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**GENDER, WOMEN, AND COMMUNITY WIDE
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

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for the SADCC USAID Natural Resources Management Project
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This publication was prepared as background information for participants in the regional USAID Natural Resources Management Project conference. Focus is on gender considerations and the role of women in natural resources management, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and wildlife.

ABSTRACT

Women play a significant role in the utilization and management of natural resources in Southern Africa. The linkages between women and the resource base are often unrecognized. An understanding of women's resource utilization and gender roles has proven critical to the design and implementation of project interventions. By failing to incorporate gender in resource projects, efforts have failed and even negatively impacted on intended benefit communities. Consideration of the interactions of men and women in relation to the environment, a recognition of the fact that gender roles are dynamic, and the targeting of agricultural, forestry, fisheries, and wildlife project activities and benefits to all resource users can result in the realization of positive project impacts and the adoption of community wide sustainable practices.

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Natural Resources Management Project, SADCC project 5.0.18, is funded by the United States Agency for International Development. Focus of the project is community based natural resource management and utilization. Project sites are in Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana. Regional coordination and exchange of information is through the office of the SADCC Technical Coordinator for Wildlife in Malawi.

The regional Project Coordinating Committee, comprised of members from each national project, identified the need to generate a broader local support for sustainable resource practices by targeting project activities to as many members and sectors of a community as possible. The regional conference on Community Variables in Natural Resources Management was proposed as an initial attempt to identify ways to address different sectors in a community through the project.

GENDER CONSIDERATIONS

One of the variables in a community is gender. Research and project analysis over the last two decades have shown that failure to incorporate gender considerations in project design and implementation have often resulted in failure of the project. Occasionally it has even had a negative impact on the socio-economic situation of intended beneficiary communities.

Recognition of the different roles traditionally and culturally assigned to men and women - gender roles - can assist in the achievement of project outputs. It is equally important to recognize that gender roles are dynamic. They are cultural rather than physical, and these roles can and often do change in a relatively short period of time.

WOMEN IN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION

Gender and women are not synonymous. A review of gender issues includes a review of women's roles and activities, though, as it is often women's input and activities that are unrecognized. This is the case in resource management. While the part African women play in agriculture is well documented, their association and potential association with forestry, fisheries, and especially with wildlife is often not realized. When given the training and employment opportunities necessary for integration into the range of environmental activities, women will be able to increase their contribution to the informed, sustainable management of natural resources.

WHAT IS GENDER?

Men and women differ from each other physically and socially. In project activities, the interest is in social differences.

*Physical differences are referred to as "sex".
Social differences are referred to as "gender".*

The word gender encompasses the fact that behavioural differences between men and women is often socially constructed rather than physical. Gender refers to the social roles of men and women.

It is important to understand that while males and females are the same all over the world, what is deemed masculine or feminine varies widely from society to society. A person is born with a particular sex, but has to learn gender roles appropriate to that sex in his or her particular society. Unlike sexual characteristics, gender roles can change over time.

GENDER ROLES VARY ENORMOUSLY BETWEEN DIFFERENT SOCIETIES.
Some of the factors that affect these variations include age, class, religion, ethnicity, regional original and colonial history.

The differences between sex and gender can be shown in this way:

SEX

*physical
universal
congenital
unchanging
unvarying*

GENDER

*social
culture specific
learned behavior
changes over time
varies within cultures*

These distinctions are very important for development work in that,

1. *They make us think in terms of **relationships** not only between men and women, but **between individuals and their society.***
2. *They get us beyond **stereotypes.***
3. *They remind us that we are working normally with **social**, not physical, categories. **Therefore, a similar approach can be used to consider other variables.***

A gender awareness helps in understanding many characteristics in the beneficiary population.

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GENDER IS CONSIDERED
AND WHEN GENDER IS NOT CONSIDERED
IN DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

A FEW POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXAMPLES

Under a forestry project in Senegal, in some villages both men and women were consulted regarding their species preferences. Women favored a mix of forage and shade species to go with the income producing species most favored by men. Tree survival was much higher in these villages. Women are responsible for watering trees under the traditional gender-specific division of labor. They were more willing to assume this extra task when they had an input on the choice of species.

An agro-forestry project in Kenya required women to collect and transport water for seedling nurseries. When a water shortage forced the women to fetch the water from a river 2.5 km away, they refused. Project planners had made no attempt to consider the impact of the project on women's work load.

A tree project in Cameroon introduced fodder trees as an intercrop to stabilize soils on land previously under slash and burn cultivation. While it benefitted men, as it increased maize yields and reduced the work required for land management, women were disadvantaged. Their groundnut production declined as their labor input was increased to prune the trees.

The development of better markets under a project in the Dominican Republic allowed men to sell palm trees planted on their farms for cash. Since men control land-use, women have little influence on decisions concerning the use of trees. As palms were sold for cash, women became unable to obtain fronds for their traditional basket-making activities.

Traditional land rights in one region of Kenya pose a serious constraint to tree planting by women. Women do not own land. Since ownership of trees on a specific area indicates ownership of the land, men almost universally oppose the planting of trees by women. They fear that women will gain a claim to the land.

In Burkina Faso, an area of degraded shrubs was cleared for planting "productive" trees. Inadvertently, women lost a valuable source of firewood, shea nuts for cooking oil, and medicinal plants.

Source: PPC/WID:RG July 28, 1989:8960W

CASE STUDY: A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT ADAPTATION TO GENDER CONCERNS

The Arid and Semi-Arid Lands project in Kenya intended to improve production and preserve the agricultural resource bases in the semi arid highlands by popularizing bench terracing and water conservation. The Social Soundness Analysis pointed out that women are the principal farmers and that, because of high male out-migration, women's self-help groups would be the main source of labor for project activities such as construction of terraces and water catchments. The report warned that if women were expected to supply free labor for soil and water conservation during the peak agricultural seasons, targets would not be met. Recommendation was for the project to pay for the labor or suspend the work during the growing season.

The original project design ignored the recommendation. Targets were set on the assumption that work would be carried on throughout the entire year. Ultimately, project management recognized that the design was not feasible. They suspended work during the peak season so that women could finish the plowing and planting.

*The economic responsibilities and time constraints of women were a critical factor in securing their unpaid labor. Women were willing to work on terracing and water catchments **when they could**. Gender analysis led to project adaptation which allowed for the achievement of project objectives. The Government of Kenya assessed the value of the women's unpaid labor contribution to the project at US\$1.8 million.*

CASE STUDY: FAILURE TO ADDRESS GENDER CONCERNS

*A rice irrigation project developed by male Taiwanese technicians was targeted to men in The Gambia, even though women are traditional cultivators and income beneficiaries of swamp rice. In order to assure women's labor on the irrigated rice, men blocked women from owning and/or cultivating irrigated rice on their own account. As a result, rice production **decreased** under the project.*

WOMEN IN THE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROJECT

WHY it is important to include women

To ignore women is to ignore more than half of the resource users and managers in southern Africa. The United Nations estimates that women provide between 60% and 80% of agricultural labor in Africa, and women's association with resources extends far beyond agriculture. In their roles as keepers of small livestock, in the collection of fuelwood for cooking, in the gathering of plants and herbs for food and medicine, and in the utilization of wildlife for food, rural women are primary users and managers of natural resources.

The many activities linking women to natural resources are directed towards achievement of their first priority - to sustain life at the household level. The burden on women to sustain the family requires that they use those resources most readily available and in nearest proximity to their homes. They have no choice but to grow food a cash crops on fragile, marginal lands. They have no alternative to gathering fuelwood from the few remaining stands of timber. These resources, though, are constantly retreating. Proportionally, the amount of women's time required to meet basic survival needs is increasing. Although women have a vested interest in responsible management, they do not traditionally have the knowledge to consider sustainability or the future consequences of a diminished supply nor do they have the time to experiment with alternatives.

In addition to providing the means to sustain life, women have full responsibility for the raising and nurturing of children. The family, as the smallest social entity in a nation, describes and prescribes the values of that nation, and it is women's responsibility to socialize children in familial and cultural values. The values and practices of women in regard to natural resources are those which will be passed to the next generations.

In spite of their responsibility in resource management and utilization and the importance of their role in instilling values and practices in future resource users, women are often inadvertently denied full participation in projects and access to benefits from project activities. This is particularly true in projects focusing on traditionally male oriented activities such as wildlife. Because women do produce a significant portion of the total national output, because they are inextricably linked to natural resources, and because their resource practices will have a major influence on future practices, it is important that women be an integral part of Natural Resources Management Project activities at the decision making level, during planning and implementation, and as recipients in the distribution of benefits.

HOW to include women in project activities

Women's active participation in project activities is complicated by their multiple roles. They have the major responsibility for maintaining the household, raising children, caring for the sick, and growing, securing, processing, storing, preparing and marketing of food. These factors may act as a constraint to women's participation in activities not relating directly to household management. Female headed households are particularly vulnerable.

Project activities should therefore take precautions not to add to the burden of women by increasing time and labor requirements but rather consider women's constraints and needs in designing community based projects. Special effort should be made to obtain ideas and suggestions from women during planning stages. Women will know if they can comply with plans that male leaders, project implementors, or donors have proposed, and can offer alternative plans more compatible to their needs.

There are three approaches to including women in projects:

WOMEN - ONLY PROJECTS

- Advantages:** Women receive all of the project's benefits. Beneficiaries may acquire leadership skills and greater self confidence in gender-segregated environment. Skills training in non traditional areas may be much easier without male competition.
- Disadvantages:** These projects tend to be small scale and underfunded. Implementing agencies lack technical expertise in raising productivity or income. WID-specific income generating projects rarely take marketability of products into account and thus fail to generate income. Women beneficiaries may be required to contribute their time and labor with no compensation. Women become further marginalized and isolated from mainstream development.

WOMEN'S COMPONENT

- Advantages:** More resources and higher priority than WID-specific projects. Women are ensured of receiving at least part of the project's resources.
- Disadvantages:** The WID component usually receives far less funding and priority than other components. These components have tended to respond to women's social roles; thus, domestic activities may be emphasized to the exclusion of any others. Awareness of the importance of gender in the project's other components may be missing.

INTEGRATED PROJECTS

- Advantages:** Women can take full advantage of the resources and high priority that integrated projects receive. If women form a large proportion of the pool of eligibles, their benefits will probably be high even without detailed attention given WID issues. This is the most effective approach in including women, as they are not further marginalized or separated from mainstream.
- Disadvantages:** Unless information on women's activity and time use is introduced at the design stage, projects may inadvertently exclude women through promotion mechanisms, location, timing, etc. If women form only a small proportion of the eligibles, they may not be included in the project. Women may be competing with men for scarce project resources and lose out because of a lack of experience in integrated group settings and their relatively low status in the community.

It is important, in targeting women's activities in the Natural Resources Management Project, to focus on women as producers rather than as merely basket weavers, farm laborers, firewood collectors, care takers and food preparers. Creative alternatives can be found to integrate women into all a variety of project aspects at the community level in both traditional and non-traditional activities. Women can serve on committees, be involved in designing research projects, assist in proposing projects, identify and attend appropriate training courses, and assist in the decisions on how community resources can be used to achieve increased social and economic benefits. A key to women's involvement in the NRM project is that participation per se is pointless unless women benefit in some way from their participation. Reduced time and labor from domestic and productive responsibilities, a direct increase in resources to sustain the family, increased income, and empowerment are potential benefits - not participation itself.

As social customs segregate women's activities from men's in many areas, different methods may need to be used to encourage women's participation. Women-only meetings, women-dominated projects, verbal exchange of information, and scheduling meeting places and times to facilitate women's attendance can help overcome social constraints to participation. The additional effort taken to develop women's trust and encourage their active participation will be compensated through a comprehensive informed management system that all resource users - men and women - will support and sustain.

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WID versus Gender

The terms "Women in Development" (WID) and "Gender" may be confusing. What do they mean? Are there consequences of using one over the other in terms of policy, project, and programs?

The focus on WID began with Esther Boserup's Women's Role in Economic Development. Published in 1970, the book documented often unnoted and negative consequences to women of many development activities. This theme was subsequently addressed by researchers as data was collected on a worldwide basis. Most development programs and policies presented problems to women as their contribution to economic production and the reproduction of society was often ignored in program and policy development. As the role of WID became a worldwide concern involving both national and international researchers and activists, focus was primarily on women, with only some comparisons to the larger society and to men.

The term "Gender" that came into widespread use in the 1980s, sought to remedy the isolation of women and WID issues, and to include the activities and problems of both sexes in research and development endeavors. The concept of gender focuses on the socially defined characteristics of men and women in particular situations in terms of the tasks they do and the results of these tasks. Gender analysis has become commonly accepted to analyze roles and to apply that analysis to decisions about programs, policies and projects.

The use of the concept of gender facilitated addressing such issues as efficiency and equity. Women's exclusion from development activities can be seen in the light of restricting the success of the project, i.e., decreasing efficiency. Whether or not women are decreasing, maintaining

or increasing their position vis-a-vis men in the new and changed situation can also be assessed. Both the collection and analysis of data (on work, access to resources, control over resources, etc.), if carried out with a gender perspective, will increase the knowledge about men and human resources in general as well as about women.

As a result of the WID emphasis in the previous two decades, many governments and international agencies tended to have women-specific policies and projects, some evolving from a focus on domestic sciences and health to that of small scale income generating activities. Although women receive all of the benefits from such programs or projects, these activities tend to be small and underfunded, with women often marginalized from the mainstream of development efforts.

Over time, two other methods have been used: the women's component and the integrated approach. The former usually has greater resources and is of higher priority than WID-specific activities, and allows women to receive at least part of the project or program's resources. The integrated approach allows women to have the advantages of the total resources of the

project or program.

In sum, the focus on both WID and gender are both still needed, because gender analysis gives WID a broader scope, and always encompasses the role and contribution of women.

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SADCC: WOMEN IN FORESTRY

The context in which forestry is practiced in southern Africa today is dynamic. Forestry related problems and issues now extend beyond traditional timber management and cross-cut disciplines and sectors such as agriculture, energy, health, education and community development. Urban and rural men, women, and children are affected by forestry practices, policies, and project interventions. While new concepts of social forestry, community participation, and women in forestry have emerged to address the need to integrate forestry and human resources, new practices have been slow in evolving.

Problems and Constraints In Involving Women In Forestry Projects

Women involved in forestry development today work primarily at two distinct levels; as laborers in community or rural-based forestry projects and as professional and technical staff in forestry departments. As laborers, women usually work in nurseries and plantation establishment. Involvement in logging and wood processing is limited to a few isolated cases in Zimbabwe and Tanzania. Female forestry technicians and professionals are generally posted to extension units and nurseries of forestry departments. Few work in research with the exception of Mozambique, where women comprise some 40% of the department staff and are represented in all divisions.

While women have benefitted from the SADCC forestry sector projects in education, training, employment, and infrastructure improvements, the necessary socio-economic impact and gender studies haven't been carried out to assess the degree to which women have benefitted and the gains relative to men. Integrating gender issues is a recent undertaking, and approaches to linking gender and forestry are still evolutionary. During a recent review of the SADCC forestry sector portfolio, a number of areas in which Women in Development (WID) and gender programming could be strengthened were identified:

1. A Coordinated Approach to Gender Issues

Consistent among projects and proposals is a lack of gender related groundwork, research and planning. In the case of the Blantyre City Fuelwood Project (BCFP) in Malawi, two income generating schemes were proposed for women. Both are at risk of failure due to poor planning. A turkey farming operation didn't provide for necessary inputs such as training and salary of the caretaker. The actual rearing process has not been successful, as no one can take time from their daily duties to care for the turkeys. The assumption was made in the project design that women's time would be available and would be donated.

In a second component of the project, a diesel powered maize mill was constructed. However, the high operating costs due to the price of diesel fuel makes the cost of grinding four times that of a nearby electric mill. **Women were not involved in the project design.** The mill was not their choice, and they opt to walk longer distances to town in order to save the difference in price.

A twenty bed women's dormitory was recently added to the Malawi College of Forestry. However, the female enrolment level has only increased from two to four, as the college is unable to increase the intake of women because of the student selection system. Construction of the physical structure itself was not sufficient to increase women's attendance. **Departmental policy was a constraint to women's participation.**

2. Stereotypes on the Role of Women in Forestry Activities

Women's involvement in forestry projects has been based on the following roles and assumptions:

a. Women are fuelwood gatherers. Therefore they are suited for and interested in participating in afforestation projects. There are several erroneous assumptions made here. Women's presumed responsibility in the replenishment of wood resources has project planners assuming their labor will be free. A second assumption is that project benefits will be accrued by women, though these are not quantified nor guaranteed to women. Thirdly, the assumption is made that women can be involved in projects only as laborers. While Zambia specifies that women will be involved in the Community Forestry and Wood Energy Programme (COFOPRO) project as managers and supervisors, other country proposals restrict women's input to the traditional laborer or nursery worker.

Because women are highly visible in their role in fuelwood collection, an underlying assumption central to the entire issue is that fuelwood is strictly a women's issue. In fact, the issue of fuelwood is critical to all family and community members.

b. Women are involved in afforestation projects. Therefore they are best suited in forestry programs as extension workers. There is relative ease in overcoming socio-cultural barriers by placing women in extension divisions. However, this has led to the marginalization of women. Extension units typically have modest budgets and a lower profile than traditional forestry divisions. With only an extension background, women have less opportunity to advance and to make a contribution in research, planning, policy, education, and forest industry.

A more meaningful approach would be to seek strategies for male extension workers to reach female clients. The Ministry of Agriculture in Malawi has successfully used an approach of interaction between women in groups and male extension agents to overcome cultural barriers. Extension Aids Circular 2/83 in the agriculture section describes this method.

3. Participation Versus Benefits

These terms are sometimes used interchangeably in project proposals. **The assumption is apparently that if women participate, they will benefit.** In many cases, projects fail by assuming that women have the time to carry out project activities when, actually, their workload is overburdened in sustaining the family. If the project is not designed so that women will directly benefit, they can not and are not willing to contribute their time. It is essential to involve women in the project design so that it is based on their needs. **It should not be assumed that women will willingly become involved for a benefit identified by someone else.**

4. Constraints to Women in the Forestry Profession

The primary constraint is the limited pool of qualified women from which to recruit female staff. A number of institutional and socio-cultural barriers impede women from entering forestry education programs.

One **socio-cultural barrier** to women's participation is the perception of forestry as a male domain. Careers have been considered unsuitable for women.

Other barriers are institutional. In Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi, government selection boards control the number of females that can be accepted. Once in the sector, women are denied access to SADCC training and events due to the nomination process. Forestry department heads and principals of forestry institutions are requested to nominate candidates. Women are frequently overlooked because male supervisors deem them unsuitable or non competitive.

Another socio-cultural barrier is encountered in the nomination process. In many cases the rationale given for denying training was women's perceived household and maternal duties. When offered training opportunities, no woman declined because of household or familial restrictions.

5. Institutional Capacity of Forestry Departments

Forestry departments typically have rigid institutional structures and operating frameworks which limit their capacity to address current issues such as women in forestry. **The project approach has not diverged from the traditional top down method of project planning and development.** Community forestry initiatives display a mechanical planning process in which forestry prescriptions are proposed with no input from affected residents.

Additionally, **forestry education has evolved slowly over time.** Curriculum changes have not developed to address current community forestry or socio-economic issues.

Recommendations for involving Women In Forestry Activities

The following proposed policies have been recommended to SADCC forestry departments and the Forestry Sector Technical Coordinating Unit (FSTCU) to address women's issues in forestry:

- ... to promote and facilitate women's advancement into decision making, policy, and leadership positions in the field
- ... to be flexible and dynamic in operations to allow projects and programs to respond to the changing needs and priorities of women in forestry
- ... to encourage the role of women in all dimensions of forestry including research, management industry and extension
- ... to increase women's benefits from and involvement in forestry development, in particular the Forestry Sector Program for Action (FSPA)

Proposed strategies to achieve the above policies:

- ...attain senior management involvement, commitment, support and responsibility for the integration of women in forestry
- ...increase educational and training activities for women
- ...plan forestry activities for women based on gender analysis and socio economic studies
- ...clearly identify beneficiaries and participants, ensuring adequate compensation for participation.
- ...conduct research on the needs of women
- ...conduct gender sensitization training of policy makers and SADCC forestry sector staff

from Women in Forestry in the SADCC Forestry Sector Programme of Action. 1992. Correia, Maria and Sara Mvududu

WOMEN AND FISHERIES

Women are far from invisible in the fisheries sector. Comprising thirty to fifty percent of the total fisheries work force in Africa, they perform a vital role in the harvesting, processing and marketing of the resource.

In Malawi, where sixty seven percent of the nation's protein is derived from fish, women play a major role in drying, transporting, and marketing food fish. Along coastal areas in Mozambique, women harvest, process and market oysters and crabs. In Ghana, they are even more visible in the industry. Hundreds of deep sea fishing boats, including trawlers and seiners, are owned and managed by women. Current economic conditions make the purchase of fuel, supplies and equipment difficult, but the women have kept their boats fishing while the State Fishing Corporation boats remain in port. ("Women in Fish Production". Randall, Peter. FAO Publication)

In spite of their extensive use and management of the resource, women are often unrecognized in the fisheries sector and are subject to a number of constraints.

*** Women are often not counted in employment figures regardless of the real allocation of their time in various fishing activities. Women and census takers often identify housework as their occupation.*

*** Information usually reaches women through their husbands rather than first hand.*

*** Many small scale fisherwomen are constrained by their use of primitive methods of catching and processing fish.*

*** Few women are directly involved in aquaculture programs due to constraints on their time and the lack of access to technical expertise. Often training in aquaculture is oriented towards men.*

*** The Ghana situation is an exception. Generally, in the more technically complex areas of fishing, such as intermediate and industrial fishing, men remain the predominant workers and beneficiaries. Analysts and planners continue to focus on upgrading the efficiency of fish production in these areas. They neglect the equally important processing function, which is primarily performed by women.*

*** In many countries, major industrial development projects use women as inexpensive labor on processing lines while plant management and technology remain male prerogatives.*

Gender Considerations are Important in Fisheries Projects

The failure to address socio-economic issues and to incorporate gender concerns in project planning and design have contributed to the negative effects of projects intended to improve local conditions. A lack of understanding of gender roles and the failure to anticipate the effects of project activities on social and economic situations has caused many projects to have a negative effect on local conditions.

In India, fisherwomen played a substantial economic role in their community. This role was negatively affected by the well intentioned introduction of the machine-made nets:

- ** local males received a disproportionately large share of the training in the use of the machines. This deprived women of their traditional activity as net makers and net menders.*
- ** the new nylon nets resulted in catches too large to be handled by women.*

Strategies to involve Women in Fisheries Projects

Consultation and Participation

Strategies for addressing the involvement of women in fisheries projects are the same as those involving women in other resource management projects. Women's input and participation must be an integral part of project design. They should be contributors and actors in local decision-making, starting with the adaptation of projects to local circumstances and needs.

The following issues should be addressed by project planners in reference to the consultation and participation of women throughout the stages of a fisheries project:

- Are local women consulted and involved in the planning and design of the project?*
- Are local women appointed to the project committee(s)?*
- Have the project planners clearly stated the intention to involve women as agents and as beneficiaries.*
- Will the project prepare local groups, business organizations, and financial institutions so that they will be willing to accept the active participation of women in the project sector?*
- What special measures have been taken to overcome constraints that prevent women from participating in this sector?*

Women in Fisheries Project Implementation Methods
*** An Example ***

DATA COLLECTION

The purpose of gathering and analyzing information is to identify the roles that women are already playing in the sector, as well as the constraints that prevent them from enjoying the benefits of development work. The socio-economic data should relate directly to the objectives and activities of the intended project and be used to monitor progress during project implementation. For example:

General situation

- *What traditional tasks undertaken by local residents, both men and women, are relevant to project objectives?*
- *What is the division of time and labor, by gender and age, to accomplish these tasks?*
- *Who controls the cash of the family?*
- *Who benefits from training opportunities and extension services?*
- *How does the share of women's work in fisheries compare with the rest of their workload?*
- *How do men collaborate with women in fisheries?*
- *Are there legal, social, or cultural constraints to women's participation in the sector?*

Fish production

- *What is the role of women in fishery production?*
- *Do women participate in aquaculture activities?*
- *Do women make and repair nets, traps, or boats?*
- *Who owns the means of production, e.g. boats, nets, traps, ovens, transportation?*

Fish processing

- *Are women involved in the processing of fish?*
- *What are the techniques used?*
- *What equipment would decrease post-harvest losses?*
- *Do women have access to credit for fish processing facilities?*

Fish marketing

- *Are women responsible for marketing of fish?*
- *What type equipment would make marketing or transport more efficient?*

Project Activities

The level of participation and involvement of women in the sector varies by country, region, ethnic group, class and culture. The following areas have been identified as the activities carried out most often by women:

- net making and repairing*
- basket making*
- fish processing*
- fish marketing*
- tending ponds, feeding, and fry gathering*

Depending on local conditions, a number of activities could be implemented to improve the working conditions and efficiency of women in fisheries:

- Net making and repairing:*
- formation of cooperatives*
 - purchase of machinery*
 - access to credit*
- Fish processing:*
- introduction of new technologies in drying, salting, and canning fish*
 - upgrading the facilities and working conditions*
 - strengthening management techniques and skills*
- Fish marketing:*
- training in business and financial management*
 - training in preservation techniques*
 - providing storage facilities and means of transportation*
 - improving marketing skills*
- Fish ponds:*
- organizing women's nurseries and cooperatives*
 - technical assistance*

Fisheries and natural resources project activities designed to improve the productivity of women in the sector should be considered in the context of each project. Project planners should be able to answer the following questions:

- Does the project improve the traditional position of women in fish production, processing, and marketing?*
- Does the project create new forms of production, processing and marketing in conflict with the traditional practices of local women?*
- Are women excluded as beneficiaries of the project?*
- Does the project increase the work load of women in the production, processing, or marketing of fish.*
- Does the project change the ownership of means of production, such as fishing boats, smoking ovens, nets, traps, or transport?*
- Does the project widen the gaps, both knowledge and wealth, between classes, sexes, ethnic groups and/or urban and rural areas?*

AFRICAN WOMEN AND WILDLIFE

Although it is not generally recognized, women in southern Africa have always had an association with wildlife. At times this association has a negative benefit to women. Elephants and other wild animals raid their crops and destroy their fields. They are unable to move about freely for fear of attack. In other cases wildlife provides a benefit to women. They are involved in the preparation of meat and often participate in the processing of skins and other animal products. They harvest small wildlife for sale and consumption, are involved in the marketing of wildlife products, and in some cases are active in hunting large mammals.

A combination of stereotypes, failure to consider gender concerns, and institutional and policy constraints have prevented women from being fully involved in wildlife activities. As these are addressed, and as women's interactions with wildlife become more clearly understood, their participation in sustainable management of this resource can be increased.

WOMEN, WILDLIFE, AND OLD WIVES TALES: African Women In Resource Conservation

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Malawi

Faced with a population increasing at a rate of 3.4% in the SADCC region and the resultant increased pressure on the environment, there is a growing sense of urgency about conservation of natural resources and wildlife in southern Africa. A direct approach to conservation is now recognized through targeting support for women's participation in sound resource management practices. The full extent of women's role in the utilization and management of wildlife and the options for their contribution to environmental conservation are only now beginning to be recognized and to evolve.

As farmers, in fuelwood collection, in the gathering of plants and herbs, and in the utilization of indigenous wildlife for food, women in southern Africa are primary users and managers of natural resources and wildlife. Their main function, sustaining life for the family unit, is directly dependent on the availability of a range of natural resources including soils, water, trees, plants, and wildlife.

Unfortunately, the majority of women in southern Africa are rural, largely uneducated, under-represented, and extremely poor. They face a daily struggle to provide for their families from marginal lands that have a limited potential. This struggle, in addition to the burden of their multiple roles, is overwhelming and requires the use of any resources available. These women do not commonly have the knowledge, skills, or time to consider the future consequences of non-sustainable practices. The effort required to meet basic daily needs often dictate strategies that contribute to a downward spiral of ecological destruction with far reaching effects on plants, wildlife populations, and the range of natural resources on which survival ultimately depends.

While women's efforts in agriculture is well documented, the link between women and wildlife has been largely unrecognized. In actuality, their use of this resource is more diverse and often has a greater economic impact than that of men. In some areas, such as the Kalahari Desert region of Botswana and Namibia, thirty percent of the diet of area residents comes from wild meat. In addition to preparing the meat, women process the skin and other animal products for use and sale. Though women do not generally participate in the hunting of large animals, a survey among the Tyua of Botswana showed that forty two percent had collected tortoises, nearly one third had captured monitor lizards, and a few had successfully killed large antelope.

The direct utilization of small wildlife, such as gathering of caterpillars for food, is often traditionally a women's activity. In a recent initiative in Malawi designed to offer local communities an opportunity to benefit from wildlife, residents were allowed to harvest Saturniidae caterpillar from Kasungu National Park. This is a popular food species which is nonexistent outside the park due to the cutting of forage tree species for fuelwood and agriculture.

During the one day "season," 173 women representing ten per cent of local households, harvested a net weight of 1,848 kg of caterpillars. A scout accompanied small groups of collectors to ensure that caterpillars were harvested from a height between one and three meters. These parameters ensured sustainability of the resource, since caterpillars outside those limits remained. This exercise offered women an opportunity to increase their family's food supply and generate cash earnings. At a market price of MK 29/kg, this wildlife yields a greater cash return per unit than elephant utilization.

In fisheries, women's management and utilization of the resource is significant. In Malawi, freshwater fisheries provide some sixty seven per cent of the nation's protein. While women rarely fish commercially from boats, they do practice less intensive fishing techniques with baskets or lines, and in coastal areas in Mozambique, the gathering of crabs and oysters are women's activities. Women in Malawi, as in many other countries in southern Africa, are the primary marketers and processors of fish for sale and for home consumption.

Interactions between women and wildlife do not always provide a positive benefit, however. Women's association with large game is characterized primarily through crop damage and fear of movement due to possible attack from wild animals. In two separate incidents in Malawi in 1992, buffalo have killed a farmer and injured his wife. Cases are reported to the wildlife department each month concerning human death or injury due to attack by crocodile, hippo, or lions. In addition to physical injury and crop damage when animals raid fields of maize, women's lives are impacted by wildlife during the growing season in other ways. For example, they must remain in the fields all night to protect their crops from bush pigs. Even children are negatively affected when they are required to miss school in order to guard fields against baboons.

Although through both negative and positive interactions women have multiple linkages to wildlife and natural resources, their formal participation in conservation and management of resources has been limited by not only their multitude of responsibilities, but by gender constraints. Wildlife officers have traditionally been male, and wildlife management and protection have been male dominated areas. The prevailing attitude has been that women are neither interested in nor suited for work in conservation. Gender roles, however, are dynamic. They can and do change over surprisingly small periods of time. As conditions, needs, and influences evolve, so does the perception of roles in a society. This is the case with women in conservation.

An innovative program was introduced in Malawi by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife to specifically target women for training and incorporation into the park system as scouts. Fifteen women attended the 1988 scout training program session, and seven completed a second intake session in 1992. Recruitment follows the same standards and qualifications as those set for men, and women selected attend training courses in law enforcement, firearms, field patrol, discipline, ecology and legislation alongside their male counterparts.

Originally the focus for the cadre of "lady scouts" was in gate keeping, guiding visitors, and environmental interpretation. However, the scouts were exposed to and responded to the same situations encountered by male officers. The first direct enforcement action came in 1989, just one year after initiation of the program, when a woman scout working alone arrested an armed poacher at Vwaza Marsh Game Reserve. Since then, women have been involved in a number of arrests and covert operations to control illegal trafficking of ivory and other animal products.

Due to the success of this program, the role of women within the Department is continuing to evolve. Following a senior level staff meeting in 1992, the Chief Parks and Wildlife Officer issued an administrative order that women should be included in field patrols. There was discussion among the male senior staff concerning logistical difficulties encountered by placing women in the field, such as the lack of tents for sleeping or for changing clothes. The conclusion was that these are Departmental scouts, as are their male counterparts, and they must be allowed and expected to act as such. The women scouts were agreeable to this both to fulfill their responsibilities as officers and because extra duty pay is received when on patrol, a benefit from which they had previously been excluded.

An interesting statement on the perception of these employees by the Department and by the Government of Malawi as professionals rather than as women has been in their uniform. The Government of Malawi has strict policies governing personal appearance. Among the most rigidly enforced regulations nationwide is the requirement that when in public all women wear a dress knee length or longer. These scouts, however, are issued trousers in keeping with their responsibilities.

As important as the formal recognition of women as national conservation officers is their involvement and acceptance at the grass roots, or community level. Chembe Village is an enclave within Lake Malawi National Park. The area is isolated, and in spite of the association with international park visitors, beliefs and customs of village residents are traditional. The introduction of the female scouts was the community's first exposure to professional women in conservation. It was regarded with some interest although it made little local impact as these scouts are not originally from the Chembe area.

During construction of a World Wildlife Fund sponsored environmental center at the park, a first attempt was proposed to incorporate local women into formal, salaried, conservation work. The initial reaction from the project counterpart was negative. His assessment was that women would not apply for the advertised positions. He felt that if they did, their personal reputation would be jeopardized by working in association with men. The reaction from the construction supervisor, a resident of Chembe Village, was also initially negative. After acknowledging the changing nature of the world, though, he agreed to supervise the pilot recruitment.

Two openings were advertised in the village, and within days both positions were filled. While there was some turnover in female employees, the incidence was no higher than for males. The reasons women left were the same as those encountered in the developed world; to continue their education, to take full time care of their children, or because their husband didn't want them to work. In subsequent openings, vacancies were filled within hours.

The employment of women on this conservation project provided an opportunity to observe how rapidly gender roles can evolve and change. Not only were women working alongside men, but their duties were those traditionally assigned to men. When women first began cutting grass with panga knives, the park manager interceded and objected that it was not women's work. After discussions with him and the women employees, an agreement was reached that as these employees receive the same pay as male laborers they should be expected to work within their physical capabilities at the same tasks. The women project employees began routinely to mow grass, bundle thatching grass, mix cement, and perform any other duties required. Based on the success and popularity of this experimental employment of women, the manager at Lake Malawi National Park hired the first local woman as a member of the park staff.

Another opportunity for women to work in conservation at the grass roots level has recently arisen through the ADMARE program in Zambia. A central part of the community based wildlife management and utilization project is the training of village scouts. Scouts are nominated by the village Chief to attend a training program in wildlife resources, law enforcement, wildlife utilization and record keeping. Following training, they return to their village and begin active duty in anti poaching, data collection, and monitoring hunting safaris. In 1991, two women were nominated by their chief to participate in the village scout training program.

In spite of these encouraging examples, women still face many constraints to full participation in conservation in southern Africa. A lack of training opportunities in non-traditional fields and a lack of support from Government agencies are commonly the result of the mistaken assumption that women are not capable of performing conservation activities. Stereotypes and socio-cultural barriers prevent their involvement. These discriminatory constraints, both advertent and inadvertent, are obviously not unique to southern Africa or to the developing world. It is largely within the last twenty years that women began working in forest reserves and national parks in the United States.

At this point, it is essential in Africa to address the critical link between women and the environment, to explore women's potential in conservation, and to move forward at a faster pace than the developed world in incorporating women into resource management and wildlife programs. While women's participation in conservation activities is currently small in scale, their role can be significant in halting environmental degradation. It is primarily through women that social and cultural practices are transmitted to children. By involving women in conservation efforts at the national and grass roots level, an opportunity is provided to pass sound ecological values and practices to the next generations of resource users as a part of the social structure.

Although both men and women in Africa live with the constraints and benefits associated with wildlife and the resource base, only men have traditionally been formally recognized as managers. In a context of increasing environmental degradation through dwindling forests, loss of watershed, soil erosion, decreasing agricultural productivity, depletion of plant and wildlife populations, and increased human poverty and suffering, the involvement of all users in the responsible management of natural resources is not an option but an absolute necessity. Given the training and employment opportunities necessary for integration into wildlife and resource management efforts, women will be able to increase their contribution to the informed, sustainable management of the environment directly and through future generations.

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Women and Wildlife in Southern Africa

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When naturalists think of Africa they think first of the world's most impressive assemblage of large mammals. To perpetuate this fauna conservation models developed in Europe and North America have been widely applied in Africa, especially through the establishment of inviolate nature reserves and allocation of primary use of large mammals to sport hunters. The models have not been entirely successful. This is particularly apparent in large areas of southern Africa where human populations are low and natural ecosystems still dominate the landscape, but the ecosystems exist with greatly impoverished populations of large mammals. This failure has occurred in large part because a long tradition of hunting game animals was broken when centralized governments usurped control of this resource. Local communities no longer have a vested interest in sustainable utilization and make little effort to control the depredations of poachers.

The solution to this dilemma, returning control and use of the resource to local communities, has been recognized for several years (Myers 1972) and has catalyzed some promising initiatives. These include Zam-

bia's ADMAD project (described by Lewis et al. 1990) and projects in the communal areas of Zimbabwe (Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management 1989) and in the Kalahari Desert region of Botswana (Hitchcock 1988a, 1989; Cumming & Taylor 1989). These projects involve village-based use of large mammals for meat, skins, and other wild animal products, most of which are marketed for cash income. Most utilization activities — cropping, processing, marketing, sometimes even population assessment — are undertaken by village men. This is viewed as a continuation of the traditional division of labor. The fact that women are also users and managers of natural resources is usually ignored; thus, women are left with few direct benefits and some negative impacts. This paper examines these issues and demonstrates that it is crucial that women be included in project design and implementation if the goals of improving human welfare and ensuring sustainable resource use are to be met.

Women as Users and Managers of Wildlife

If one uses a broad definition of wildlife — all forms of life that are wild — women in rural communities interact with myriad forms of wildlife in ways that are of fundamental importance. Although men are primarily the killers of large mammals, anthropologists have often

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overlooked women's role in sighting and tracking large mammals and capturing animals of all sizes, especially insects, fish, reptiles, birds, bats, and rodents. Of 52 Tswana Basarwa women interviewed in the Nata River region of northeastern Botswana, for example, over 42% had collected tortoises (*Geochelone pardalis*), nearly a third had captured monitors (*Varanus exanthematicus*), and over 15% had killed either large or small antelopes (Hitchcock 1988a:23-25). In Zambia, Valley Bisa women rarely participated in the elephant hunts themselves, but they were a crucial part of the elephant exploitation process (Marks 1976:61-64). If they saw elephant sign, women would often cut short their gathering trips and return to inform the men. Groups of women would then follow the hunters and perform the bulk of the butchering and the preparation of the meat and other products. In West Africa, giant rats (*Cricetomys* spp.) and cane rats (*Thryonomys* spp.) are particularly prized by women (Asibey 1974). In Botswana, women frequently collect wild birds' eggs, including those of the ostrich (*Struthio camelus*). Once the yolk is consumed, the eggs are cleaned out and used as water containers (Hitchcock 1988a:26). In the Okavango Delta and Chobe and Nata river systems of northern Botswana, women often fish communally using fish baskets (Hitchcock 1988b). Along the Kariba River, Zimbabwe and Zambia, processing and marketing of fish are done primarily by women.

Insects and insect products are used extensively by many African people, especially women, for both subsistence and cash income. An important insect resource in Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa is caterpillars, especially the mopane worm (*Gonimbrasia belina*). They are gathered in substantial quantities, then processed and consumed, or stored for later sale to buyers who transport them to urban markets. Another profitable activity in which women are the primary participants is exploitation of moth cocoons (e.g., *Argema mimosae* and *Gonometa postica*) for silk production. From 1985 to 1988, Botswana Game Industries (BGI) purchased over 100 tons of cocoons from 3,000 local collectors (Hitchcock 1988a:30). A fledgling silk industry has emerged in Botswana, the processing being done prior to export to markets in Italy.

Gathering wild plants for food, medicines, construction, tool manufacturing, and generating income is an important aspect of the economic systems of rural southern African populations, especially for women (Scudder 1971; Silberbauer 1981:80-93, 198-203; Hitchcock 1988a:33-45). A wide variety of wild plants are consumed, in Botswana alone over 150 wild plant species are used for food (Campbell 1956). In southwestern Botswana, the tubers of the grapple plant (*Harpagophytum procumbens*) are dug up and sold to the Agricultural Resources Board, which then exports them to Europe for use as arthritis medicine. An impor-

tant craft export in Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia is baskets; these are made by women from the leaves of palms (e.g., *Hyphaene ventricosa*), and natural dyes are utilized for decoration. Unfortunately, in the Nata River and Okavango Delta areas of northern Botswana, the palms are so heavily exploited that the long-term viability of the basket industry is threatened (Cunningham & Milton 1987). Botswana Craft, a parastatal handicraft purchasing organization, is working with local women to find alternative types of plants and to plant palms.

As both users and managers of the natural resource base, women have an extensive knowledge of their environment. They can often predict the location and yields of indigenous wild products, and by using a variety of species, they promote sustainable utilization. Women decide or help decide when and where wild plants and small animals should be collected, trees cut for firewood and fodder, and grasses exploited. In their role as primary subsistence producers, women are also responsible for maintaining soil fertility. It is not surprising, therefore, that women are becoming increasingly involved in efforts to conserve resources (Vollers 1988).

Potential Impacts of Wildlife Utilization Projects on Women

In some cases conservation programs for large mammals can have a direct, negative impact on women. Generally, apart from land-clearing and plowing, much of the responsibility for subsistence agriculture lies with women, and if large mammals destroy crops, the impact falls most directly on women. Some Tswana women in northern Botswana spent nights in their fields cracking bullwhips in the hope that the sound would keep the elephants at a distance (Hitchcock et al., in press). High mammal populations can also limit women's access to other wildlife products. Women we interviewed in Zambia said they were afraid to travel far from the village to gather food and other resources when large mammal populations were high.

It is also important to consider secondary impacts of wildlife utilization activities. Increased demand for fuel to process game meat, for example, could decrease the availability of fuel for home consumption and force women to walk farther to collect firewood. Moreover, when fuel is scarce, fewer meals are cooked and there is a shift to less nutritious foods requiring less energy to cook (Dankelman & Davidson 1983).

Wildlife utilization projects may also have many positive impacts on women. As members of the community, women will benefit from expanded economic activity; from the provision of community services such as schools, clinics, wells, and grain mills; and, potentially, from increased supplies of game meat. Benefits will be

particularly substantial if women's interests are considered in the process of developing community infrastructure.

Integrating Women into Wildlife Utilization Projects

Women must be integrated into wildlife utilization projects as both participants and beneficiaries to meet the dual objectives of better management of the resource base and improved community welfare. In rural African communities, as elsewhere, women have a pivotal economic role. They perform most of the agricultural tasks and raise small livestock; they provide firewood and water; they generate substantial income for the family budget; and they care for their children and homesteads. This is particularly true in southern Africa, where there are many women-headed households (e.g., about 40% in Botswana [Obbo 1981; Kossoudji & Mueller 1983] and, in parts of Zimbabwe, up to 65% [Murphree 1989]). Generally, married women with absent husbands (men who have migrated to urban areas and mines) head these households, which are often the poorest in the community.

Unfortunately, development programs sponsored by governments and aid agencies have largely ignored the use of natural resources by women, even though its total economic impact may exceed that based on large mammals. This economic sector, commonly termed wild products, regularly appears in planning documents, but few specific programs result from these assessments. Williams (1985), for example, argued that despite women's widespread use and management of forest resources, forestry policies have largely ignored women except in their role as firewood consumers.

The most obvious means of increasing women's participation is to develop income-generating activities that utilize all forms of wildlife, not just large mammals. Experience has shown, however, that unless women are specifically targeted as beneficiaries, economic development projects ostensibly directed to both women and men rarely involve women. Therefore, it is necessary to target an appropriate level of funding to be reserved for subprojects focused on women. These may include collection and marketing of insects, medicinal plants, thatching grass, and wood for fuel and building materials; keeping bees and other small animals; basket-making and other handicrafts; smoking meat; soap-making; and biltong production. Women's entrance into traditionally male occupations should also be considered. A few women in Zimbabwe, for example, have expressed interest in becoming ivory carvers. (According to Child [1989], there are approximately 150 carvers in Zimbabwe, and they generate between U.S. \$5 million and \$10 million per year in sales.)

Women should also be encouraged to participate in decision-making regarding the management and use of wildlife, as well as the control and use of revenues generated by utilization activities. Wildlife utilization projects should include a facilitator for women's activities, who would assess the needs of the women, facilitate communication of these needs to decision-making bodies, and inform women of their rights and obligations under the project. During our interviews with women in an ADMAD project area (Lewis et al. 1990), it was clear that while they were aware of ADMAD's anti-poaching activities and employment of men, they were not aware of its community development aspects. In the two community-based wildlife projects that have been undertaken in Botswana, the only people in the villages who received training were males (Hitchcock 1988a: 19–24). Some of the women we interviewed felt that they had been overlooked by extension personnel, and several pointed out vociferously that large mammals were as much their concern as men's.

Another means of integrating women is to collaborate with traditional and modern women leaders. Women have informal means of gathering information and expressing their acceptance or rejection of decisions taken on their behalf. Women rely on other women with authority to represent their interests, including traditional midwives, wives of the chief, and successful entrepreneurs. There are also examples, albeit few, of the formal participation of women in decision-making bodies. Obviously, integrating women needs to be undertaken very carefully, with due consideration for traditional social structures that vary from culture to culture.

In summary, community development based on large-mammal utilization has been designed and implemented to date as a male-oriented activity. However, when one uses a broad definition of wildlife—all forms of life that are wild—women in rural communities interact with myriad forms of wildlife in ways that are of fundamental importance. Any successful natural resource utilization project with the dual objectives of better resource management and improved community well-being must integrate women into project activities, and there are many vehicles for doing so.

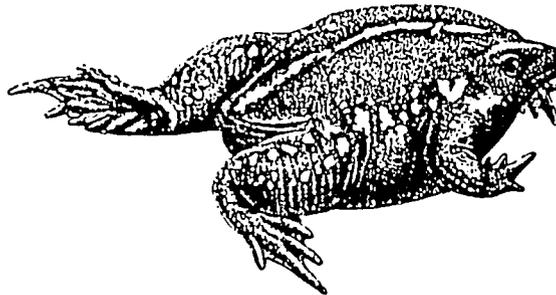
Acknowledgments

This paper was conceptualized in June and July 1989 when we were part of a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) team that designed a program to support community-based wildlife utilization projects in southern Africa (Development Alternatives, Inc. 1989). Scores of Zimbabweans, Zambians, Botswanans, and USAID employees and consultants have contributed to the development of this project (Re-

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African Women in Agriculture

The Importance of Gender Considerations: A Case Study from Malawi

The role of African women in agriculture is well documented. Recognition of the importance of gender considerations in projects aimed at improving women's efficiency as farmers, however, is relatively new. Results of a national survey in Malawi, where women play a central role in agriculture, showed that farmers' contacts with extension workers differed by sex.

- Contact with extension workers was the major source of advice for both men and women farmers, but men received more personal visits and advice than women.
- Group meetings tended to reach more farmers than personal visits, but primarily men attended.
- Female headed households received the least attention.
- A presumed transfer of technology from men to their wives did not take place. Very few women received agricultural information from their husbands.
- Women farmers, especially female headed households, were ignored by credit programs.

A multi-step method was designed to remedy the situation and provide extension services to women. This type of approach, taking gender roles into consideration, is not only applicable to agriculture. It can be modified for use in forestry, fisheries, and wildlife programs.

1: The cooperation of male extension agents and male village leaders was sought to bring women into extension arena and enable them to articulate their problems.

Male village leaders were asked to designate women farmers for leadership training. They were taught leadership skills by both male and female extension workers which made them able to better articulate their problems in farming. Women's primary concern was that extension workers and programs bypassed them in terms of credit and training.

2: The notion of "credit worthiness" was re-defined.

Male staff members were told to target women in credit services, but a different method of determining "credit worthiness" had to be established. A method was devised in which male village headmen could vouch for women. The women who received credit began paying back their loans prior to the harvest from the sale of beer and crafts.

3: Credit packages were modified.

Standard credit "packages" of seed and fertilizer were determined in multiples of one acre and were too large for women smallholders. The simple solution was creation of 1/2 acre packages.

With the focus on women's needs, a modification of standard techniques, and the assistance of the male extension staff, the number of women extension beneficiaries increased from five percent to twenty percent within the year.

Following this success, an extension circular entitled "Reaching Female Farmers through Male Extension Workers" was prepared. It was issued by the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) rather than through the WID office, as circulars from the MOA are regarded as technical recommendations for the entire extension staff. Information contained in the circulars becomes extension policy. As a MOA publication, the circular legitimized and advertized the fact that male extension agents could work with female farmers in their districts rather than relegate this responsibility to the few female extension workers. The approach ensured that all farmers had an opportunity to benefit from extension training and to contribute to more productive and sustainable agricultural practices.

From: Gender Issues in Farming Systems Research and Extension. Poats, Susan V., Marianne Schmink, and Anita Spring. 1988.



REACHING FEMALE FARMERS THROUGH MALE EXTENSION WORKERS



EXTENSION SERVICES NEED TO BE GIVEN TO WOMEN FARMERS BECAUSE

- WOMEN CONTRIBUTE MUCH TO PRODUCTION OF FOOD, CASH CROPS, AND LIVESTOCK**
- WOMEN PERFORM MANY FARM OPERATIONS**
- WOMEN HEAD ABOUT 30% OF MALAWI'S RURAL HOUSEHOLDS AND MAKE THE FARM DECISIONS FOR THOSE HOUSEHOLDS**
- WOMEN ARE FARMERS AS WELL AS BEING FARMERS' WIVES.**

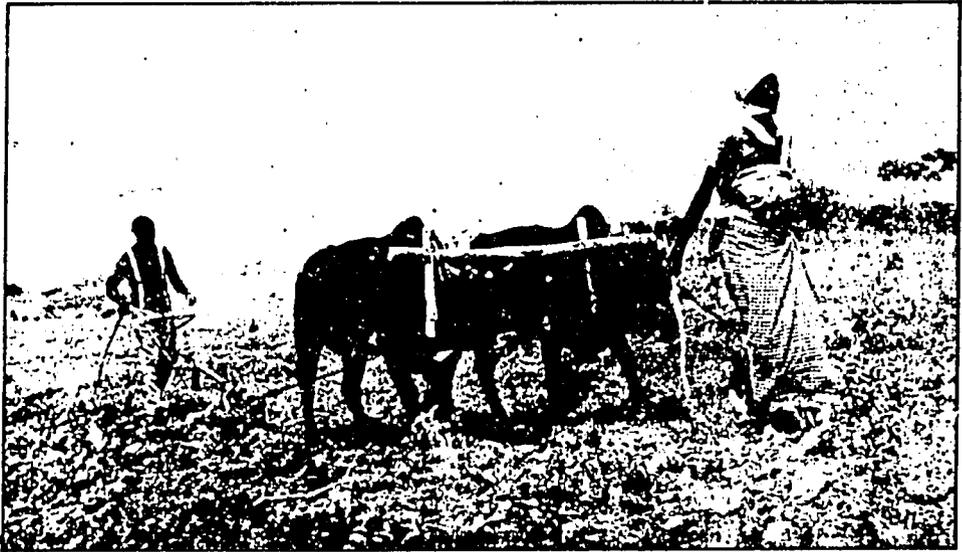
HELP EXPLAIN WHY AND HOW YOU SHOULD INCLUDE WOMEN FARMERS

There are very few female extension workers (about 150) compared with many male extension workers (about 1,850). Many Extension Planning Areas (EPA) do not have even one female extension worker but do have several different types of male extension workers who should be providing extension services to farmers, both men and women.

Agro-Economic Survey data show that women farmers do 50-70% of the agricultural operations in the smallholder sector, either alone or with their husbands and families. They cultivate food and cash crops in gardens managed personally or by their husbands. According to National Sample Survey of Agriculture (NSSA) data, men receive most of the extension visits and training as well as extension services such as credit, technical information, etc.



Some people say women are not interested in agricultural training but are only interested in home economics. Many female farmers are interested in agricultural training, but they think it is mainly for men because agriculture has not been commonly offered to women. Also, some women have not been keen to take training opportunities because of



family commitments. Women farmers are interested in both agriculture and home economics subjects. Through their agricultural production, women can generate income which will pay for the costs of home economics materials. Where the initiative has been taken to offer agricultural training to women, they have learned new knowledge and skills so that they have increased their production.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO HELP WOMEN FARMERS KNOW ABOUT EXTENSION RECOMMENDATIONS AND HAVE ACCESS TO EXTENSION SERVICES. A VARIETY OF METHODS EXIST THAT YOU CAN USE TO INCLUDE WOMEN FARMERS MORE FULLY IN EXTENSION PROGRAMMES.

METHODS OF IMPROVING EXTENSION SERVICES TO WOMEN

Here are some approaches that have been successfully used in various areas to contact women farmers.

VILLAGE MEETINGS

There is a great potential for reaching women farmers through the group approach. When the extension worker calls a meeting, ask the local leaders to call both men and women. However, it is possible to have few women participating. If you find few women in your meetings, it will be useful to do

some fact-finding to discover the reasons. Are women in the area too shy to attend? Do you come at times when women are busy with gardening and domestic tasks? Do you address your comments only to the men? Do the women have the idea that the agricultural topics are not for them? Is it difficult for both husband and wife to attend at the same time? Are the women reluctant to ask questions in front of the men? (etc.) Depending on what the reasons are, you will have to devise strategies to help the women participate. Leadership training for women will help women take part in meetings and demonstrations. Proper scheduling and appropriate topics will facilitate participation. An interest by field staff in women's agricultural problems and questions will motivate them to contribute to the discussion.

Farm Visits:- During your on-site visits to individual farmers, request that wives and other female relatives be included in your discussions, demonstrations, pegging marker ridges, farm planning and the like.

Local leaders (both men and women) can help call women together for agricultural activities such as demonstrations, courses, club formation, credit registration and tours.



AGRICULTURE TRAINING COURSE FOR FARMERS

Some Agricultural Development Divisions (ADDs) have set targets (e.g., at least 30% of participants) for the number of places for women in agricultural courses at Residential Training Centres (RTCs), Day Training Centres (DTCs), and Farm Institutes (FIs). Women can be recruited for agricultural courses using local leaders, husbands and male relatives as well as by yourself and female staff. When you teach women agricultural topics, you should use the same materials as is used for male farmers. Do not leave out

topics such as forestry and tobacco production which many people think are only for men.



CREDIT PROGRAMMES

Seasonal and medium-term credit programmes are direct ways that farmers receive aid to boost agricultural production. The policy concerning seasonal credit is that both men and women who are in farmer's clubs are eligible, but in practice the number of women who receive credit is small. Nevertheless, women are excellent at repaying credit.

In some families both husbands and wives obtain seasonal credit packages. Other families prefer only the husband to get credit. In some families, the husband is away and the wife would like to get credit. In many female-headed households there are no husbands. Some women are too shy to ask for credit and many believe credit is only for men. Depending on the situation and the farmer's preferences,

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both men and women should be actively encouraged to obtain seasonal credit packages to increase their production. This will make them self-sufficient in food or enable them to generate income. Special programmes may be necessary to encourage women to join clubs in order to help them be eligible for credit.



FARMERS' CLUBS

Farmer's clubs are an effective means of giving information on new technologies as well as facilitating ease of contact with the extension agent. Since credit and technical information are being given to farmers mainly through clubs, women farmers must be members of clubs to receive these services. Women should be encouraged to join farmers' clubs on their own or with their husbands.



As an extension worker you should counsel women to join clubs. You should inform club members that women can be office bearers as well as men. The groups of the female extension workers have the potential for being turned into clubs or the members might want to join existing clubs. Your advice on club requirements and procedures may be helpful to these groups. You should inform women about the factors used to decide credit worthiness and make them aware of the types of credit packages, livestock, and implements that are available.

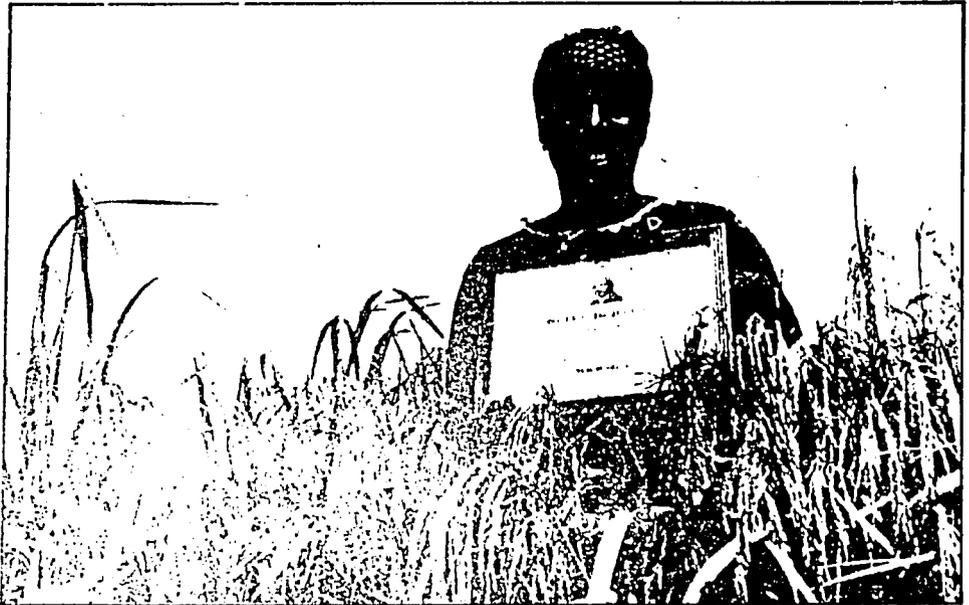
DEMONSTRATION PLOTS AND FIELD DAYS

You should select women farmers as well as men to participate in demonstrations and any programmes in which farmers are requested to provide land and management. Local leaders should select women as well as men farmers of good standing in mounting demonstrations. Both men and women

farmers could also attend field days and view demonstrations to broaden their knowledge.

RECORD KEEPING

In order to monitor your extension contacts with women and men farmers, you should keep records of the type of frequency of contacts and demonstrations, meetings, on-site visits, training sessions and credit taking. Instead of listing only the number of farmers, you should list the number of men and women farmers.



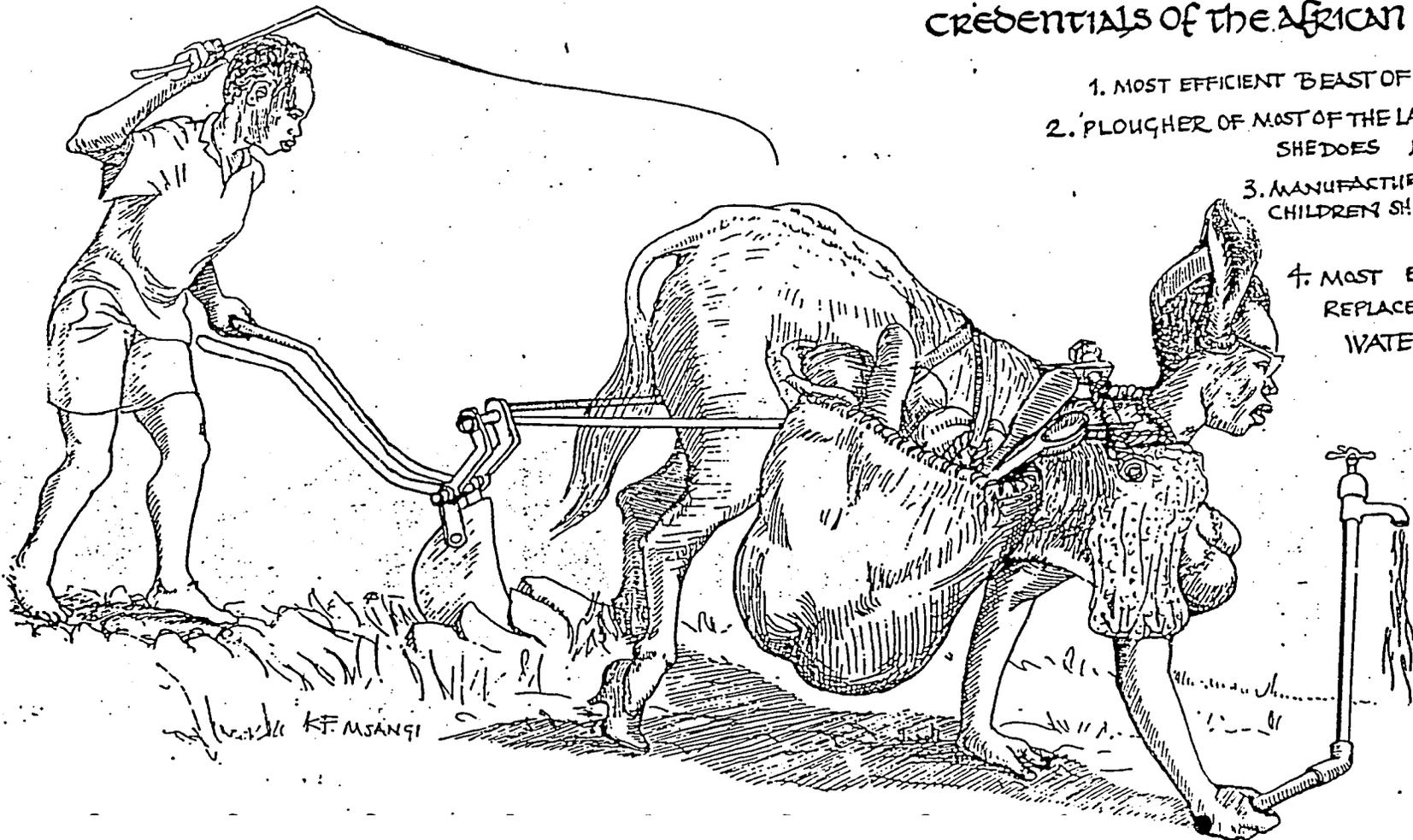
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CREDENTIALS OF THE AFRICAN WOMAN

- 1. MOST EFFICIENT BEAST OF BURDEN
- 2. PLOUGHER OF MOST OF THE LAND (WHICH SHE DOES NOT OWN)
- 3. MANUFACTURER OF CHILDREN SHE DOESN'T OWN
- 4. MOST EFFECTIVE REPLACEMENT FOR WATER PIPES



K.F. MSANGI