequences which A.I.D. officers must consider when designing and monitoring programs. For example, increasing girls' accessibility to schools, in addition to improving their educational status, may gradually increase women's options for labor force participation, as entrepreneurs and employees. As women earn higher incomes, overall educational and living standards rise, as does the opportunity cost of raising a child. As households adopt higher standards of living and schooling, the direct cost of a child also rises. The outcome is generally a long-term decline in average family size (assuming the availability of family planning options), which most of the industrialized countries have experienced. A.I.D. country programs and strategies should aim to reinforce such positive linkages within the project portfolio.

Development practitioners must endeavor to increase women's access to resources and decision-making power so that they may take advantage of opportunities to participate in and benefit

from the development process. As Dr. Carol Adelman, Assistant Administrator for the Europe and Near East Bureau, explained, "When we think of the projects done by A.I.D., how to provide the opportunity to let women make choices cannot be divorced from economic development." To be effective, policy must consider gender-differentiated constraints, opportunities and incentive structures and recognize the implications of policy in light of distorting inequalities. A.I.D. must be willing to make difficult decisions when faced with policy options that appear to encourage economic growth, but actually ignore inefficiencies while reinforcing existing institutional biases and cultural attitudes which limit women's capacity to participate in development.

Women's Income, Fertility and Development Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In all nations, women play a crucial role in society's most fundamental processes. Women have primary responsibility for the management of the home and for the rearing of children, and they make major economic contributions to the (measured or unmeasured) economic output of the nation. However, development planners generally pay little attention to women's role in the economy. This paper makes the case that women should be accorded special attention during the development planning process. It argues that women's roles are subject to the greatest changes during socioeconomic development and that these role changes have major consequences both directly for the growth of the economy and indirectly by their impact upon population growth. This paper focuses on the latter, examining the relationship between women's labor force participation and fertility. It presents a framework for use in understanding how development policy can affect women's fertility through its impact on their labor force participation. Given the central importance of population policy in A.I.D.'s development activities, the paper assumes that a reduction in population growth is desirable in promoting socio-economic development.

First, a review of the literature for countries in the Asia and Near East region is presented, summarizing support for an inverse relationship between women's labor force participation and their fertility rates. Contrary evidence is also examined, and explanatory factors for variation in the relationship are cited, including access to family planning methods, the structure of employment opportunities, and family structure. A number of explanatory hypotheses are reviewed for applicability in the region, including the role incompatibility hypothesis, Sen's entitlement hypothesis, and the active-passive decisionmaking framework. The common denominator in these various explanations of the inverse relationship between women's labor force participation and fertility rates is the general level of socio-economic development of a country, which generally includes increases in women's status. Our reading of the literature for Asia and the Near East leads us to believe that the indicators of a developing or transitional economy which may be particularly important for

measuring women's status include: (1) employment opportunities in the modern sector, such that women work away from their home and for wages; (2) a declining surplus labor force, such that the best substitute childcare providers are gainfully employed elsewhere; and (3) an increase in women's wages and the status of their work, such that work provides sufficient monetary and psychological compensation for having fewer children, as well as greater input into household decision-making vis à vis men.

Second, the paper describes the various means through which development programs can affect women, by changing the environment in which individual decision making operates. Examples of such programs include:

- (1) *Economic Infrastructure Investment*, which can fundamentally alter the style of production, its location, the quality and nature of labor required, and the extent of both the commodity and labor markets.
- (2) *Direct Capital Investment*, through equity investment or loans to private entities, can influence the mix of goods and services produced and the structure of labor demand. For example, the capital equipment provided to these enterprises serves to increase the productivity of labor directly and to mandate the quality and type of labor required to use it.
- (3) *Investment in Human Capital* can increase the productivity of labor by improving labor skills and versatility. These programs can be specially targeted to women and girls in order to influence their preferences and increase their labor opportunities, especially those that conflict with the traditional motherhood role if the goal is population reduction.
- (4) *Social and Political Policy*, by promoting (or at least permitting) the social transformation that accompanies development, can give women the choice to work both inside and outside the home.

Many development programs affect women only indirectly, operating through the economic and social environment, and it is easy to miss their impact on reproductive behavior. As a result, planners often ignore this dimension as they assess the consequences of their policies and programs.

The following sections of this paper present a framework designed to show how the impact of development policy on fertility can be traced through its effects on women's income from labor. First, a model of the demand for children is presented that shows the "proximate decision factors" that directly influence a woman's desired completed family size. These factors are: relative preferences for children versus other activities; the perceived opportunity cost of a child; the expected economic contributions of a child; and a family's potential income. Later in the paper, we focus more carefully on the role of normative pressures from the husband and other family members on the determination of actual fertility.

The perceived opportunity cost of a child is particularly influenced by the labor force opportunities and constraints affecting women. The paper lays out the connections between the labor market and women's productive behavior in some detail. It shows that a wide range of policies operating on diverse spheres of the economy can have a significant impact upon the value of a woman's time, her labor force participation and income, and ultimately on her demand for children. Linkages between reproductive behavior and women's income are shown to connect public programs in the following areas: social policy, infrastructure investment, direct investment, agricultural policy, education policy, public health policy, family planning policy and commercial policy. We suggest that as A.I.D. officers continue to develop a multidisciplinary approach to program and project development, they begin to ask a series of questions to elicit the potential effects of an activity on women, their income and fertility rates. These questions include:

- (1) To what extent does this project add to the alternative labor market activities available to women? Does the form of the project make it easy for women to participate in economic activity and rear children, or does it ease access to the former while making the latter more difficult?
- (2) When evaluating projects that have the potential for reducing the demand for children by making labor force participation more attractive, ask: Are the family planning facilities associated with the location of this project sufficient to meet the additional demand likely to be generated?
- (3) When supporting investment in roads and transportation systems that can extend the labor market, ask: Can infrastructure investments be designed in such a way as to expand women's labor force options?
- (4) How do education projects affect women's potential wage rate? What changes would be necessary to endow women with the power to command higher wages?
- (5) Does new investment in industry and business lead to increased opportunities for women? If not, how could the form of the investment be altered to increase opportunities for women? To what extent will new labor market opportunities conflict with large families?
- (6) To what extent do agricultural investments make women more valuable as farm producers, thus reducing the relative value of women in child rearing activities? To what extent do agricultural investments make children more valuable, thus conflicting with population reduction goals in a given country?
- (7) Programs designed to favor the economic position of women may be particularly difficult to implement in areas where there is high general unemployment for men. In that case, how could labor market preference be given to women, if it were decided that such preference were warranted?
- (8) When social policy that is beneficial in and of itself (e.g., child care for working mothers, child allowances or maternity leave policies) conflicts with fertility reduction goals that focus on

making women's labor force activities more attractive than, and incompatible with, child rearing, ask: Which of these goals is more important in the short run? in the long run?

The consequence of this variety of connections is that small changes in policy can have important effects on the opportunities and constraints that determine women's labor force participation. Changes in women's labor market opportunities can, therefore, have significant effects on their reproductive behavior and ultimately on a nation's rate of population growth.

Women's Income, Fertility and Development Policy

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Labor force participation and child-rearing are not mutually exclusive options for a woman.**

It was agreed that juxtaposing labor force participation (LFP) and fertility decisions as done in the paper may create an impression of overdichotimization. Family size is the critical issue, as is the timing and spacing of births, not whether or not a woman will choose to have any children. However, factors relating to the demand for children and completed family size, on the one hand, and those affecting the decision of when to place the next birth, on the other, are analytically different and hence it may be important to note this difference. In policy formulation, the distinction implies a range of program possibilities. Some can target the delay of births or start of childbearing ("sequential demand" in the paper); Others can target completed family size.

It was also observed that there clearly exists a range of non-work and non-childrearing activities that might engage women's time (volunteer work, leisure activities are examples) and give direct pleasure but offer no monetary remuneration. Most women in Asia and the Near East do not yet have the option of engaging in such activities.

- **Economic growth and changes in the labor market may have an impact on fertility even when women are not participating in the labor force.**

As families' incomes and standards of living rise, along with average educational requirements in the labor market, households are required to invest more resources toward each child. The result is higher costs of raising a child, which generally lowers completed family size.

- **There may be instances in which exploiting the potential conflict between childrearing and LFP would be undesirable.**

The context in which we typically address the LFP-fertility relationship--that of a stable household with at least one male income earner--hides this fact. However, as the poorest women are frequently forced into the labor force due to the absence of male support, programs to make the roles of mother and laborer more compatible may be desirable.

- **There is a crucial difference between providing women more choices and inducing women to choose certain things.**

High female LFP may be considered a desirable result simply because it leads women to choose to have smaller families--a decision consistent with the preconceived "best outcome" of the policymaker. This approach to the LFP-fertility relationship may overemphasize the need for conflict between motherhood and employment. However, to the extent that development brings a "fundamental change in woman's role from one that is centered in the home, whose primary responsibility is for management of the household and rearing children, to something more diverse," which a thorough reading of history suggests, some conflict is inevitable.

- **Phrasing the question about fertility and LFP as "what is the effect of employment on fertility?" may be the source of the problem.**

Perhaps a better question is, "what kinds of opportunities exist for women and what the returns in those occupations?". Viewed in this light, there may be a positive association between family size and LFP. Framing the question about LFP in opposition to fertility is worrisome because it suggests that we should only promote female LFP as a tool to decrease fertility. There are actually many other independent benefits to women's involvement in remunerative work.

- **Convincing policymakers to target women may initially require an emphasis on the broad implications of policy.**

In the case of North Africa, the change in openness to fertility reduction programs would not have been possible were the need to increase women's LFP presented as the objective of the fertility reduction project. Instead, increasing female LFP was offered as the instrument to achieve broader desired ends.

Investing in Female Education for Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Female education has always lagged behind male education in most of Asia and the Near East, though the gap has varied enormously between countries. Differences in school enrollment rates have lessened over the past two decades throughout the region, and may have been eliminated in Sri Lanka and some East Asian countries. Nevertheless, they remain considerable in many others. Enrollment rates refer only to the current flow of investment in formal schooling. Evidence of gaps in investment in education other than formal schooling is very sketchy, but seems to suggest similar patterns. Gaps in the stock of educated women and men are likely to remain for decades in most countries of the region.

Such gender gaps in education raise important questions. Are such gaps sensible from the point of view of efficiency? What are the implications for concerns about equity? What are the implications for policy? To address these questions, it is necessary first to ask what is known about the determinants of female education and of gender gaps in education, and then what is known about the impact of such education. Only with an understanding of the causes and effects of female education can policy needs be defined and specific interventions designed.

1. Analytical framework, measurement and estimation problems, and policy rationale.

To establish a framework for analysis of such questions, consideration is given to modeling education investment decisions, to measurement and estimation problems, and to the analytical rationale for policy interventions. Modeling suggests how a number of dimensions of demand and supply for education may interact to affect female education within the broader context of household behavior and current and expected market options, and that controlling for other factors in the estimation of the impact of female education is likely to be critical to avoid biased estimates. The discussion of empirical problems notes that disentangling the effects of female education from those of a number of other variables -- such as innate ability, motivation, and preferences -- is likely to be difficult. The consideration of policy rationales points to the need to identify some market failure - - perhaps due to externalities or increasing returns to scale or public goods -- to rationalize policies

that increase economic efficiency. It also points to the existence of a policy hierarchy, in which policies that more directly address the specific market failure of concern tend to be relatively preferable from an efficiency perspective (all else equal). Equity arguments may show that it is desirable to use policies which result in increased inefficiencies, but there still remains a range of policy choices with different costs in terms of efficiency and productivity. Therefore, the efficiency concerns still provide guidance.

2. Summary of systematic empirical studies.

Existing systematic empirical studies raise a multitude of questions that merit further research and argue for the replication of some of the more interesting results to test their validity under different conditions. Nevertheless, they suggest a number of insights into the determinants and impacts of female education, mainly formal schooling.

The determination of the gender gaps in education in Asia and the Near East has been subject to relatively little systematic empirical analysis. The available studies suggest that expected gender gaps in paid employment options are often a significant factor in inducing gender gaps in formal schooling and other forms of education to which the payoffs are largely in the labor market. To the extent that this is the case, policy changes that reduce gender biases in labor market conditions are likely to induce more female education. With regard to formal schooling, however, this is a lengthy process, given the gestation period between enrollment (especially at the primary level) and returns in the form of improved employment opportunities. A study done in Indonesia also suggests that improvements in the health of young children and infants may have a substantial positive effect on secondary schooling of girls by reducing their time spent caring for younger siblings. A study of Pakistan concludes that in rural areas of that country, the largest factor underlying large gender gaps in educational attainment is a gender gap in the public provision of schools.

The impact of female schooling on paid labor market outcomes and on nonmarket outcomes in the Asia and Near East regions, and elsewhere, has been subjected to much more systematic study. Findings suggest that the much larger number of "standard" studies which interpret simple or multivariate associations as reflecting causality may be misleading in a number of respects. The failure to control for sample selectivity seems to cause biases in both directions of the estimated effects of women's schooling on such outcomes. On the other hand, standard studies underestimate the extent to which labor market returns to schooling for women exceed those for men, i.e. given current base levels, equivalent investments in female and male education result in greater percentage wage increases for women than for men. Failure to control for other factors -- such as individual ability and motivation, household encouragement, the quality of schooling, and community learning

and employment opportunities -- seems to result in substantial overestimates of the impact of female schooling in standard studies. Estimates that control for such factors imply that the true impact of female schooling on both paid labor market and other outcomes is substantially less than often claimed. Nevertheless, the effects of female schooling do appear prominent and widespread.

3. Implications for productivity, efficiency, growth and other policies.

Several distinctions are important in considering the implications of the empirical estimates for the contribution to productivity growth.

First, even if more careful analysis substantially moderates the estimated impact of female schooling on various outcomes related to growth, it still implies that female education has a substantial effect on various dimensions of productivity. The estimated rates of return to formal schooling in terms of narrowly defined economic outcomes are fairly large. In addition, there are the effects on nonmarket outcomes. Though there are no estimates that translate the nonmarket outcome effects into rates of return, the nonmarket effects clearly mean that narrowly defined economic rates of return are a lower estimate on total rates of return to female education. Therefore, countries in Asia, the Near East and elsewhere are likely to gain in terms of productivity and growth from female schooling.

Second, the available estimates do not suggest a strong reason for policies that induce more investment in female education on efficiency grounds, when it is considered in isolation. In fact, there is very little information on the existence and importance of social benefits (externalities) beyond the private benefits. The fact that women's education has significant positive effects on their productivity in a range of activities does not imply that there is an efficiency-based argument for policies that directly or indirectly subsidize female education. Available studies show that these estimated effects are basically private benefits, not social benefits, and therefore should be realized without subsidization.

Often times the important nonmarket effects of female education are interpreted to mean that there are efficiency reasons for policies that favor female education, but that conclusion does not necessarily follow either. Many of the nonmarket benefits are private benefits. Better health for a woman or her family has a considerable private component to the total benefit. The available studies do not provide evidence of any externalities that might justify policy interventions to favor female education.

Many believe that there are important negative externalities associated with population growth, including pressures on public health and education systems and increased pollution and environmental degradation, and female education is a means of slowing population growth. If this

is the case (which is a matter of considerable debate) then it may provide a reason for advocating policies that promote female education in order to reduce such negative externalities. The considerations underlying the discussion of the policy hierarchy, however, would not point to increased female education as a first-best policy. The first-best policies are ones that are aimed directly at the distortions. If there are social costs above private costs if more children are born due to public subsidies for health and education, the first-best policy (from an efficiency perspective) is likely to be increased prices for those services to the point at which their price equals the social marginal costs of their provision. The point is that increased female education, while possibly working in the right direction to help eliminate such distortions, is not likely to be the first-best policy.

Third, with regard to the allocation of resources between female and male education, the empirical evidence supports some shift of resources towards females. The estimates tend to indicate that economic rates of return for investments in female schooling are equal to or higher than those for male schooling. In addition, evidence on the nonmarket impact of female education reinforces somewhat the argument for shifting resources from male to female education, despite the frequent overestimation of benefits. These considerations certainly do not support the maintenance of present gender gaps in school enrollments that favor males in most countries in the Asia and Near East regions, and if anything, they argue for favoritism towards females. To the extent that this gap arises from policy-related supply considerations, then efficiency considerations argue for elimination of the gender gap in schooling supplies that currently favors male enrollments. To the extent that enrollment gaps are due to demand factors, then the implications are less clear, depending upon the nature of such factors.

4. Implications for concerns about equity.

There seems much less ambiguity regarding equity than regarding efficiency in considering female education in isolation. If society were to weigh all persons equally, the present gender gap in formal schooling enrollments in most of Asia and the Near East is inequitable. There is a conceptual possibility that other forms of education that offset this imbalance. For example, girls who are not in school may be obtaining informal education in household productivity that is of equal value as would be formal schooling, but that is highly unlikely. There also is the conceptual possibility that, given preferences, the gap is perceived to be appropriate due to differential disutility costs of female versus male involvement in certain activities, but rapid socio-economic change and future uncertainty somewhat weaken this explanation and its implication that measured gender gaps do not reflect real gaps.

5. Considerations of more specific policy options.

Actual policies take specific forms, such as increasing fees at universities, conducting literacy campaigns for women, or establishing formal training programs for women. Adequate evaluation of specific options in a particular context requires substantial specialized knowledge of a number of dimensions of local conditions and institutions. These conditions vary enormously even within some of the countries in Asia and the Near East, to say nothing of across countries. Therefore a broad survey such as this can only be suggestive regarding what is known and not known about policies from a more general perspective. However, the material covered in this survey does give some basis for greater specificity.

Policies related to the demand for female education: The analytical framework suggests that an important determinant of female education is various components of household demand for such education. This demand, in turn, is related to current or expected conditions in various markets and surrounding public services, as well as to current and expected nonmarket activities and gender specializations.

- Imperfections in capital markets. It is widely perceived is that imperfections in capital markets are common in most developing countries, with negative ramifications for the poor who tend not to have much access to such markets. But the available systematic studies suggest limited effects of capital market imperfections on education. Nevertheless, since there are many who believe that capital markets are fairly imperfect in much of the Asia and Near East regions, it may be worthwhile to undertake some pilot projects that attempt to measure the impact in different country contexts of different loan programs for investments in education for girls from poor households, with careful monitoring and controls.
- Expected impact on subsequent outcomes. The analytical framework and empirical estimates suggest that one important component of the demand for education is the expected impact on subsequent outcomes. Therefore, it appears that expectations of better access for women to labor market options would induce increased demand for their education of various forms. Such expectations might be formed in part by policies that serve to eliminate any discrimination against women in those markets.
- Household resource allocation. Demands for education are household demands that reflect the overall allocation of resources that occurs within the household and the various constraints under which the household operates. Some of the studies summarized in this review suggest that the opportunity cost of time that older daughters spend in household activities (explicitly in one case, care of younger sick siblings) has a substantial negative effect on their school attendance. In such cases, policies that led to improved health of younger children and infants would induce more schooling attendance for older girls and also might induce more training and stronger job attachments for older females. Such possibilities mean that the efficiency and equity arguments for policies that improve child health may be stronger than it would appear from considering only the direct effects on child health, and should be incorporated into the analysis of such policies.

- **Child care arrangements.** If household structure in Asia and the Near East continues to change so that nuclear households become more common, the nature of child-care arrangements may be of increasing importance for female education directly (both for schooling for older daughters and for training for women) and indirectly (by affecting expectations regarding labor market and own-enterprise options and the possibilities of stronger job attachments). Though there have been no systematic efforts to explore the impact of alternative child-care arrangements in countries of Asia or the Near East that were uncovered in this survey, it is likely to be a topic of increasing interest. Some pilot projects might well be warranted, especially given that suggestive examples exist from other regions.

Policies related to supply side for female education: In certain settings, supply characteristics may directly or indirectly be responsible for large gender gaps in school enrollment.

- **School availability.** A study of rural Pakistan concludes that the gender gap in (single-sex) school availabilities accounts for the majority of the rather large gender gaps in schooling attendance, completion of various schooling levels, and cognitive achievement. In such a case, there is a policy-induced distortion that probably causes both inefficiency and inequity. The policy remedy would be to at least equalize access to schools for females and males. Experimental programs are underway in several Asian countries and elsewhere in the developing world that suggest that access to females can be improved effectively with satellite feeder schools for the initial grades in remote rural areas, flexible hours, hours that do not conflict with other activities, and perhaps greater flexibility in seasonal patterns.
- **Quality of education.** On a priori grounds, increased quality of educational institutions is likely to increase the rates of return for any given period of time spent by an individual in that institution (unless there is associated with the quality improvement an even greater upward shift in the cost of education). Some studies in other developing countries suggest a substantial impact of various dimensions of schooling on test scores and on post-school labor market outcomes. The studies reviewed in this survey for the Asia and Near East countries report significant but not very substantial effects of schooling quality. There also is little systematic empirical evidence related to the efficiency of the use of inputs in educational institutions in these countries. Therefore, experimenting with variety of institutional forms, public and private, with careful control for selectivity of students in the analysis, may prove quite valuable in improving the policy basis for recommendations regarding these issues.
- **Level of Schooling.** There is a fair amount of evidence pertaining to the relative rates of return to various levels of formal schooling. Many claim that such returns are much higher for primary than for higher levels of schooling. The studies reviewed in this survey suggest, however, that the standard estimates substantially overstate the returns to primary schooling relative to higher levels by failing to control for estimation problems. Moreover, the evidence on positive externalities is mostly speculative, and the externalities may be more likely to be important for the higher schooling levels. For these reasons, the efficiency arguments for policies that favor lower over higher levels of schooling often appear to be overstated. Nevertheless, the current large discrepancy in public resource per student (strongly positively associated with the schooling level) probably means that the appropriate resources shift from the point of view of efficiency alone would be toward lower schooling levels.

- **Type of education.** There is a range of alternatives for female education that are practiced in different countries of Asia and the Near East, or that are conceivably viable. Policies can affect such programs through a variety of means including direct governmental supplies of education, governmental regulations and price/subsidy/tax policies that affect private suppliers, individual taxes and subsidies. There is very little systematic evidence that permits one to sort confidently among these alternatives, apart from findings on the relative ineffectiveness of vocational education.
- **Vocational education.** There seems to be a growing consensus that vocational education is less effective than general education. Training conducted in industrial institutes and vocational secondary schools appears less cost-effective than informal, firm-based training. Short courses tend to be more cost-effective than long courses, though it is not clear that studies on this topic control for some important characteristics, such as individual abilities and motivations. If this consensus is correct, it may imply that a selective strategy is desirable, with emphasis on generic pre-employment training in low-income countries (where firms usually have very little training capacities) and focus on training related to new technologies in firm-based and industry-connected contexts in middle-income countries.
- **Pricing of publicly-provided education.** There are a number of proposed policy changes to the effect that rather than charging low and uniform prices for different levels and types of public education, selective user fees should be charged for higher and specialized forms of education for which the private benefits are substantial and tend to go to the better off (given enrollment patterns by income and socioeconomic class), with the extra proceeds targeted to assure greater access of the poor to education. The claim that successfully carrying out this program would lead to greater equity and efficiency seems likely to be valid, though there remains considerable lacunae in our knowledge of the technical and administrative capacities needed to target successfully subsidies to assure the poor's access to the types of schools for which user charges are introduced or increased, but in most cases, usual targeting problems do not arise when girls' schooling is subsidized.

Research needs: The considerable importance of supply policies in creating a large gender gap in the case of rural Pakistan raises the question of whether supply sources of such gaps are not more important than often claimed, so that it would be useful in thinking about policies to know more about similar decompositions of gender gaps in education in other contexts. There are a number of technical issues regarding the estimated impact of female schooling on various outcomes that need to be explored further. But perhaps most important in this area is that very little is known about the magnitudes of the various market failures such as externalities that are at the heart, often implicitly, of efficiency arguments for policies that favor female education (as well as male education). Finally, the more systematic available evidence that has been uncovered and reviewed in this survey focuses almost exclusively on schooling, which means that there may be considerable returns to undertaking careful pilot projects and related research to investigate the relative returns to other forms of female education.

Investing in Female Education for Development

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **When (private) non-economic gains are not "immediately familiar" to the household, it may demand too little education for its female members.**

This type of distortion does not constitute an externality (which is one justification for intervention), as the "problem" with the gains in this instance is not that they accrue to society, but rather, that they are hard for a household to anticipate. Nonetheless, the case does provide a reason for policy intervention. In this instance, the appropriate form of intervention would be provision of information to shorten the recognition lag, not subsidization of schooling.

- **If the outcomes of educating girls are not seen as desirable by a family, investing less in daughters compared to sons is sensible from the perspective of the household, particularly where the daughter is likely to marry early and leave her parents' household.**

Although the logic of the statement is not suspect, existing evidence does not permit the conclusions (1) that the results of education are "bad" or (2) that the gains do not accrue to the original household. Lower dowries for educated women in India, for example, suggest that an educated daughter would be preferred as a wife by other families, and present less of a financial burden at the time of marriage. Implicit transfers by married daughters to their natal families (such as support during bad harvests) exemplify the manner in which gains may still accrue to her original household, and presumably they will be larger if she is educated. These offer counter-examples to the suggestion that returns to investment in females are not reaped by the natal household due to marriage into another household.

- **If one believes that equity enhances the social gains from a particular investment, one has valid grounds for implementing policy that does not exclude a large part of the population.**

In such a case, the two arguments of efficiency and equity can be bridged: forcing equity would also engender a more efficient outcome. The fact that much of the inequality discussed by Dr. Behrman could be eliminated by policies which make girls' schooling as accessible as boys' is a good example. Such action would promote both equity and efficiency, since rates of return for female education are higher than those for male education.

- **The rate of return evidence should be sufficient to make investing in women appear more attractive to policymakers.**

The rate of return evidence--that there are higher economic rates of return to investment in women than men--provides a clear signal that inefficiency prevails. A member of the audience suggested that rate of return comparisons with other project sectors might be a useful supplement.

- **Low national funding for educational expenditure does not justify gender gaps in education.**

One cannot justify lower expenditure on girls relative to boys by a low overall level of spending. Even when funding for education is limited, the question remains how sensible is the allocation to women, given that country's educational resources.

- **Surveys which are disaggregated by respondent would provide evidence regarding what different household members want in terms of education for the daughters, and thus help in A.I.D.'s development efforts.**

Women and the Law in Asia and the Near East

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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A.I.D.'s development strategies for the 1990s are driven by a commitment to individual choice, both as the moving force behind economic growth and as a valued goal in its own right. A.I.D. programs such as "Open Markets/Open Societies" and "Voice, Choice and Governance" are designed to unleash the power of individual initiative by creating the political and economic conditions -- a market-based economy, free and fair elections, an independent judiciary, openness in government -- intended to protect and promote the exercise of free choice. Such programs rest on the assumption that each individual is a free and equal agent capable of exercising control over the basic circumstances of his life; given the right societal conditions, he is positioned to make the choices most conducive to growth and development.

But this assumption of individual autonomy stands in stark contrast to the reality of the lives of millions of women throughout Asia and the Near East. For these women, locked into a life cycle controlled from cradle to grave by the men of their families, the vision of political and economic freedom held out by A.I.D. programs remains but a distant glimmer. While there are many factors that converge to deprive women of control over their lives, key among them is law.

This paper attempts to elucidate the complex, often subtle, ways in which the law (a) deprives women of the autonomy to which all human beings are entitled and on which social and economic development ultimately depends; and (b) consistently undercuts the progress that is made when women are able to participate in A.I.D. projects. It demonstrates that giving women the ability or tools to take control over the circumstances of their lives -- for example, through education, training, or income-generation projects -- is simply not enough; unless and until they have the right to most effectively use and benefit from those abilities, they will not truly possess the kind of autonomy that lies at the heart of A.I.D.'s strategies for development.

Thus the central recommendation of this paper is that A.I.D. view women's legal status not just as an inhibiting factor that often prevents women from participating in its other substantive programs and projects, but as an independent element of its WID strategy to be given specific attention in both the policy formulation and project identification processes. In that context, the law must be seen as a two-edged sword: while certain of its elements define and enforce a social order

that subjugates women to the will of men in their homes and in the society at large, the law can also be used affirmatively to promote and protect women's autonomy.

However, there is no precise set of laws or legal institutions that will work automatically and cross-culturally to yield autonomy for women. Thus A.I.D.'s goal should not be to design and promote some "ideal" legal system. Rather, the aim should be to develop a deep enough understanding of a particular legal system and its place in the life of the community, to be able to work with men and women there to transform the role and rule of law in ways that have meaning in their own culture and on terms that can garner broad-based support.

To this end, the paper sets out a conceptual framework that A.I.D. officials can use to analyze how the law in any given society relates to women's lives. The framework divides a legal system into three inter-related components:

- substantive:** the content of the laws;
- structural:** the organization of the legal system and its institutions;
- cultural:** shared attitudes about the law, its uses, its efficacy, and its role in the overall life of the community.

By conceptualizing legal problems in this way, the analyst can go beyond an understanding of the theoretical content and form of the law (its formal substance and structure), to see how the law actually functions in the real lives of people and in the corridors of power. For present purposes, the concept of legal culture is particularly important because it helps the analyst put the laws governing women's lives into their broader historical and cultural context in order to explain the great symbolic power that such laws wield throughout much of Asia and the Near East today.

Historically, interaction with the West -- beginning with the colonial conquest and continuing with the integration of Asian and Near East countries into a post-war international economic order dominated by Western powers -- has profoundly influenced their law in two respects: (1) it has determined much of the substance of legal codes and structure of legal systems in place today, and (2) it has transformed traditional law and customs into vehicles for the expression and assertion of cultural identity in reaction to the West.

Typically, when the European colonial powers conquered territory in Asia and the Near East, they enacted their own legal codes to govern economic and political matters, but left untouched the traditional laws that had governed their subjects' private lives for centuries. As a result, most countries in Asia and the Near East still have a dual legal system in which civil law, derived from European legal traditions, governs most aspects of public life including the functioning of government,

commercial transactions, labor relations, and criminal sanctions; and personal status law, derived from religious law and customary practices, governs most aspects of private life including marriage and marital relations, divorce, child custody, and some issues of inheritance.

This kind of dual legal system sharpened the distinction between the public and the private worlds -- with very different implications for men than for women. For men, the private world became a refuge from the dislocation caused by colonialism and by the ongoing process of modernization: "Forced to compromise their values, beliefs, and behavior, and surrender power in the public sphere, men reacted by intensifying 'traditionality' and reinforcing their domination within their homes" (Shaheed 1986). In the process, the religious law and custom surrounding family life, the personal status law, became imbued with the symbolism and power of nationalism and ethnic identity.

For women, however, the emergence of personal status law as the repository of a cultural identity requiring constant vigilance as it is threatened from every direction, has a strikingly different effect. This is because, in practice, the traditional laws and customs governing family relations often give men rights and responsibilities over women that effectively deny women meaningful choices about the basic conditions of their lives. Indeed, in some parts of Asia and the Near East, the personal status laws dictate that a woman spend her entire life under the formal guardianship of a man -- first her father or brothers, then her husband -- never granted the legal "capacity" of an adult and so never given the right to determine the course her life will take.

For example, a girl's parents generally decide whether and for how long she will go to school. They decide when and to whom she will be married. Once married, her husband may demand total obedience and, in some places, is explicitly permitted to enforce that demand by physical beating. In many cultures the wife is secluded in the home (*pardah*) and must be veiled when she ventures into public. The dependence and vulnerability that these laws and customs create is often accentuated by unequal divorce and property laws. In Islam, for example, the husband has the unilateral right to divorce his wife at will and is required to provide only minimal, short-term support. While Islamic law grants women certain property rights that theoretically would provide security, in practice women are often forced to cede control over their property to the men of their families.

In short, the laws and customs operating in the private sphere effectively deprive women of the ability to make choices, to take control over, the most basic aspects of their lives. Under these circumstances, a woman may never enter the public sphere in any meaningful sense; thus changes in the civil law that governs economic and political life -- the kinds of changes needed to implement A.I.D.'s Open Markets/Open Societies and Voice, Choice and Governance programs -- may have no effect on her whatever. This will be true even of changes aimed directly at improving the status of women. For example, if a woman's husband will not permit her to work outside the home (and the

law in many countries explicitly gives him this right), then a statute that forbids gender discrimination in employment or in financial markets will do little for her ability to participate in a newly opened economy.

Yet simply abrogating traditional law and enacting secular, western-style codes is clearly not the solution. For, despite their adverse impact on women's autonomy, the personal status laws grounded in religion and custom continue to resonate with meaning for women as well as for men throughout Asia and the Near East. Thus, only a movement that grows from within the society, that has support of a wide cross-section of women, that is expressed in terms and concepts that have meaning in the culture, and that is sensitive to the historical context of the law, has the chance to effect real, broad-based change in the lives of women.

Without such change, the impact of A.I.D.'s initiatives will be substantially muted. For example, even where A.I.D. has succeeded in institutionalizing gender considerations in its own internal procedures, its best-laid plans are regularly thwarted by external factors: A survey sent to all A.I.D. missions has revealed that legal constraints prevented women from participating in half of all A.I.D.-sponsored projects and programs. And women who do participate in A.I.D. projects often lack the legal right to make maximally productive use of the skills they have acquired or of the income they have generated.

Quite apart from its influence on specific A.I.D. projects, women's autonomy (defined in part by their legal status) has been shown to be essential to a society's overall development, even in countries that have enjoyed spectacular economic growth (Caldwell 1986). Finally, women's rights are a vital component of the range of human rights recognized in international law and supported by United States policy. Thus the improvement of women's legal status has value as a goal in and of itself since programs that promote women's rights as human rights seek to give women the dignity and freedom to which every human being is entitled.

For all these reasons, A.I.D. should begin to look at women's legal status not merely as a constraint on its other projects, but as an independent, affirmative element of its WID strategy. This can be done most effectively through PVO support projects that further the work of the many women's groups already seeking to improve the status of women from within the cultural reality of their own societies. For example, some groups are developing the theoretical foundation for reforming Islamic law by exposing the contradiction between Islam as it is currently practiced and the original intent of the Quran (often more favorable to women), or by demonstrating how the doctrinal tools of Islamic jurisprudence can be used to modify current practices while remaining true to the principles of Islam. Other groups are actively mobilizing to bring about legislative reform at the national level. Still others are involved in grassroots legal literacy programs designed to empower

women by helping them understand the legal system and utilize the law to promote and defend their rights in both private and public matters. A.I.D.'s support for such PVOs could be complemented by policy dialogue with lawmakers and other government officials.

Finally, coordinating projects aimed at improving the legal status of women with A.I.D. projects designed to promote women's autonomy through other mechanisms such as training or income-generation, may demonstrate a kind of synergy between these two approaches to the advancement of women. A program that enables women to enhance simultaneously both their ability and their right to control the circumstances of their lives may be the best way to ensure that women can make the kinds of choices that form the foundation of A.I.D.'s vision of development.

Women and the Law in Asia and the Near East

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **In many countries, civil law does not necessarily guarantee women's ownership of property or ability to accumulate personal wealth.**

This situation arises not as a result of the text of the law but because of the institutionalized practice of women relinquishing property to male siblings with the understanding that he will provide for her should her husband die. This case offers an example of how an understanding of legal culture is prerequisite to determining how law actually treats women.

- **A woman does possess the right to earn her own income and share in the husband's under Islamic law.**

Due to low legal literacy, lack of enforcement and restrictions on women's access to markets (often requiring them to send male children, who may or may not be trustworthy, to carry out their transactions) work to undermine this right. One solution might be a campaign that emphasizes the principle of women sharing control of household income as a truly Islamic one.

- **It might be time for A.I.D. to consider a legal approach to development.**

Such an approach would fight inequalities in education, employment, etc. in the courts rather than relying solely on economic arguments to make the case for women.

- **A.I.D. could use the new policy for the family to bring women's concerns to the forefront.**

It was added that one need not worry perceive such policy as an imposition of Western values if women's rights are considered to be a universal value, just as basic human rights are. Actions by the international community (e.g. the U.N. High Commission on the Status of Women) would indicate that the potential to frame women's issues in that light does exist.

- **The rise in Islamic fundamentalism underscores the notion that the only way to improve women's legal status is by working with local women to develop laws and interpretations that would have broad based support.**

The solution is not to transport and impose Western statutes.

- **The framework for approaching the study of legal systems advanced in the paper is applicable to non-Islamic areas.**

One difference peculiar to the Islamic case is that law is deeply interwoven with religion. State law is Islamic law. Although there are religious traditions in law everywhere, the nexus is usually not as

broad as in the Islamic case.

- **There may be differences in the degrees of freedom for women interpreted into Islamic law.**

A country's (or household's) level of wealth, and hence its need for women to contribute economically by working outside the home, may have significant influence on its reading of Islamic principles that limit women's mobility. In some cases, however, poor families see no choice other than to go against religious principles they still aspire to.

- **It is difficult to discern what women want in terms of legal underpinnings.**

Aggregate surveys are probably not likely to be helpful because they may conceal key differences between subgroups. Furthermore, women's opinions are likely to be constrained. What they perceive of as far as possibility is likely to be limited by what they perceive as realistic options.

***The Role of Women in Evolving Agricultural Economies of Asia and the Near East:
Implications for A.I.D.'s Strategic Planning***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The regional agricultural strategy formulated by A.I.D.'s former Bureau for Asia and the Near East (ANE)* clearly recognizes the need to consider gender issues in meeting its three key objectives: **increased income, increased food availability, and enhancement of the natural resource base.** In providing programmatic guidance, the strategy identifies priorities based on an economy's level of structural transformation, as indicated by per capita GNP and shares of GDP in agriculture and industry. The ANE countries are thus formed into three groupings:

- (i) **Low-income agricultural economies** (Bangladesh, Nepal), with per capita incomes less than \$250 per year, and shares of GDP in agriculture over 50%, in industry less than 20%;
- (ii) **Middle-income transitional economies** (Egypt, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Yemen A.R.) with per capita incomes of \$250-\$750, and shares of GDP in agriculture less than 35%, in industry over 25%;
- (iii) **Middle-income industrializing economies** (Jordan, Oman, Thailand, Morocco[§], Tunisia) with per capita incomes over \$750, and shares of GDP in agriculture less than 20%, in industry over 30%.

This report examines a number of dynamic characteristics of economic growth and transformation within ANE countries that are described in the strategy, focusing on those that pertain most directly to the differential contributions of women and men. It then discusses implications of associated conditions and experiences for achieving objectives within five of the seven strategic program emphases: **agribusiness development, natural resources management, agricultural planning and analysis, infrastructure management, and trade and market development.** It concludes that

* Since that time, the Agency has reorganized and countries formerly under the ANE Bureau have been divided between two other bureaus. These are the Bureau for Europe and Near East and the Asia Private Enterprise Bureau.

[§] Although Morocco is included in the Middle-Income Transitional group in the ANE strategy, it has been included with the industrializing economies here because of recent changes in GNP per capita and sectoral distribution of GDP.

investing specifically in women is not only more likely to achieve food systems growth objectives, but is also more likely to engender greater positive benefits than similar investments in boys and men. Agricultural and environmental interventions offer a unique opportunity to promote women's participation by identifying and overcoming constraints to their productivity, employment opportunities and earnings. Finally, recommendations are offered to A.I.D. Missions for promoting sustainable agricultural development and economic growth that actively incorporate the analysis of gender issues and recognize the central role of women in a food systems strategy.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN AGRICULTURE IN ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST

The proportion of the labor force engaged in agriculture in ANE countries ranges from 10% in Jordan to over 90% in Nepal. There is substantial variation within the region in the sex composition of the farm work force. According to ILO estimates for 1980, proportions of girls and women among all farm workers (paid and unpaid) range from under 5% in Egypt, Jordan and Oman to 30% or more in Nepal, India and Indonesia, and nearly 50% in Thailand. Enumeration methods for the female agricultural labor force are highly suspect in several countries, however, and wide disparities arise depending on the type of survey or estimate used. In non-agricultural sectors, the situation is similar, with women's share of employment (formal and non-formal) ranging from about 10% in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan and Oman, to over 40% in the Philippines and Thailand.

Variations in female labor force participation in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors are not related linearly to the degree of structural transformation. Rather, they are primarily a function of interactions between: (1) the degree of cultural restriction on female mobility, which affects the supply of female labor; (2) the type of primary crops and livestock raised and associated labor requirements; (3) the use of irrigation and mechanization, which absorbs or displaces male and female labor to differing degrees; and (4) the nature of demand for male and female labor outside agriculture (including domestic requirements) in both rural and urban areas, which competes with agricultural work and may provoke seasonal or permanent migration flows.

Male migration out of rural areas is apparently not related to rising agricultural productivity either; rather, the data suggest that men are most likely to leave the least productive areas for work in urban areas or abroad, or seasonal work in more prosperous agricultural regions. As a consequence, women are generally most involved in farm work where productivity is lowest. Predominantly male migration to cities prevails throughout the South Asian countries, while female migrants outnumber males in the Philippines and Thailand. The remaining countries show only slight differences in the ratios of adult males to females in rural and urban areas, suggesting that men do not substantially outnumber women in rural-to-urban migration streams at the national level.

Migration flows, female labor force participation and the sexual division of labor in agriculture vary substantially across regions within a country and across the different classes or castes within its population. The division of agricultural labor by gender is quite rigid throughout much of the region, even though what is considered "women's work" in some areas may indeed be "men's work" in others and vice versa. Similarly, tasks performed largely by family labor in one setting may be done by hired workers in another. Women often specialize in seed selection, weeding, transplanting, preparation and application of organic fertilizer, post-harvest processing, and maintenance of small livestock and poultry. Men tend to specialize in land preparation, planting and harvesting, care of large animals, and tasks involving modern technologies or inputs. In some areas, however, men and women do the same work almost interchangeably, most notably in Thailand. Individual country studies reveal the diversity and dynamism of these patterns within and across countries in the ANE region.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER IN ACHIEVING STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

According to the ANE Food Systems Strategy, the major development objectives for the low-income agricultural economies are to increase basic cereals production and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the required support services. For middle-income transitional economies, key objectives are to maintain sustained growth in cereals production and to expand the industrial sector, especially through the development of agro-processing as an additional source of rural income and employment. For middle-income industrializing economies, the Strategy objectives are to assist domestic institutions in the agricultural sector to be self-sustaining and linked with domestic and international research networks.

Policies such as these that appear on their surface to be "gender-neutral" rarely turn out to be gender-neutral in their implementation or outcomes; rather, they almost always affect men and women differently in terms of employment opportunities, labor inputs and returns, and productivity. Knowledge of the varied and changing patterns of the gender-based division of labor within the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors of each country is essential to understanding the nature of resource use and of agricultural production, processing and marketing, including the constraints to increased productivity and hence the impacts of various interventions. Investment in agricultural development or natural resources management will in most cases require careful analysis of the organization of labor by age, gender, landholding status, and other characteristics, as a basis for choosing appropriate interventions.

The ANE agricultural strategy identifies seven "program emphases" or "primary investment opportunities" for attaining its development objectives: **agribusiness development, natural resources management, agricultural planning and analysis, infrastructure management, agricultural technology**

development and management, trade and market development, and institutional and human capital development. Where the emphasis should be placed in any given country depends on its process of structural transformation, along with other characteristics such as its natural resource endowments, educational level of the workforce, and the degree of infrastructural development. Each of the seven program emphases carries important implications for women's roles and contributions. Depending on which strategic priorities are emphasized, certain aspects of women's roles in agriculture and overall development must be understood in order to maximize their contributions to growth and facilitate the transformation process while minimizing the adverse impacts of economic adjustment.

The report provides a number of detailed recommendations within several program emphasis areas. Although specific recommendations should be tailored to the unique conditions of each country, several general points can be summarized here:

- 1. The development of agribusiness enterprises through the creation of forward and backward linkages to the production process holds great promise for employing women workers and raising their productivity and incomes, if it is carefully planned to achieve these objectives. The rising female presence in manufacturing in many ANE countries attests to the availability of female labor pools for these purposes.**
- 2. The success of natural resource management programs depends heavily on women's participation because of women's special roles in collecting fuel, water, wild foods and medicines, and animal fodder, their specific crop-tending responsibilities, and their reliance on forest products as a source of income.**
- 3. Agricultural planning and analysis in ANE countries should include a clearly defined gender component as an aid to understanding the linkages between macro-policy issues and the productivity, security, and well-being of women in landless and cultivator households.**
- 4. Investments in rural infrastructures such as roads, markets, and irrigation systems that take women's specialized needs into account can significantly improve women's access to such infrastructures, and thus, their productivity and incomes.**
- 5. The design of new production-enhancing technologies must take into account the needs and capacities of women workers and the decision-making roles of women in farm management.**

Many subsectors in which female labor predominates, such as homestead agriculture, livestock, poultry, and agro-processing have high growth potential but do not receive adequate policy and program support. There is enormous scope for supporting these undervalued activities through new programming efforts. Investments that explicitly take account of women's current or potential contributions can also produce impressive results in fisheries and forestry enterprises, irrigation and water resources, environmental protection and restoration, small industries and microenterprises, rural institution building, and infrastructure development. What is needed most is a genuine commitment

to making women's equal participation a reality in the planning and implementation of policies and programs.

Recommendations need to be adapted to the particular circumstances of each country. Priorities will differ depending on structural and social conditions, state policies, the nature of domestic and international trade and markets, environmental and agricultural potential, and other considerations. The major point to be stressed is that all aspects of A.I.D. program and project identification, planning, implementation, and assessment in the region should actively be directed toward specific investments in women's productivity and earnings. In this way, the Agency can improve women's contributions to and benefits from food systems growth. Working in a gender-neutral framework is simply not sufficient to accomplish the full range of program objectives. Planning for agricultural growth in the 1990s offers a major challenge to A.I.D. to engage in innovative and path-breaking support for women in agriculture and for growth which taps women's full productive potential.

The Role of Women in Evolving Agricultural Economies of Asia and the Near East

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **The focus on agribusiness and privatization may complicate A.I.D.'s capacity to ensure that women will be incorporated into training programs.**

However, to the extent A.I.D. is still supporting training programs there will be a familiar way to affect whether or not women are hired. In addition, all evidence suggests that employers currently recognize the attractiveness of hiring women. If, however, women cease to be incorporated, incentives to encourage the private sector to include women should be introduced.

- **Should AID concentrate funding efforts on female owned agribusinesses instead of trying to increase quotas for female participation in training programs?**

Although this would be one way to meet the need to train female entrepreneurs, it is unclear whether this should be A.I.D. policy. To the extent that efforts focus on promising sub-sectors in which women are involved, the training need might be automatically met. Although gender needs to be recognized as important it should not be the only one upon which investment decisions are made. However, unwillingness to stress women's concerns on the grounds that it would be a normative judgement ignores the fact that such judgements are made elsewhere. For example, implicit in AID's targeting its investment effort on co-operatives and not public enterprise was a very normative judgement. Perhaps AID could make the same normative judgement along gender lines.

- **Further consideration of the labor implications beyond women's productivity is necessary.**

The implications in terms of social security systems, benefit packages and cyclical unemployment must also be considered. Furthermore, A.I.D. needs to intimately integrate its industry/agriculture programs with human capital/social security/benefits programs. A.I.D. must abandon its practice of separation of issues, assessing industry and agriculture separately from health and population and human capital issues. Reliance on rates of return and market signals means labor will be hired and fired on the basis of merit. Building benefits programs underneath will require an integration of A.I.D.'s thinking. Further investigation of relationships between working conditions and security provisions, and between child care and productivity in agribusiness, for example, presents an important area to which AID might contribute.

- **What is desired for female labor force participation is not a particular figure like one-half of the agricultural labor force.**

In Thailand, despite the fact that women comprise half the numbers, one cannot conclude that they are faring well. Large numbers are forced into low paying service jobs. The critical issue is not whether women are in the labor force at all, but when they are, what kinds of returns they receive. When they are not, one must ask whether their absence is by choice.

- **The effect of mechanization on women's participation in agriculture has generally been detrimental.**

Some national data on levels of mechanization in the ANE region are available, but ample regional and anecdotal evidence exists that suggests mechanization displaces female labor. (For some countries, one can even look at agricultural censuses and construct analyses of the relationship between mechanization and gender specific use of labor.) In assessing the desirability of mechanization, one must also consider the source of the mechanization impulse. Mechanization occurs because interest rates are subsidized and distribution of landholdings is highly unequal, not because it is efficient. Mechanization frequently takes place in labor-abundant countries where it is not economically appropriate. Women are frequently the victims of misdirected policy which encourages mechanization.

- **Women's participation in agriculture and ability to own resources vary enormously across the region, as does the reliability of numbers measuring participation.**

A.I.D.'s strategy must reflect that diversity.

Lessons Learned From the Advanced Developing Countries

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This paper examines the experience of development in the advanced developing countries in Asia from a gender perspective and draws some lessons for WID policy in middle income countries in the Asian and Near East regions. It is essentially exploratory; it raises as many questions on which further research and information are needed as it provides answers. The policy recommendations are correspondingly tentative.

The analysis is based primarily on data for four countries, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan. They are referred to for short by the term "four most advanced developing countries" (4MADCs). All are in the middle or upper national income level category, in world terms. According to purchasing power parity assessment of income levels per capita, Hong Kong and Singapore have per capita income higher than that of the Netherlands, Australia, Austria, and the United Kingdom, among OECD member countries; Korea and Taiwan have significantly lower income than this, but still above the levels of Greece, Brazil, Argentina, and Turkey, for instance. Some data is also assembled later in the paper for Thailand, the Philippines, Egypt and Jordan (all except Egypt falling into the middle income category), more as a way of indicating the kind of inter-country differences that relate to women's economic status than as a rigorous comparison.

The argument of this paper is that the pattern of rapid economic growth in the 4MADCs has been causally linked to a greater extent than is usually acknowledged with women's economic participation. These economies are notable in world terms for the very high proportion of women found in the formal labor force in general and in the industrial workforce in particular. This is not coincidental. It reflects the export intensity of production in the industrial sector, and the fact that, world wide, expansion of export manufacturing by developing countries has demanded and created a female workforce. The high rates of participation of women in the 4MADCs has thus allowed the labor absorptive strategy embodied in their macro-economic policies to be pursued to the utmost. The early attention paid to female education in these countries was important in facilitating this pattern of development.

There are two main channels through which women's economic participation has contributed to the pattern of socio-economic development found in the 4MADCs. First is that women's earnings

have been a factor in the relatively egalitarian distribution of income among households in these societies. This was founded on land redistribution policies introduced in Taiwan and South Korea in the early post-war period (and the virtual absence of land as a class of asset in Hong Kong and Singapore is surely not irrelevant in this context). But women's earnings have contributed subsequently to the sharing among all families of the current income benefits of growth through employment. Consequently there has been a limited incidence of poverty in these societies.

The second area of benefit related to women's economic involvement, and certainly stemming from behavioral decisions made by women, has been the extraordinarily steep fall in fertility experienced in these societies. Population growth is now below replacement levels in some instances, and below the rate found in many richer countries. The fall in fertility took place in the reinforcing context of strong public family planning programs, which extended to anti-natalist fiscal and social sector policies. Public action could easily redress the low growth rate of population by relaxing some of these policies, in particular by reducing the conflict for women between employment and childbearing. The Swedish government has successfully led the way in this area, and seen a modest rise in fertility sufficient to bring population growth up to replacement level by facilitating greater choice for women in the area of reproduction.

The picture is not entirely rosy for women in the Asian ADCs. First, does not the maintenance of "familism" imply a lack of individual social autonomy, impinging particularly on women? The literature does not bear out this concern, showing that more educated women resist certain family pressures (to bear sons, for example) quite effectively, without causing disruptions to the family unit. But the extent to which there has been a lessening of the degree of patriarchy remains an open question. Perhaps there is a more important lack of representation at the political level? Women's movements, as a socio-political force independent of governments, seem to be weak. This may indicate co-opting of women at household or social level, or authoritarian repression, as against other groups with oppositional potential (or both).

Second, a striking feature of employment in the Asian 4MADCs is the differences in the occupational distribution of the male and female workforces, and, partly by extension of this, partly as a result of outright gender discrimination, a wide earnings gap between men and women. Although women's access to employment allows the prospect of economic self-sufficiency to women, the earnings gap is an incentive to women to seek financial dependence on men. By attaching a cost to economic independence, it constrains their freedom of choice. Though the number of female headed households is low, the divorce rate seems to be increasing and with it the prospect of children becoming financially dependent on their mothers' earning capacity alone, which may have significant welfare costs. Because of implications for family well-being, ADC governments should look with

alarm to the emergence of the phenomenon of withdrawal of male support to children in some OECD countries (notably the US and the UK) as women's employment prospects have strengthened and men's control over women's fertility has lessened.

There are overwhelming reasons to pursue gender equity in wages, however, because discrimination has negative efficiency implications. It discourages full human capital investment and career commitment among women. These rapidly growing economies need continually to upgrade their skills base, particularly, in industry, in greater cognitive and administrative and managerial skills, in both of which women have high competence. And they need to make full use of their best talents, however they are embodied.

Organizations in all sectors need to identify and remove barriers to the retention of their female workers, by understanding their real contribution, by not penalizing them in salary terms. And more urgently, governments need to analyze the scope for public action in encouraging the labor force attachment and optimal deployment of women in whom much human capital investment has been made. Policy measures to consider are wider application and enforcement of equal wage legislation, removal of "protective" legislation for women (which increases the cost of female labor and reduces women's probability of employment), and public support for childcare via fiscal exemptions if not direct provision.

There are lessons in this for other Asian and Near Eastern countries. The crux of the matter is the need to encourage women's participation in paid employment, the only form of employment to which the potentially wide social benefits accrue (fertility reduction, poverty averting household cash income contributions, and improvements in women's status within the household). A more labor-absorptive macro-economic strategy is one basic condition for achieving improvements in women's employment status.

Another level of intervention is to look to ways of upgrading the status of the majority of women's current work opportunities, which arise in the unorganized sector. Governments and A.I.D. might encourage the formation of community/neighborhood organizations among women. These are legally incorporated entities which have proven effective (in Japan and India) in empowering women to act collectively to improve employment conditions in small workshops. These entities usually provide services such as training in work and life skills and, in some cases, function as a channel for credit to improve the productivity of women's self-employment activity in small enterprises. Moreover, they can be better than traditionally male dominated trade unions in helping women to bring pressure to bear for improvements in wages, working conditions, and facilities in the formal sector as well. They can also serve as the foundation stone for giving greater representative voice to women within the juridico-bureaucratic and political spheres and - albeit not immediately within

the domain of government - make a real contribution to the process of political decentralization which must underlie moves towards democratic pluralism.

Recommendations for specific activities for U.S.A.I.D. programs, classed according to the new thrust of policy towards middle income countries, then include:

Global Economic Integration

1. Special attention to the representation of women in technical and business training programs relevant to employment in expanding export related industries and services.
2. Special attention in educational programs, especially at the tertiary level, locally, in the U.S., or in a third country, for inclusion of women among the beneficiaries.
3. Pilot programs to train women in new, technologically advanced occupations, which follow through into active placement of graduates with employers. The emergence of new occupations is a strategic window of opportunity for women, if they can enter these new job sectors before they become identified as a male preserve.
4. Encouragement to governments in policy dialogue to monitoring and improvement of women's employment in export sectors, with the objective of improving women's access and removing gender discrimination in wage and non-wage employment benefits and in promotion opportunities based on regulatory asymmetries (e.g. in child allowances, leave provisions).
4. Encouragement to U.S. companies operating in advanced developing countries to acknowledge the major part women play in economic production in those countries, and to pay attention to the promotion of women's opportunities in their own businesses.

Democracy

1. Research is called for into the extent and the determinants of wage discrimination by sex in advanced developing countries. There is relatively little information on the degree of occupational segregation by sex in these economies, of the dynamics of wage discrimination (in aggregate or at the micro level inside firms), and of the menu of effective policies and interventions available to counteract it. Comparisons with what is known from other developing countries and developed countries would be fruitful (see ILO, 1990, for an up-to-date evaluation).
2. U.S.A.I.D. should support local women's organizations that include in their programs efforts to improve women's conditions of employment. Such organizations should be encouraged to enter directly into discussion with local employers and also to lobby politically for policy and legislative changes. In discussions with employers, they can be a less confrontational alternative to traditional labor organizations. They may also be more effective in improving the conditions of women's lives in their totality, insofar as they can widen the issues to include amenities such as childcare and flexible working schedules which are not usually taken on board by traditional labor representatives. In their lobbying function they are indispensable to progress on the legislative front.

Given the traditional neglect of women's issues within labor organizations, and the tendency of official women's organizations to appease rather than advance women's long term interests, the

promotion of local women's groups is a legitimate contribution to widening and deepening of civic debate.

3. Another area of public action where U.S.A.I.D. programs may make a useful contribution is in the promotion of the idea of accountability in public social services.

Provision of many social services in the health, education and social security fields is of special concern to women. Yet it is not common to conceive of women as the consumer constituency for these services (as opposed to passive recipients of services provided exclusively for them, e.g. MCH programs). There is a great deal of scope for, first, screening all public social sector services for their impact on and utility for women; and also for developing ways of exposing public service officials to accountability to women as users. The promotion of local women's groups, as above, would be instrumental in this connection.

4. Facilitating reproductive choice is another area of vital concern to women's life choices. The below-replacement rate of population growth in some countries, a cause for government concern, reflects the fact that women may have been squeezed too far and the economic and practical disincentives to childrearing have become too severe. The Swedish experience shows that reversal of the public policy measures that brought the situation about can easily encourage increases in fertility again. Improving maternity leave provisions and allowances, child care provision, etc., quickly led in that case to recovery of population growth to replacement levels. The time has come to investigate the application of such measures in some middle income countries too.

Poverty

1. A.I.D. programs should introduce to the policy dialogue agenda special attention to the justification for and formulation of a gender aware system of old age social security provision. The high budgetary cost of pensions schemes is brought into better perspective when the fertility reducing impact of such schemes and (and in the 4MADCs) the social sector costs of alternative forms of shelter for the elderly are properly taken into account.

2. In this connection, the prospects for income earning among women towards the end of their working lives should be monitored. Changes in economic policy affecting agriculture, the sector where remaining employment for older women is presently concentrated, should be checked for their effect on labor use. Regulatory changes may helpfully be introduced, for example, encouraging part time working, which would open up opportunities for older workers on reasonable terms in unskilled jobs in the service sector, including the public social services.

3. In the 4MADCs and other advanced developing countries with similar social systems, there is a strong case for monitoring the situation of older cohorts of women, specifically by checking that "familism" continues to provide as good a mechanism of inter-generational transfer of income as it has in the past. Modifications might be made to the fiscal system to reinforce incentives for younger people to continue to shelter elderly relatives.

4. With regard to female headed households, there is a real need for social supports (childcare, etc) to ensure that sole mothers' earnings and career progression are not impeded by the particularly severe mobility and time constraints imposed on them by the task of caring for children. Modifications in the fiscal system may be necessary to ensure that there is no gender bias against women in the granting of tax exemptions for dependents. Integrated systems of public collection of

statutory child support payments from men are being developed in some countries, e.g. Australia, and these might also have a place. Finally, the case for developing a "child income" element in the social security system should be explored, with payments made normally to the mother. All these various aspects would be far developed if introduced at an early, preventive stage in advanced developing countries, to cope with present pockets of poverty and to ensure that they do not grow unmanageably in future.

Lessons Learned From the Advanced Developing Countries

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **A link can be made between political liberalization and the status of women.**

Encouraging democratic reform may provide one way to enhance women's status. However, efforts to assist grass-roots women's welfare organizations (which have not been allowed to develop in most ADCs and which possesses the potential for strengthening women's voice) rather than efforts aimed at the formal sphere of political participation are also necessary, and arguably more important.

- **Social security schemes based on employee contributions do not adequately support women.**

The problem emerges because most women are household, informal sector, part-time or casual workers who receive no coverage from these schemes. Evidence shows the schemes to be of minor importance. People rely much more on savings and support from children, which are not completely effective and exclude women disproportionately (particularly if female life expectancy is higher than male). The question of old age support for women is an important one worthy of A.I.D. attention because access to income for women in old age is crucial for equity and fertility reasons. Assessment of different employment opportunities in terms of their social security benefits for women and impacts on fertility also deserves attention.

- **Korea and Taiwan are special cases.**

Despite the fact that their success can be at least partially attributed to special security and market arrangements made available as part of the package of U.S. support, they do offer at least one lesson: rapid institutional development in education and research has not come hand in hand with equal access for women.

- **The labor intensive manufacturing approach taken in ADCs offers a lesson for other countries.**

The educational requirements are not high and widespread female participation is possible if there is no resistance to women taking on manufacturing work. Furthermore, as subcontracting becomes more prevalent in manufacturing, it will be more and more possible for small women's groups to engage in export trade.

- **The Chinese patriarchal system present some lessons for other countries.**

Policymakers should look for ways to achieve the social security results similar to those the familial inter-generational transfer scheme accomplishes. They should try to replicate the advantages that come out of Chinese familism.

- **Occupational segregation can be fought with higher education for women.**

This tool will have greater effectiveness as technical occupations become more important and if education focuses on newly emerging occupations, preventing discriminatory patterns from their onset.

Women in the Newly Emerging Democracies of Eastern Europe

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report is the first phase of a two-phase study on gender roles in the newly emerging democracies of Eastern Europe. The purpose of this phase of the study was to take a first step toward gathering and analyzing data on gender roles in the Eastern European labor force, with a view toward assessing how these roles might evolve as a result of the current reform process. All of the information contained in this first phase report is based on a review of the literature available in the U.S. The second phase of the study will involve field research in Eastern Europe. The aim of the field work will be to update the information gathered in the literature review; gather information in areas in which there was little or no information available; and validate and/or modify the findings of the literature review.

Because this report is based on secondary source materials it is important to recognize that:

- ◆ Most of the data currently available in the United States does not reflect the effects of the dramatic changes that have occurred during the past two years in Eastern Europe.
- ◆ Because most of the information available in the U.S. pre-dates 1989, there are several areas in which the team found limited data. Field research will be critical to expanding information in these areas.
- ◆ This report does not explore significant differences in gender roles between countries in Eastern Europe. Significant differences do exist; field work will aim to examine some of them.

Though many of the differences between Eastern European men and women may seem familiar to us in the United States, the socialist political system and prevailing social attitudes do make the gender issues of Eastern Europe unique.

One of the envisioned benefits of socialism was that it was to eliminate all inequalities between women and men, in both the workplace and social structures. Legislation regarding equal pay for equal work, and active recruitment of women into the labor force was seen as the answer to women's inequality. However, the end result of this attitude was that the women of Eastern Europe

were given no choice but to work; work was a political duty. Women were thrust into the workforce by the political system, rather than forging their own place gradually, by their own choice, as women in the U.S. and Western Europe have done. Economic necessity also forced women to work; families needed the second income in order to get by.

While socialism introduced "equality" to the workplace, it did not, as predicted, introduce equality to Eastern European homes. Throughout Eastern Europe women have remained responsible for nearly all of the child-care and household work. In addition, the challenges of daily living in Eastern Europe make caring for the home a full-time job in itself. Few women have access to labor-saving devices; they must often stand in line two to three hours on a daily basis to get food for meals. These factors combined have served to make the double-burden women face more acute.

Because of socialism's dedication to "equality" and full-employment, women have played an extremely active role in Eastern European labor forces. Though women are well-educated, well-trained, and legally ensured of equal pay for equal work, they often are found only in positions of lower and/or middle management. Many professions, such as medicine and finance, have become "feminized," that is, they are dominated by female labor and have relatively low wage scales. Child rearing is often cited as the primary reason that women are under-employed relative to their education. Because of the need to juggle responsibilities at work and at home, women often choose less demanding jobs. In sum, although socialist theory professed a dedication to equality, it was unable to deliver on this promise in practice.

In this period of reform, the women of Eastern Europe are now engaged in a new debate: was their experience over the last forty years really emancipation, and if so, what were its benefits? For women, one of the legacies of socialism is a sense of disillusionment with the benefits of working. Work in the socialist context brought relatively few material or intrinsic benefits to women, particularly those in the industrial sector. The combined effect of this sentiment and prevailing social attitudes regarding women's responsibilities in the home may lead women to retreat from the labor force during this period of reform, if they can afford to do so. The economic reality is that many women will be unable to stop working because their incomes are so critical to their families' well-being.

Democratic reforms will imply greater freedom of choice for women. In the short-run those women that can afford to may choose to stay at home in reaction to the burden they shouldered under socialism. However, as new opportunities develop in Eastern Europe, women's sense of disillusionment with the work environment may well change. In the new economic and political context women will gain the right to choose where, when and how they will participate in the newly emerging Eastern European economies; these are choices that were unavailable to them under socialism.

Women in the Newly Emerging Democracies of Eastern Europe

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **In the case of Eastern Europe, one has to be careful when interpreting figures on the degree of women's political participation.**

Politically, women's participation in leadership positions has been significant, but primarily as a result of appointments aimed at filling quotas for political participation rather than giving women true leadership power. Noting this fact, one should not be troubled by the decline in the percentage of female representatives after free elections. The drop reveals prevailing social attitudes that politics is strictly a man's domain.

- **Access to quality reproductive healthcare is an issue in Eastern Europe.**

Access in the past has been limited, especially by government licensing laws practices under which Ministry of Health officials were the only ones allowed to prescribe contraceptives. A.I.D. is working to train more general practitioners for prescription and to ensure that the restriction is removed once doctors are qualified.

- **Access to services and housing has traditionally been tied to factory affiliation.**

A.I.D. efforts may be needed if privatization eliminates such access.

- **It is necessary to understand the socio-historical context of work in Eastern Europe.**

Many women have entered the workforce under the rubric of duty--obligation to one's country. Constitutional text and tying services to the place of employment were ways that such behavior was "enforced." This context is important to note, because it explains the desire of many women today to exit the workforce.

- **There are important differences between the ADCs' experience and what is expected for Eastern Europe.**

One difference is that in the Eastern Europe case, rising unemployment is expected. Support for children will also be critical in Eastern Europe, as it is uncertain that the social benefits systems currently in place will remain intact once reform has advanced.

"Translating Data Into Policy and Programs: Implications for A.I.D."

SYNOPSIS OF PANEL DISCUSSION

Moderator: Maurice Middleberg, The Futures Group/OPTIONS Project

Informed policy depends as much on good evidence as it does on sound reasoning. Before policy responses can be drafted, the condition of women must be ascertained. After policy is implemented, it should be evaluated in terms of impact. In between is the policy design stage. Data is crucial at the first and last junctures. Statistics are used to describe what is observed about the status of women and to devise indicators which gauge how policy improves it. As we rely on data to answer the questions of where and what the problems are (ex ante) and how much progress have we made in their solution (ex post), researchers and planners must be concerned with the quality and quantity of existing data. Both determine whether existing data adequately measures what we desire to assess. In order to assess this "adequacy," two critical questions must be posed, is there enough data and is the data reliable? In order to facilitate policy formulation, the researcher must frame recommendations from the measures and indices at hand. The panel discussion challenged the experts and the audience to consider how to improve the set of data available to planners and how to convey the implications of existing evidence to political decision-makers.

Major Sources of Data and their Limitations

Primary sources include population censuses, national labor force surveys, the International Labor Office, agricultural censuses, censuses of industry, local research institutions and the World Fertility Surveys. National labor force surveys are published in the Yearbook of Labor Statistics and provide extensive employment data: labor force decomposed by detailed occupational categories, industry, employment status, and geographic region. ILO data is based on national censuses or, if a census for the country in question is non-existent or unreliable, simulations from models based on neighboring countries with similar conditions. Specific gender-related problems worth noting are the tendency to undercount the number of women in unpaid agriculture, the variance of estimates for sub-Saharan Africa and the fact that to be counted as "labor," the activity must generate output that is included in the national product accounts, which women's labor often does not.

For these reasons, and because the adequacy and reliability of source data often depends on the country in question, it is worthwhile to discuss the data with those who gathered it or with others who have already applied it. Inadequacies exist, but they do not impose insurmountable barriers.

Efforts to Remedy Data Problems

The ILO serves as a source of standardized statistics. This facilitates comparisons across countries. To help correct the problem of missing series, additional tabulations can be requested from a source. Frequently desired (unpublished) statistics can be extracted from existing data sets simply by running additional calculations. The extra effort is especially worthwhile in order to tease out the gender specific implications and to build in gender-specific measures.

Many organizations are engaged in data improvement efforts which means that A.I.D. does not have to launch its own attack, merely to enlist in the existing movement. As the process frequently involves changing definitions (especially as more of women's work gets counted), it is important to recognize that data improvements may initially introduce substantial discontinuities with past.

Micro data for macro purposes

Micro-level household data can be a rich source of detailed information. Dr. Dixon-Mueller's example of an eight village study done in Nepal is case and point. From the data on hourly work and contribution to household earnings (which includes imputed value for home-based production), one could deduce where and when women are overworked, how policies at the macro-level could relieve pressure and when the effects of policy might vary across regions. Macro policy implications and needs can often be inferred from micro-level data.

Using data to advise policymakers

Once the researcher is satisfied with his or her data set, a second issue emerges: translating the data into a clear message for national policy-makers. At this juncture, one must assess the constraints on data use, the criteria for judging data implications and the means of communication. Policymakers prefer data which successfully addresses their agenda, data which is part of a timely response, and data that identifies what action the policymaker should take. Any number of criteria--economic, technical, administrative, political, normative, or some combination of these--may be used to judge program proposals. Reliable and understandable data and sound analysis are crucial in terms of fulfilling the needs of high-level government officials.