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SPECIAL STUDY #18

*Sex Imbalances and Gender
Issues: Addressing the Linkages
in Development Planning*

Alison C. Meares

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United States Agency for
International Development
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**Sex Imbalances and Gender Issues:
Addressing the Linkages in
Development Planning**

by

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I. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The purpose of this Special Study is to explore a potential method for combining quantitative and qualitative data analysis, to illustrate its use for exploration of gender issues, and to draw attention to possible policy implications of these issues for development planning. As a point of departure for the method, quantitative data are presented, disaggregated by sex. The origin of significant sex imbalances is traced, using a type of qualitative analysis which we have called "social mapping." The paper is intended for persons interested or engaged in development activities. The basic "gender-related" concepts and definitions currently in use in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other development agencies are explained in the text before the actual process of social mapping is introduced.

As a complement to this Special Study a separate "tool" has been developed, entitled "Sex and Gender-What's the Difference?: A Tool for Examining the Sociocultural Context of Sex Differences." The tool is part of the GENESYS Project's *Gender Analysis Tool Kit*. The two documents can be used either in combination with each other, or independently. This Special Study provides a more in-depth description, illustrated by examples from various countries, of how a simple observation of sex imbalances in quantitative data can lead to systematic social and gender analysis. The tool, on the other hand, provides a straightforward "how to" step-by-step procedure for people who are planning a specific development intervention and who have access to some form of sex-disaggregated data.

The idea for this method emerged out of a few simple observations. First, for virtually all countries in the world some form of sex-disaggregated data can be found in secondary sources which are quite easily accessible. Secondly, these data can instantly provide a visual presentation of sex imbalances in development indicators such as labor force participation, education, and rural-urban residence. Such a picture draws attention immediately to an existing difference between men and women. However, it does not explain the origin of the phenomenon, which may have its roots in the division of labor, rights, and responsibilities between men and women. The process of social mapping introduced in this paper is intended to explore the social forces which contribute to the observed sex imbalances, with the objective of helping development practitioners comprehend better the complexity of the societies they are dealing with; a complexity which has often been overlooked, resulting in less-than-optimal development outcomes.

This paper describes one way gender analysis can be carried out by the development practitioner. The process entails two steps, the first quantitative, the second qualitative. The first step is to identify the appropriate questions that need to be answered (i.e., to identify sectors or areas where gender issues are prevalent). The second step is qualitative sociological analysis. This paper demonstrates how sex-disaggregated data can indicate sex imbalances and thus relevant gender issues. Sex-disaggregated data can be used by the development practitioner to gain an understanding of gender differences as a variable in the sociocultural contexts of development problems and to foresee

how proposed interventions will affect both women and men. Quantitative data, in this way, are useful for formulating questions that shape and support subsequent qualitative research.

Often, USAID missions have at their disposal a wealth of sex-disaggregated data. In order to comply with the Percy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1988,¹ USAID has advocated establishment of a solid knowledge base, not just on people as an aggregate unit, but on both women and men in their unique and disparate functions and in their contributions to the development of their community and nation. To bolster that effort, Congress mandated in fiscal years 1990 and 1991 that missions and staff "collect sex-disaggregated data in all its research and data-gathering activities."

In addition to data collected by missions, "canned" data sources routinely include sex-disaggregated data. The method described in this paper demonstrates how these existing data sources, from libraries and development organizations, can be used effectively in designing policies and programs. Most of the demographic data used to perform gender analyses in this paper are from national censuses and are tabulated by age and sex, but other types of quantitative data--such as those collected specifically by a USAID mission project--can also be used in the process outlined in the following sections.

This paper presents a step-by-step approach on using quantitative data as a starting point for gender analysis. First, concepts and definitions critical to the understanding of the tool will be discussed. Second, the combined quantitative-qualitative methodological approach to "social mapping," which guides the identification of sex imbalances and the process of gender analysis, will be detailed. Third, conclusions and recommendations will be offered. The paper concludes with case studies from three countries--Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and the Philippines--that provide concrete examples of "social mapping" and demonstrate how available demographic data can help to identify sex imbalances that may be indicative of gender issues

Quantitative analysis is an important first step in the gender analysis process, but cannot by itself provide the information necessary to make sound policy decisions. It is useful in indicating where more in-depth qualitative sociological analysis is warranted. This paper demonstrates one way in which quantitative and qualitative data can work together to suggest anomalies, reveal sociological complexities, and provide an approach to explore those complexities. The paper focuses on gender as a social variable, but combining quantitative and qualitative methods can be useful also in other types of analysis.

¹ Included in recent Women in Development legislation adopted in the Foreign Assistance Act in 1988.

II. CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Sex and Gender: What is the Difference?

Each significant development issue, "gender issues" included, has its own jargon. Within the development community, social scientists speak about "gender sensitivity," "gender roles," and "gender literacy"; while until recently more commonly used terms were "sexual division of labor," and "sex roles." What differentiates these terms? And, more important, does the switch in emphasis from sex to gender signify a shift in conceptual thinking or merely a semantic change?

The terms *sex* and *gender* have often been used interchangeably in development literature to refer to differences between men and women, particularly in terms of the division of labor. To the social scientist, however, sex and gender are related terms used to denote an important distinction between the biologically and culturally determined differences of men and women.²

In this paper, *sex* refers exclusively to biological differences that are static such as reproductive capabilities; *gender* refers to differences in the social roles of men and women that have been defined by their culture--that is, socioculturally, economically, and psychologically determined--and that can change over time. Childbearing, for example, represents a biological difference between the sexes because only women have the physiological capability to give birth. Assigning child rearing responsibilities--such as day care, nourishment, and education--almost exclusively to women, however, represents a gender role; that is, it is socially prescribed rather than biologically determined, because both sexes are physically capable of caring for children.

Gender differences in behavior often are derived from or based on real or perceived biological differences between men and women. For example, the fact that women in pre-industrial societies breastfed their babies for extended time periods reinforced women's roles as primary caregivers to the young, thereby limiting the range of economic roles for women because breastfeeding was more easily carried out close to the home. While biologically only women can nurse, however, this biological distinction is only a factor for women within a certain age group (i.e., childbearing years), and there is nothing in their sexual physiology that distinguishes their ability to generate income. Therefore, the predominance of women in home-based occupations is a social phenomenon based on gender.

While physiological differences between the sexes were instrumental in shaping the norms of division of labor in early agricultural societies, such distinctions virtually dissolve in the face of modern technology and organization. Furthermore, observation and research have shown that when the need arises men and women are capable of performing each other's culturally or socially defined functions, apart from reproduction. In addition, anthropological studies have shown that what were historically considered biologically based divisions of labor in societies varied greatly from culture to culture.

² Parts of this text were taken from a paper written by Pietronella van den Oever entitled "Sex and Gender: What is the Difference?" and presented at the International Development Conference in January 1993.

Much of what constitutes the difference in men's and women's roles in society, while it may have roots in biology, is largely gender-based -- that is, socioculturally rather than biologically determined.

For example, a new industry introduced into a developing country might create a demand for a new type of wage labor that is more compatible with men's than women's socioculturally prescribed roles (perhaps it requires working with heavy machinery or being away from home for an extended period of time). Thus, the men in the region will be more likely to respond to the new demand for labor than the women. The men might migrate or, if necessary, drop certain responsibilities within the family and community such as agricultural tasks, especially in subsistence farming, to accommodate the time and travel demands of the new job. The women and children will likely replace the men in their former roles to ensure that the crops are harvested and the family is nourished, especially if outside sources of labor are unavailable. The responsibilities shift (i.e., are "renegotiated") and the women find themselves playing new and supplementary roles, which in the past typically fell to the men.

By thinking about the division of labor in terms of gender instead of sex roles, the local community, development planners, and policymakers can begin to answer such essential questions as: How does the renegotiation of gender roles affect sustainability of economic and sociocultural systems which have helped this community survive in the past? For instance, will agricultural output--especially at the subsistence level--continue to be adequate for home consumption? Will women have access to resources and support in their growing roles and responsibilities? Will labor demands on girls and/or boys increase to the extent that they can no longer attend school?

Gender Analysis and Sociocultural Aspects of Development

For this study we define the *culture* of a population as the dynamic social behavior, patterns, art, beliefs, thought, and institutions characteristic of a group. When environmental conditions change such that longstanding cultural ways are no longer appropriate or sufficient to respond to people's needs, elements of a culture tend to adapt to the new demands, often bringing about changes in the traditional definitions of gender roles, particularly in the economic and productive spheres. Such adaptations are also usually accompanied by considerable confusion, insecurity, and conflict.

Sociocultural analysis is essential in development planning to understand the dynamics of cultural elements of a society. Gender analysis, as one form of sociocultural analysis, provides the information necessary for selecting proper target groups and appropriate strategies. For development efforts to be sustainable, development planning must take into account a culture's unique and dynamic social organization.³ Gender analysis, as an integral component of broader sociological analysis examining social groups by income level, age, religion, and other factors, examines those sectors of a society that are constructed according to gender. Gender analysis helps, for instance, to identify and

³ For more on the use of gender analysis in development see: Bronsue 1992 ; Canadian Council for International Cooperation 1991; Feldstein and Poats 1989; Moser 1993; Rathgeber 1990 ; Thomas-Slayter, et al. 1991.

understand (1) traditional and actual sociocultural composition; (2) external impacts and environmental variations that provoke cultural change; (3) kinds of cultural changes; and (4) development strategies best suited to meet these challenges.

Gender Considerations in Development and Women in Development

Understanding gender roles and responsibilities as critical components in economic and sociocultural systems is essential for the development of projects and policies that will result in benefits accruing appropriately to all social groups in a dynamic system. The concept of Gender Considerations in Development (GCID) represents a marked departure from traditional Women in Development (WID) activities. The WID approach, which emerged in the 1970s, tended merely to "graft on" women to existing development strategies (Moser 1993). Activities were designed to ensure women's equal participation in education and technology transfer, while staying within the basic models of economic development policies and programs. In other words, "women's projects" were largely tacked onto existing economic development projects in various sectors. For instance, in addition to the introduction of major cash crops aimed at increasing families' income by providing jobs for males, microenterprise projects (e.g., producing and selling soap, raising small livestock) were developed for women. Rather than broadening the understanding of society to include *interaction* between social groups, women were treated in isolation, with experts and special bureaus. By focusing exclusively on women's roles, however, the WID approach failed to understand how development initiatives affected women differently than men, and neglected to consider the implications of this comparative perspective on the debate over the nature of development. GCID, however, which has emerged in the past few years, proposes a systematic way to shape development policy and programs within the context of a given social, political, and economic reality.⁴ Central to this approach is a comparative analysis of women's and men's situations as well as their interaction and interdependence. GCID tends to challenge mainstream theories and practices of economic development and their failure to capture the reality and centrality of social construction in the development process.

A serious consideration of "gender" as a critical variable leads to the following analyses: (1) the impact of external forces, such as a development activity, government policy, or other environmental change, on both women and men interacting in a variable and socioculturally defined system; (2) the historical and actual social organization of a population, based on gender; and (3) likely changes occurring as a consequence of a new external force. As mentioned above, gender historically forms the basis for the division of labor and other functions in most communities and is, therefore, a cross-cutting variable. When a project or policy effectively responds to a need that challenges existing gender roles in a society, those roles are likely to be renegotiated in response to the new circumstances.

⁴For more on the evolution of WID to GCID, see Rathgeber (1990) and Moser (1993).

III. FROM QUANTITATIVE TO QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS: THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL MAPPING

"Social mapping" is a rudimentary exercise that bridges quantitative and qualitative analysis. It is designed to guide the development practitioner through a process that outlines how gender is woven throughout the sociocultural fabric of a population. Social mapping identifies the specific cultural, social, and political norms and institutions that differentiate gender roles, rights and responsibilities. Using a numerically represented sex imbalance, social mapping helps to define the substantive gender issues that the quantitative data suggests but does not describe or "translate" into policy implications.

The tool for using demographic data in gender analysis consists of two basic steps:

- (1) Examine quantitative sex-disaggregated data (e.g., a population's age-sex structure) to identify empirically observable sex imbalances.
- (2) Examine the origins and implications of the sex imbalances to identify relevant gender issues qualitatively guided by "social mapping."

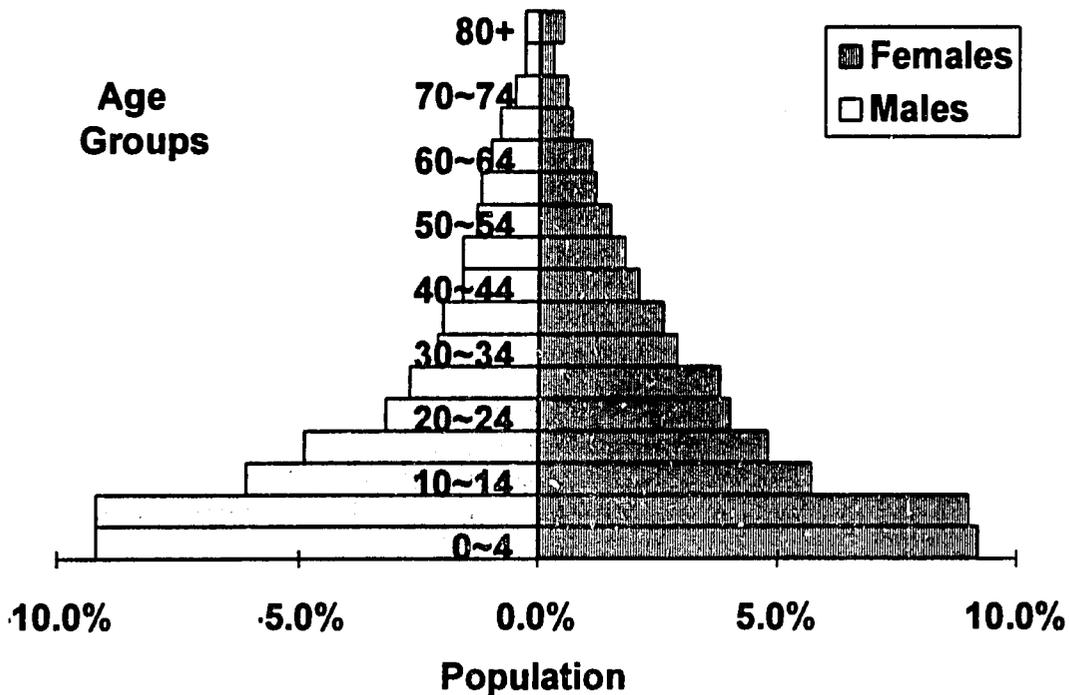
Step 1: Quantitative

The first step in the analytic process is to obtain the most recent and reliable data available. As mentioned above, USAID missions usually have at their disposal sex-disaggregated data on the country in which they work. For demonstration purposes, this paper uses existing census data available from sources such as the United Nations and the Population Reference Bureau. Examination of such census data allows the practitioner to formulate pertinent questions that guide the subsequent qualitative analyses in the form of social mapping. The following discussion offers guidance on locating and interpreting this type of data.

Population pyramid

Probably the most dependable and widely used source of data on a country's age and sex structure is the *United Nations Demographic Yearbook*, available in most major libraries. The yearbooks provide these data in tabular form, but the most common (and easiest) way to begin analysis of age and sex structures is to present the data in a type of bar chart known to demographers as a population pyramid (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Population Pyramid (Percentaged) of Burkina Faso, 1985



Source: United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1992

Each bar in the pyramid represents the population (as actual numbers or as a percentage of the total population) for males and females in five-year intervals of age. The left side of the chart shows the males, the right side shows the females. The youngest age group (0-4 years) is at the bottom of the chart and the oldest age group (80+) is at the top of the chart.⁵

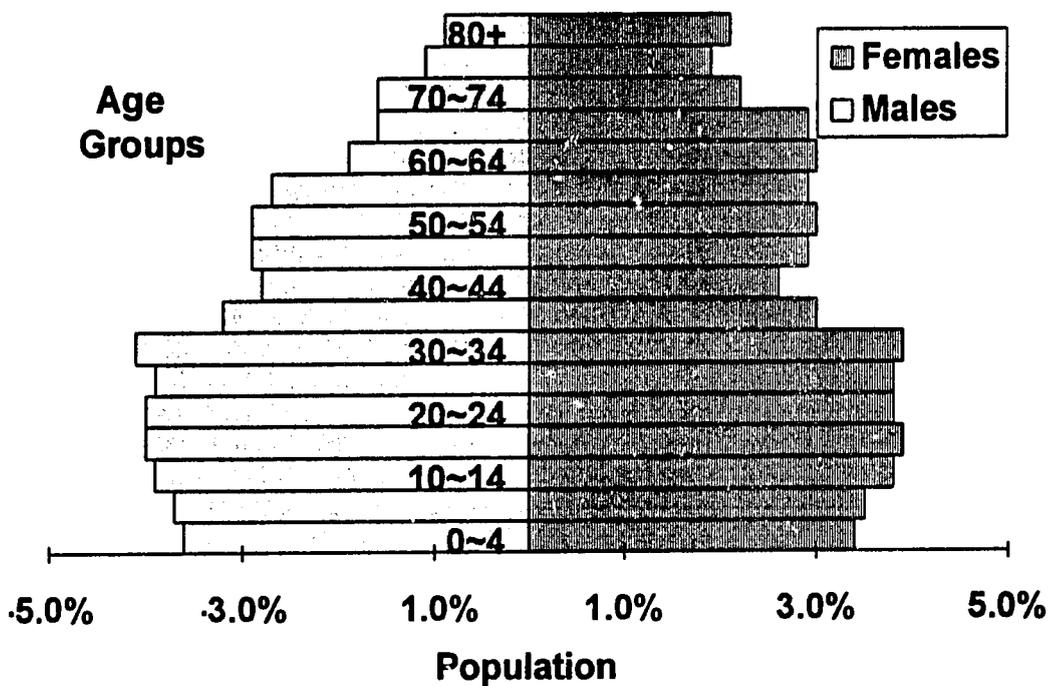
Figure 1 shows the age-sex structure of Burkina Faso in 1985 (the most recent year available). Generally, an analyst first notes the overall shape of a population pyramid. The shape of Burkina Faso's population pyramid is characteristic of many developing countries with high birth rates. It is quite narrow at the top, indicating that the society has few persons, male or female, living beyond the age of about 70; and quite broad at the bottom, indicating not only that Burkina Faso, on average, has

⁵ When comparing the age-sex structures of two or more countries the data should be presented in terms of percentages of the total population in each age-sex category. When looking at data from only one country, actual population numbers may be used instead of percentages.

a very young population (48 percent of the population is under the age of 15), but also that the total population of Burkina Faso will continue to grow at a rapid rate for several more decades even if there is a marked decline in fertility, because of the numbers of young people moving up into the prime reproductive ages.

The age structure for France, a highly developed industrial society, is shown in Figure 2. The block-like structure of this pyramid indicates that the population of France is almost stable, which accounts for the dramatic difference in shape relative to the pyramid for Burkina Faso.

Figure 2. Population Pyramid (Percentaged) of France, 1982



Source: United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1985

The flaring pyramid shape of Burkina Faso illustrates what demographers call population momentum: since almost half of the population has not yet reached childbearing years, the next generation will increase the total population even if each woman has, on average, fewer than two children. This has important implications for Burkina Faso's development. Over the past few decades, the economy, which is overwhelmingly based on agriculture, has been severely stressed to keep pace

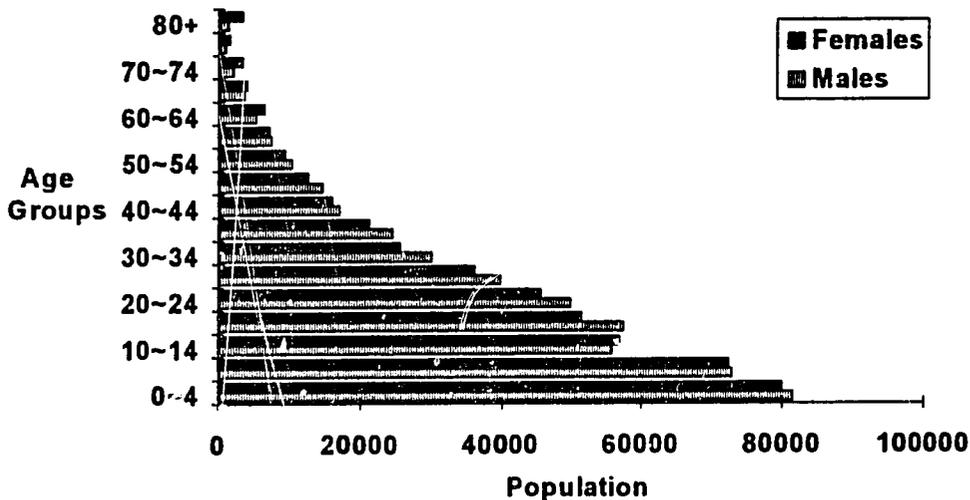
with population growth. This pyramid indicates that these pressures will increase in the near and mid-range future. Another implication of this demographic momentum is that, in the future, pressures for out-migration from Burkina Faso are likely to continue and, perhaps, increase as the country's natural and economic resources become more severely strained and as the local supply of labor increases relative to the demand. (The migration phenomenon is discussed in more detail in the attached case studies.)

Sex Ratios

A sex ratio is the number of males in a population for every 100 females. A sex ratio of 100 indicates that there are the same number of males as females. Across all societies, there are approximately 105 male babies born for every 100 females, but males are less likely to survive than females at almost all ages and in almost all cultures. Without the intervention of exceptional cultural and environmental factors, the sex ratio usually approaches 100 in the 30-to-40 age range. After that, women increasingly begin to outnumber men (which would be indicated by a sex ratio of less than 100), especially in the highest age groups. Large differences in sex ratios for specific age groups (age-specific sex ratios), except among the most senior groups, are not biological in origin, and must therefore be attributed to cultural, socio-economic, or political circumstances.

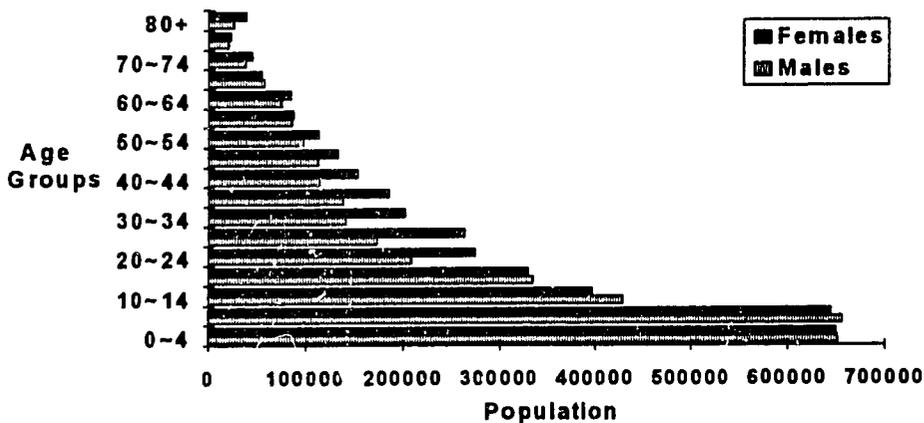
Sex ratios that deviate markedly from the typical patterns indicate age-specific sex imbalances that potentially affect social organization and economic productivity and may be the product of cultural preferences to social practices. These imbalances can be made obvious by plotting the male and female data from the population pyramid on the same side of the vertical axis, which makes it possible to visually compare the relative sizes of the male and female populations for each age group (see Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3. Urban Population of Burkina Faso by Sex and Age, 1985



Source: United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1992.

Figure 4. Rural Population of Burkina Faso by Sex and Age, 1985



Source: United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1992

For the Burkina population as a whole, the sex ratio is 93, indicating that there are approximately 93 men for every 100 women. When the population is divided into urban and rural components, however, the sex ratio in urban areas is 104 (a surplus of males), while the sex ratio in rural areas is 91 (a surplus of females). This population pyramid will be examined in more detail in

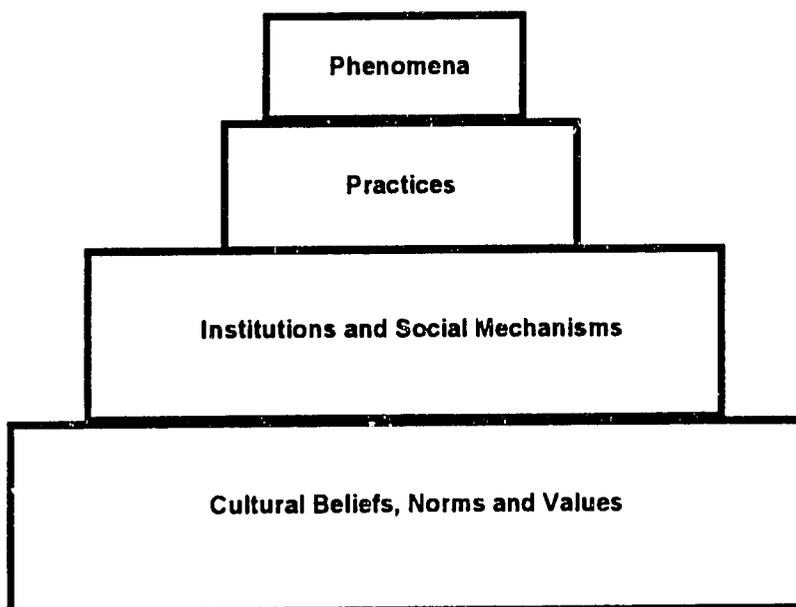
Case Study One. This example provides some idea of how sex ratios can be used to identify potentially problematic phenomena.

Step 2: Qualitative

Once the distortions or anomalies in the age-sex structure of a population have been identified, the observations can be used in an exercise called "social mapping." Social mapping helps in formulating relevant questions and puts in motion the gender analysis, which in turn leads to information on probable interactions between demographic (in this case) and sociocultural (especially gender, for our purposes) features of a population, information that can be useful when creating development strategies. For instance, the identification of sex imbalances could be followed up with broad questions such as: Why are these imbalances occurring? How are these imbalances affecting economic productivity and social cohesion? How will these imbalances interact with or affect the outcome of various development strategies?

The "social map" consists of four interdependent levels (see Figure 5), which are represented as a pyramid to emphasize: (1) the way in which the process of social mapping builds; that is, each element feeds into an aggregate representation of the social variables at play; and (2) the supportive nature of the model; in other words, each element of inquiry only makes sense in terms of its contribution to the whole structure.

Figure 5. Social Mapping



The top level of the pyramid represents phenomena, the information derived from Step 1 above. Phenomena include empirically observable facts such as quantitative data that indicate an anomaly (i.e. distortions in age-specific sex ratios of a population). The phenomenon can lead us to ask pertinent questions and help gain understanding, and can be used through the rest of the model. This is where quantitative analysis ends and qualitative or substantive gender analysis begins.

The second level of the pyramid asks the researcher to identify practices or behaviors that hypothetically support or produce the observed phenomenon. This type of information consists of practices such as migration patterns, which could explain a surplus of one sex in rural or urban areas; and the practice of enrolling only boys in school, which could explain high sex ratios in matriculation or literacy data. Practices, therefore, represent prevalent behavior patterns which at least superficially explain the statistical anomalies identified in Step 1 and can be readily supported by additional (usually) quantitative or statistical inquiry.

The third level of the pyramid calls for a thorough investigation of the underlying institutions and social mechanisms at play. These institutions and social mechanisms can be thought of as clusters or systems of collective behavior in which the practices are embedded. They include legal, political, economic, and kinship systems. For instance, a government may emphasize policies that lead to the mechanization of agriculture and an increase in export crops, which may perpetuate male-dominant out-migration from the rural areas and necessitate the removal of children from school to compensate for the loss of male labor.

The final level in the pyramid--cultural beliefs, norms, and values--represents the collective ideology of a society or social group concerning the way that everyday life should and should not be conducted. These perceptions can be identified in the cultural meanings that members of society attribute to the environment around them. They are norms that have a bearing on the way social groups, communities, and whole populations respond to change. Examples of these norms include the beliefs that women should be physically secluded from men to demonstrate morality and modesty; that men should be the primary economic providers for the family; and that girls and boys must be ceremoniously initiated into adulthood before assuming certain responsibilities.

The social mapping process does not necessarily have to unfold in the sequence just outlined; although this sequence does represent a logical progression from the most easily and conspicuously identifiable and attainable data to the more obscure and difficult to ascertain. Social mapping can become complicated when multiple practices and institutions are identified that all support--directly or indirectly--the same phenomenon; when all the information gathered is mutually supportive and results in multiple layers of the same map. The sequence here can be used to progressively build the pyramid; but it should not be surprising if the analysis strays from the sequence. The key is to understand how one layer of the pyramid--one layer of the social structure--supports or fits into the whole.

The model proposed here offers a framework for formulating research questions and deriving hypotheses about gender issues. Sociological analysis does not always use quantitative data. In fact, this type of social mapping can occur without it. However, quantitative data is useful in complex webs of sociocultural, economic, and political systems. It is advocated in this paper that quantitative data be used both to explain the need for and to encourage gender analysis.

- (1) **Phenomena** = Empirically observable facts expressed quantitatively.
- (2) **Practices** = Behavior that directly supports or produces the observed phenomenon.
- (3) **Institutions and social mechanisms** = Clusters or systems of collective practices in which the specific practices of concern are embedded.
- (4) **Cultural beliefs and values** = Deep-seated perceptions and feelings of a people concerning the way that everyday life should not be conducted.

IV. CONCLUSION

The social mapping method described here is intended to provide the development practitioner with a rudimentary framework for formulating questions and examining further critical gender issues. Although not designed to result in a final and exhaustive analysis of social and gender issues, this method can help the development practitioner anticipate how impacts of the development process will differ for women and for men and understand the basic sociocultural context in which development efforts must unfold if they are to be sustainable.

It is important to point out that the relationships between the different levels of the social map (different layers of the pyramid), as the case studies will demonstrate, are not linear. Rather they are web-like; each interaction spawns yet another interaction. In other words, the relationships between the different layers of the pyramid are interdependent, implying that a significant intervention at one level will, in some form, have an impact on another.

The cultural norms of a society usually do not change rapidly; changes occur over generations and typically come from within. Therefore, it is difficult, inefficient, and--some would argue--unethical to intervene directly at the pyramid's foundation; that is, at the level of norms and values. However, policies, programs, and projects targeted predominantly at practices, institutions, and social mechanisms--that is, at the top of the pyramid--can result in relatively rapid change and might lead to an eventual shift in a society's cultural norms or value perceptions. In Burkina Faso, for instance, policies could dictate that rural women whose male counterparts have emigrated receive from development programs the technology and skills needed to maintain or increase agricultural productivity or foster other means of income. With increased economic

power, the actual and perceived value and type of women's contributions to the household would perhaps increase over time. A shift in gender roles (namely, that women have more diverse and more agreeable options for their own and their family's well-being), combined with the appropriate resources and support, could dramatically increase the productivity and economic welfare of the household, community, and nation. Further, using participatory methods in field research that enable actors to become aware of and evaluate their own socio-cultural fabric and knowledge base is proving to be effective in bringing about long-lasting change defined by the actors themselves. Development guided by such research aims to provide for more immediate survival needs while challenging existing norms and traditions which impede greater self-determination on the part of all social groups. This question, however, is beyond the scope of this paper.

It is the tools, skills, resources, and knowledge that women, children, and men acquire or build through the development process that lead to progress in the form of personal and community autonomy, economic and political stability, and the security of future resources. They lead, in other words, to sustainable development. Gender analysis is essential to understanding the context in which those interventions are to be implemented and thus for the design of mechanisms to respond to the need for skills and resources. Change in the way gender fits into the sociocultural fabric will perhaps begin when these tools contribute to women's and men's development of their own decision-making and self-determination.

V. CASE STUDIES

The following case studies are concrete examples of ways demographic data can be used to propel analysis of gender issues and roles in particular sociocultural, economic, and political contexts. The process of social mapping can be complex, resembling a more webbed than linear model. Figures are presented throughout the text that show the various layers of the social map as it develops. It is also important to note that these case studies have been developed based on research and analysis conducted by social scientists. For this paper, the findings of these studies have been combined to demonstrate how different types of data and analysis, when used together, present a more complex and complete picture of the social and cultural landscape of a society.

Case Study One: Age-sex structure imbalances of the rural population in Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso is at the core of the Sahelian zone of western Africa, a landlocked country, suffering at regular intervals from severe drought, desiccation, and consequently low agricultural output. A large proportion of Burkina Faso's male population is leaving the country to seek work, mainly in factories and on plantations, in more prosperous countries nearby (e.g., Côte d'Ivoire). One study estimated that as many as 25 percent of adults in Burkina Faso migrate either

permanently or as sojourner workers,⁶ an estimate that is supported by a comparison of the age and sex population for rural and urban areas of the country.

Social Map Level 1: Phenomena

Figures 3 and 4 show two population pyramids for Burkina Faso: one for the urban population (about 18 percent of the total population) and one for the rural population (over 80 percent of the total). The data for the male and female populations have been plotted on the same side of the vertical axis (i.e., one side of the pyramid has been "folded" over onto the other) so that the relative sizes of the male and female populations for each age group can be visually compared. In the urban population chart, for the age groups between 15 and 59, the bars are longer for males than for females, indicating that there are more males than females of these ages in the cities. The imbalances in sex ratios in the much larger rural population are different from the urban imbalances and are of greater proportional, as well as numerical, magnitude. In the rural population chart, notice particularly how much larger the female population is relative to the male population during the years of greatest productive potential, ages 20 to 54. In general, the rural population of Burkina Faso is predominantly female and there is a particular shortage of young to middle-aged males relative to females. This is the **phenomenon** that initiates the social mapping exercise.

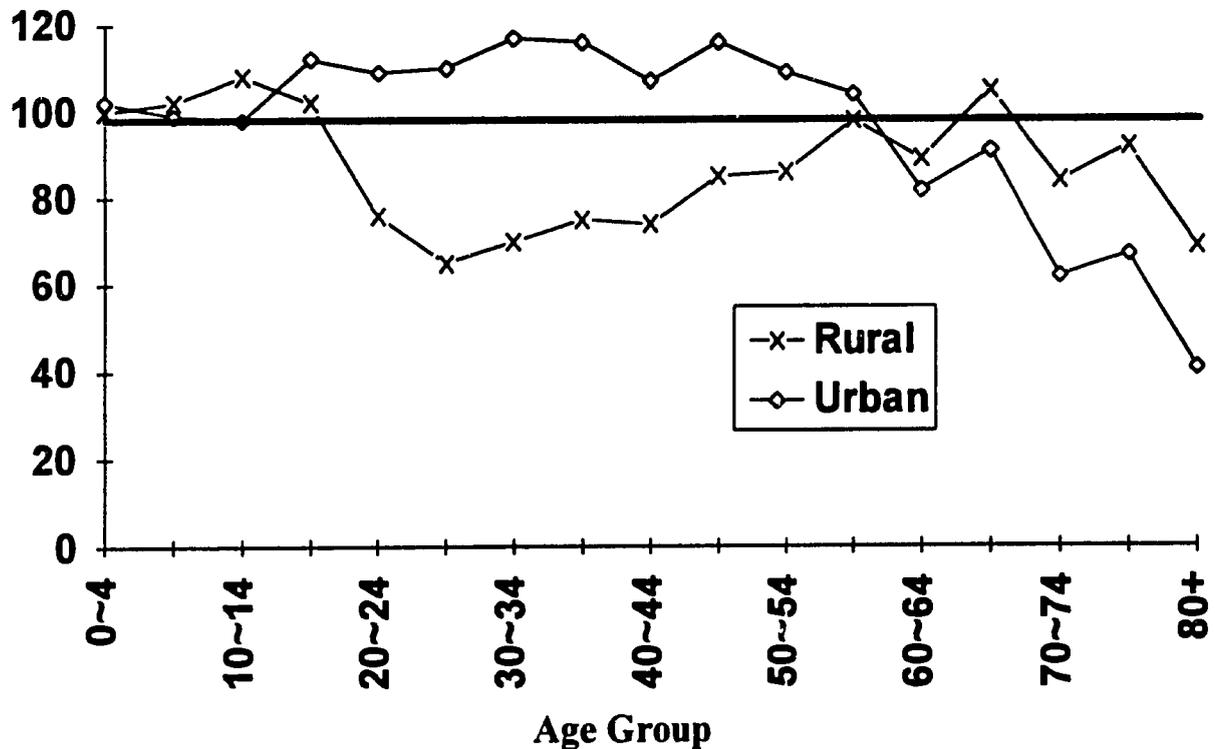
Deviations from the typical pattern in age-specific sex ratios, as detailed in Step 1 of the social mapping tool, indicate that cultural and/or environmental factors are influencing demographic dynamics.

Figure 6 shows a plot of age-specific sex ratios for Burkina Faso's rural and urban populations in 1985. The heavy horizontal bar at 100 on the y-axis indicates the level at which male and female populations are the same. While the age-specific sex ratios of Burkina Faso conform to the typical pattern at the youngest ages, they quickly diverge to extreme proportions. The most striking deviation is the very low sex ratios in rural Burkina Faso in the 20-to-54 age range. Around ages 25-29, there are only about 65 males for every 100 females in the rural districts. Some of these males are working or seeking work in the urban areas of Burkina Faso, but given that the rural population is four times the size of the urban population, the surplus of urban males not nearly sufficient to account for the rural gender imbalances.

⁶Nagy, et al. (1989).

Figure 6. Age-Specific Sex Ratios by Residence for Burkina Faso, 1985

Males per 100 females



Source: United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1992

Social Map Level 2: Practices

Male out-migration: Indicator of social change

Sex imbalances in the demographic make-up of Burkina Faso indicate that a large number of men, during certain age periods, are absent from the country. The hypothetical linkage between the observed anomaly and observed practice is suggested by exploring what most superficially and directly accounts for this absence. What, in other words, is the primary practice(s) directly supporting this phenomenon? Is male mortality high due to political strife? What is the rate of male migration compared to female migration? Again, quantitative data is

useful here in suggesting and confirming possible trends. Indeed research shows that a large number of men are migrating out of Burkina Faso to other countries during their prime economic years. These imbalances demonstrate a high degree of gender selectivity in the migration patterns; men are far more likely to migrate than women.⁷

Social Map Level 3: Institutions and Social Mechanisms and Level 4: Cultural Beliefs and Values

Migration, however, only addresses the numerical imbalance of a certain age group but does not in itself explain *why* men between the ages of 20 and 54 migrate as opposed to other age groups or women, or why the imbalance is so pronounced in the rural areas. At this juncture in the inquiry the critical research question -- the one which will launch the more qualitative study and gender analysis -- is formed: What prompts rural males of a certain age group to migrate in large numbers and what accounts for gender selectivity in migration trends? Finally, what effects does migration have on the social and economic base of the rural areas and those who remain behind? Or, what links the second block of the pyramid to the third and fourth? What **institutions** and **social mechanisms** provide the impetus for migration and how are these influenced by or reflected in the society's **cultural beliefs and values**? Economic and social theory, historical example, and past research inform our hypotheses, which guide the qualitative inquiry. In Burkina Faso research suggests that among the most obvious social mechanisms that promote the high levels of rural male out-migration are the increasing demands for labor in bordering countries and the decades of poor agricultural output in Burkina Faso. Frequent droughts in Burkina Faso and the growth of large labor-intensive plantations in Côte d'Ivoire have provided additional motivations for out-migration. Furthermore, Burkina Faso's government, chronically short of foreign exchange, has encouraged emigration in the past so that repatriated wages could in turn provide a source of funds for the country through government bonds and taxes on returning workers (Palmer 1985).⁸

A faltering economic system coupled with a shortage of income-generating options in the rural areas could provide good reason for people to move away. However, such evidence does little to explain the gendered nature of migration in Burkina Faso. Following the pyramid model, an understanding of why these migration patterns so predominantly involve males over females requires deeper analysis of the **cultural foundations** and the **institutional systems** of society in Burkina Faso. Understanding the systems that perpetuate traditional gender roles, even after the logical, driving motives for them have deteriorated, is important for guiding research and formulating strategies for responsive project planning and policy decisions.

⁷ Note: This seems to be a typical pattern among African cultures, but an opposite pattern is often apparent in Latin America, where young women are more likely than men to migrate to cities in search of work.

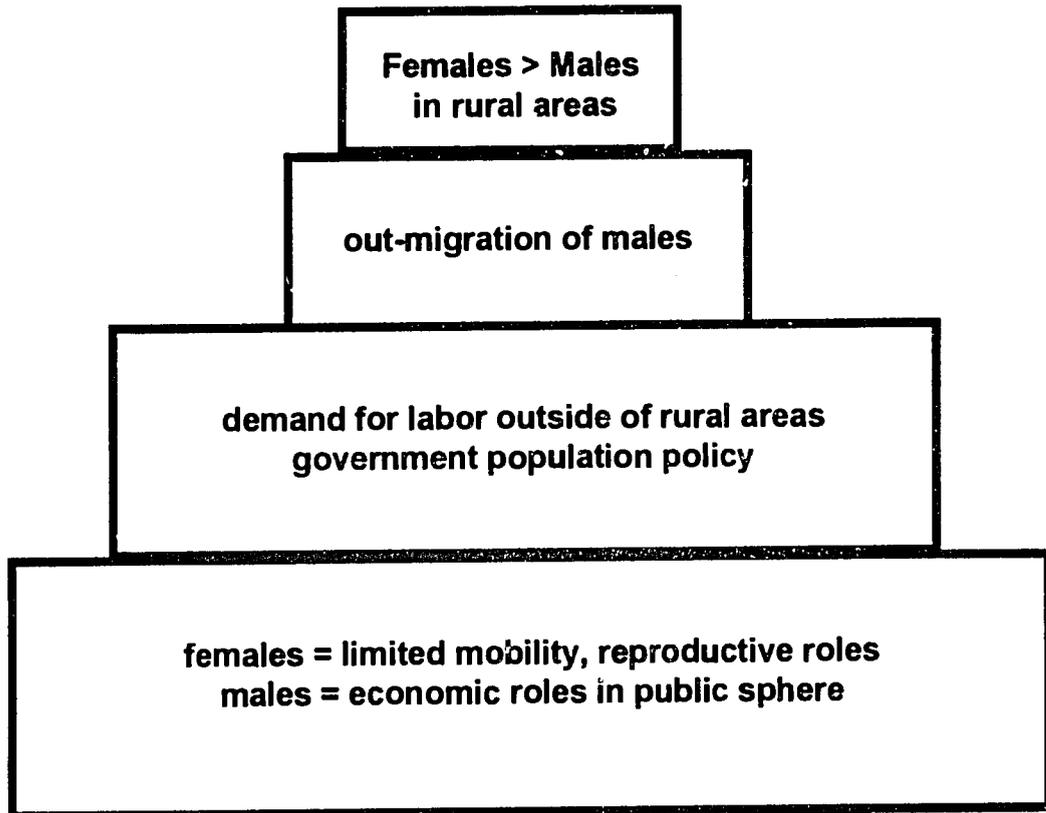
⁸ Henderson, et al. (1982).

"Gendered" nature of migration patterns

The gender division of roles and responsibilities in Sahelian countries, as elsewhere in Africa, is significantly linked to a period when food production for subsistence purposes was the stronghold of local economies. Both men and women played essential and complementary roles in providing food for the family. The activities dominated by men tended to be those that required a great deal of physical strength, mobility, or risk-taking (e.g., clearing land and hunting large game). The bulk of farming, which was largely used for direct consumption or trading, was carried out with minimal technology, and fell to the women (Boserup 1989, Van den Oever 1986). Also significant in defining early gender roles were **reproductive roles** that logically demanded that women be near the home. Reproductive work extends beyond the biological capacity for childbearing to include processing and preparing food for household consumption, household maintenance, and gathering firewood and water for household use.⁹ Reproductive work is distinct from but can include *social reproduction*, or those activities which support reproduction of the labor force. Consequently, females' contribution to agriculture was significant because most of the tasks associated with agriculture were home-based. Therefore, as national-based and foreign markets introduced new sources of income, migration as a practice was clearly more consistent with men's mobility associated with their prescribed activities and the gender division of labor that had become over the years the **cultural norm**. The broad outlines of the social map are thus beginning to unfold (see Figure 7).

⁹ Reproductive role is defined by Eviota (1992) as childbearing in addition to "the caring--the daily physical and ideological maintenance of human beings." It is important to note that reproductive activities are not necessarily consistent across cultures, although the reproductive roles is almost always characterized as women's work. For more on the distinction between reproductive and productive roles, see Canadian Council for International Cooperation 1991, and Moser (1993).

Figure 7. Social Map of Burkina Faso



While today some of the logical reasons for migration no longer hold true--in fact the government of Burkina Faso has stated as a policy objective the reduction of out-migration (United Nations 1987, pp. 86-89)--the traditional division of roles and responsibilities has remained largely intact (reflected in societal **attitudes** about "appropriate" activities for males and females), and the complementarity initially associated with many gender roles has deteriorated. This lack of complementarity creates a gender imbalance in work load that has an impact on the household system of production and reproduction. To accurately inform potential policy decisions, we must further explore the gender imbalances in roles and opportunities and their implications for family survival and welfare in the context of the current environment.

Female-headed households: Foundations and consequences

The traditional family organization in Burkina Faso that has endured since the pre-colonial era, in which the man has primary decision-making power and formal representation in village and national affairs, is backed by legal definitions that appoint the man as *de jure* head of the household. Yet, if the population of men in the productive ages has steadily declined over the years due to out-migration, what has happened to the actual composition of the household and its

internal decision-making processes and labor divisions? According to a recent comparative analysis by the World Fertility Survey and the Demographic Health Survey,

the age and sex structure is . . . an important factor that determines the headship . . . of households in a country; . . . where an important part of the adult population is subject to migration, households are likely to be composed of women, children, and the elderly. (Ekouevi, et al. 1991, p. 1552)

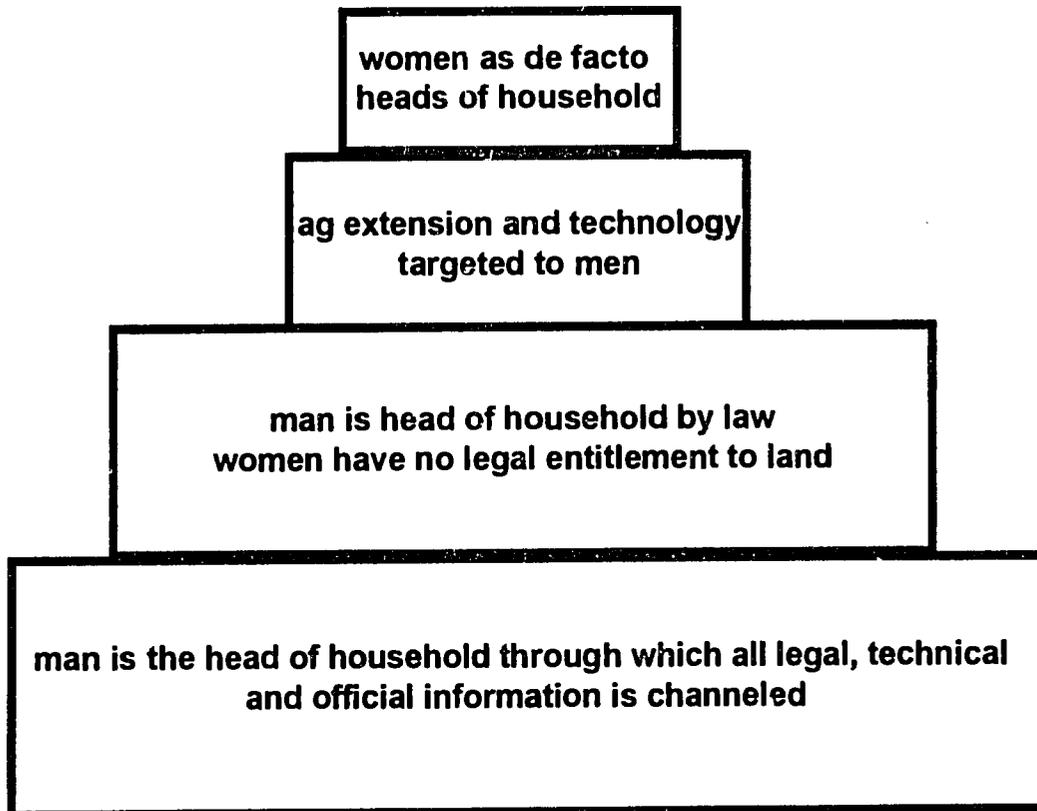
A second look at the demographic data showing the sex ratio skewed in favor of females supports the supposition that households are likely to consist of more women than men; women who are becoming de facto heads of households as their husbands, brothers, and fathers migrate to the cities, Côte d'Ivoire, and other regions in search of wage labor. Another layer of the social map is beginning to unfold based on the **phenomenon** of a rising number of de facto female heads of household, consistent with trends throughout Sub-Saharan Africa (Perucci 1992, Weekes-Vagliani 1990).

In the absence of their male partners, women frequently have complete responsibility (at least in the immediate future) for family survival. In addition to their customary domestic, social, reproductive, and productive roles, women now must fill the absent males' roles if they are to provide adequately for their families. In the rural agriculture sector, the gender division of labor practiced since pre-colonial times, as described earlier, is such that men and women harvest together: men handle the mechanized tasks and heavy labor; women do the "handwork" (such as weeding and planting) and process the food. Due to the depletion of labor in areas of heavy male out-migration, women in Sub-Saharan Africa have been thrust into new roles that, with a small income and limited labor supply, "tends to limit their ability to exploit agrarian resources efficiently" (Okoth-Ogendo, 1989, p. 314).

Women's performance in these new roles is significantly hindered by limited access to the resources that are normally obtained by or directed toward men as the head of household. For instance, women may not be legally entitled to own or purchase land, or their bargaining power may be limited by insufficient cash flow or lack of collateral. Second, agricultural extension services and technology are principally targeted to men. In men's absence those services may not get delivered at all. These **practices** are all supported by a lack of **institutionalized** rights and legal protection in turn reinforced by a **cultural norm**, followed by both rural people and government officials, that channels all "official" and technical information and resources through males as the traditional and, in most cases, legal representatives of the household. In areas where laws, cultural standards, and poverty prevent rural women from gaining access to education, training, land tenure, and other resources, agricultural output and thus economic stability in the household tend to decline (Okoth-Ogendo 1989, p. 314; Palmer 1985, pp. 3-4).

What are the policy implications which emerge from analysis of the various indicators of unbalanced sex ratios and corresponding gender issues? The loss to the subsistence system and to overall productivity from the breakdown in complementarity of roles can be great (Okoth-Ogendo 1989). This is not to indicate that the solution lies in maintaining the complementarity of roles, but rather that policies need to redress the issue of access and control of resources to reflect the shift in gender roles in the division of labor. Thus, in Burkina Faso, changes in women's roles without enforced legal reform and redirected resources have resulted in an imbalance in gender roles, low agricultural productivity, and economic insecurity. The social map thus evolves (see Figure 8), representing the newly identified complexities.

Figure 8. Social Map of Burkina Faso



Case Study Two: Two Faces of the Economically Active Population in Côte d'Ivoire

For this study, another type of demographic data is used, namely statistics on the economically active and literate populations, by age and sex. These data can provide a rough indication of how a country's human resources are being developed and put to productive use. However, these data also can be misleading if they reflect inherent biases on the part of the

collector. Therefore, this case study will also demonstrate the use of supplementary quantitative survey data to expose the researcher's biases, the gender issues they point to, and the importance of qualitative research to complement statistics by depicting the social reality incompletely presented in census data.

Caution: Biases in defining "economically active"

The economic activity of a population is sometimes ambiguously defined in data sources. These definitions depend a great deal on who is conducting the survey and how the questions are being asked. Responses themselves are influenced by diverse cultural norms and language differences. For instance, what constitutes work is arbitrarily defined by different people in different social groups in different parts of the world. The data for this case study is drawn from the 1992 Year Book of Labour Statistics published by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). *Economically active work* is officially defined by the ILO as labor for the production of economic goods and services consistent with the United Nations Systems of National Accounts and Balances, including all production and processing of agricultural products for the market or for home consumption (International Labour Office 1992, p. 3; United Nations 1991, p. 85). The inherent biases in collecting this sort of data can in part account for significant distortions in the age-sex structure of the economically active populations for most developing nations. The composition of the economically active population of Côte d'Ivoire is examined in more detail later in this section.

The most obvious bias in collecting this sort of data stems from the traditional Western ideology of a nuclear household with the father or eldest breadwinning male designated as the "head." This ideology has been imported to non-Western societies and is evident in statistical conventions that measure the nuclear household as a single economic unit without taking into account the welfare, status, or contribution of individuals. Although family law has evolved in many Western societies to successfully challenge traditional concepts of the household head, many African nations still legally define males as heads of households (Folbre 1991). Households in which adult males are absent are simply not counted in censuses, or these households are misrepresented as having a male head even though the male is not actively contributing to the household economy.

The biases run deeper than legal institutions, however. Rooted in the social construction of gender that has already been explored in some detail, women's work is frequently defined as informal labor or housework because most of the products are not sold in the formal market for cash but are consumed directly by the family for subsistence. Lack of official recognition and measurement of women's labor-intensive activities and status in the household can result in further impediments to access and control of resources and training to improve productivity and financial status. As a legacy of the colonial period, for instance, some Sub-Saharan African countries have continued to distribute privatized or communal land exclusively to heads of households. By legal definition women are excluded or ineligible (Folbre 1991). The implications for agricultural

productivity specifically and other development goals in general are considerable given that the majority of *de facto* female-headed households are located in rural areas, depend on subsistence farming, and fall below the poverty line. According to one FAO study,

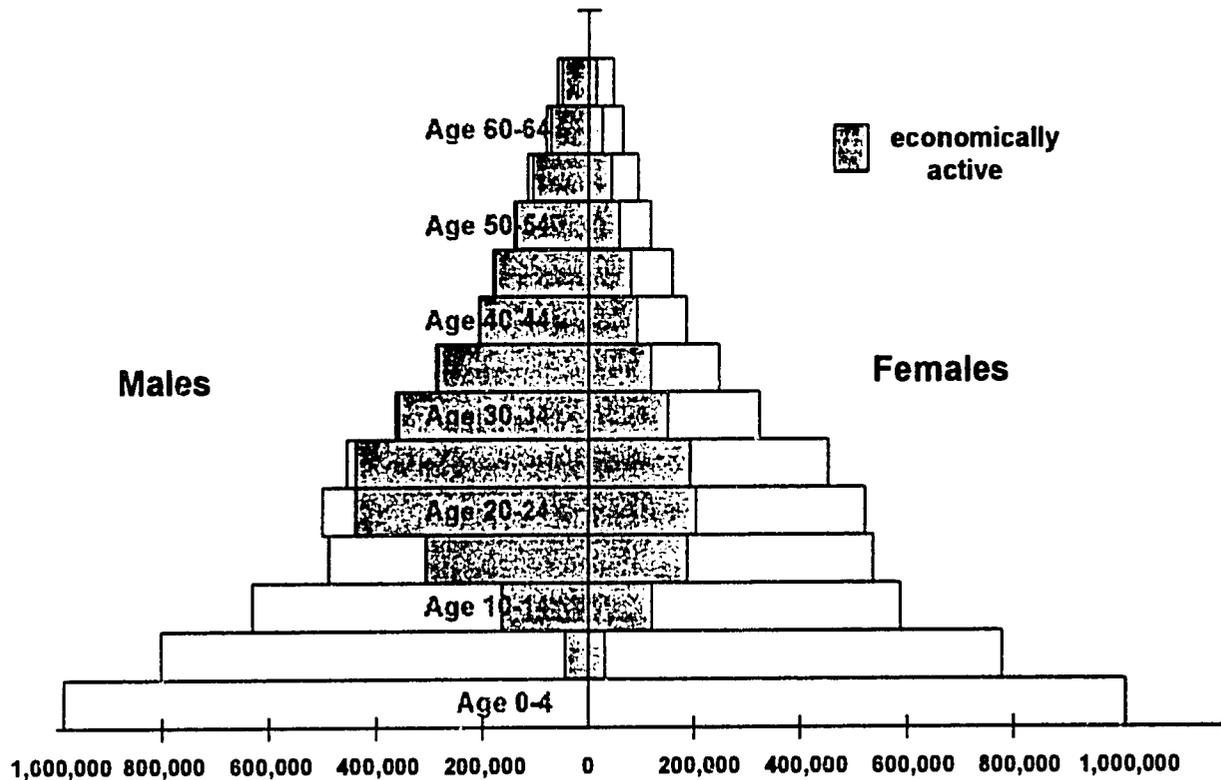
the identification of subsistence units [not officially recognized as a legal holding] is of great importance for policy making and planning purposes. As for small holdings, the contribution to the total national agricultural production of these units may be small in monetary terms, but it involves the work and the lives of a considerable number of people. In addition, this section of the agricultural population--among whom a major part are women--is the one that most needs training, credit, extension and other services for which detailed information is crucial. Adequate policy measures in this area not only may affect the living conditions of the population involved, but may have an impact on the overall level of production (Perucci 1992).

The number of *de facto* female heads of household is growing at a swift pace due to male out-migration and family instability (Perucci 1992, p. 16; Weekes-Vagliani 1990). According to a 1984 ILO study, three in every ten households in developing countries are headed by women. The study itself considered this figure to be a conservative estimate (Waring 1988).

Who is economically active in Côte d'Ivoire: The phenomenon

When the demographic make-up of the economically active population in Côte d'Ivoire is superimposed on the total population (see Figure 9), it becomes apparent (the **phenomenon**) that males comprise a larger percentage of the former than females beginning around age 20 and continuing through the highest age category. Almost all males are regarded as being economically active, while generally less than half of the females in each of these age groups is considered so employed.

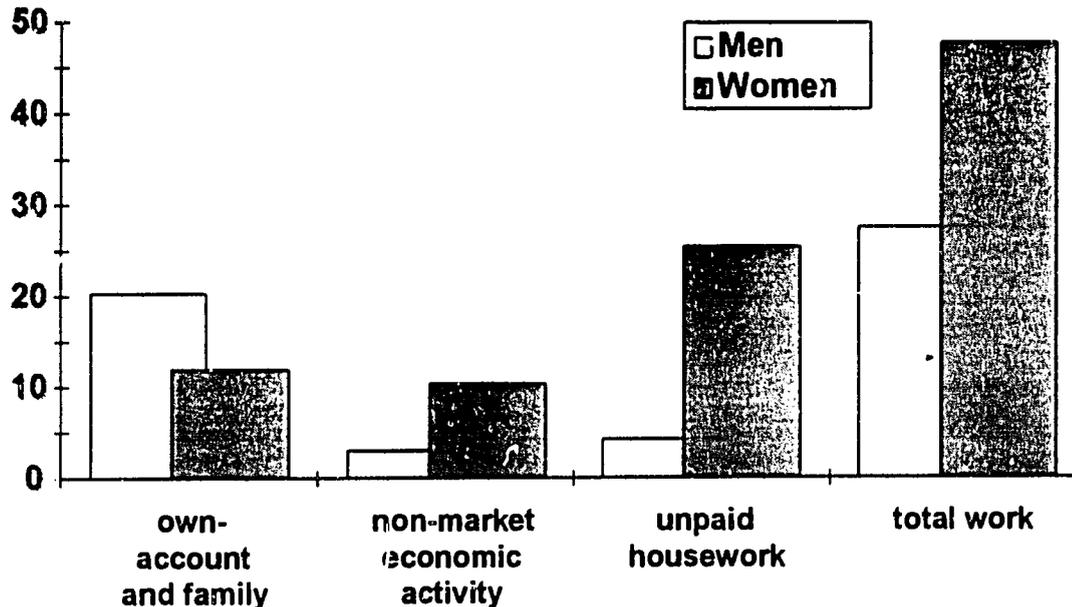
Figure 9. Côte d'Ivoire, total population by age and sex and economic activity 1988



Source: ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1992. Census Data.

A cursory glance at the data may lead to erroneous conclusions about the important gender issues to be examined as explored in the previous paragraphs, because one would assume that men are much more economically active than women. But the question is, do these data represent reality? From Figure 9, it could be concluded that females do not have the same opportunities for employment as males, or that females simply do not contribute as significantly as males to the household or national economy. Yet, when these data are looked at in combination with survey data that records women's actual day-to-day activities and responsibilities, contradictions between the two scenarios become evident. For instance, a United Nations publication calculates that women and men in rural Côte d'Ivoire spend about the same number of hours at economic activity (excluding the foreign-born population) until non-market economic activity (i.e., work in family enterprises, subsistence agriculture, water carrying, fuel gathering, construction, etc.) and unpaid housework are taken into account. Then, as indicated in Figure 10, it is apparent that women actually "outwork" men by nearly 2 to 1 (United Nations, 1991).

**Figure 10. Rural Côte d'Ivoire
Time spent in work (hours per week)**



Source: United Nations, 1991.

Our inquiry, thus, must begin by exploring the contradictions in the phenomena -- in the first block of the pyramid. Specifically the contradictions between the two sets of data would indicate that at least one of the graphs describes the phenomenon incorrectly. The following discussion examines the sociocultural context of women's and men's actual productive or economic activities, and attempts to clarify discrepancies in the two sets of data.

Contradictions in the quantitative data lead to the following two research questions: (1) Why are women not consistently reflected as economically active in official data sources; and (2) What implications does this official under-representation have for women's productive lives? These questions will first be tackled at the level of practices (pyramid level 2) leading to more in-depth exploration of social institutions and related cultural values and norms (pyramid levels 3 and 4):

Part of the answer to the first question, on why women are not included in official labor statistics, is found in the formulation of actual census questions and the behavior of census takers. Considering the family as a single economic unit with a male head of household leads census takers to interview only one member of the household -- usually male -- and to ask general questions about family economic activity which fail to document differences in individual

contributions. Data collectors and their questionnaires, in some cases, simply do not address themselves to women. This oversight, which constitutes one **practice** is becoming more widely acknowledged, however, and cannot exclusively account for the contradictions in statistical phenomena. A second **practice** or behavioral pattern, which seems to support the data that suggest that men are more economically active than women as well as the statistics that indicate women's predominant activity in the informal economy, is that women tend to remain in close proximity to the household and village, limiting their interaction with others to the private sphere of household and village activity, thus reducing their opportunity to meet and talk with outsiders. A detailed examination of a distinct social institution and the changes it has undergone in Côte d'Ivoire help to explain the underlying **social institutions** and **cultural factors** of these **behavioral patterns**.

An additional complicating factor: Erosion of the matrilineal system in Côte d'Ivoire

Historically, matrilineal systems as a **social institution** permeated many societies in Côte d'Ivoire (e.g., most sub-groups of the Akan, especially in the southeast).¹⁰ Due generally to the nation's increased participation in the global market, these systems have deteriorated in the rural areas, where communities and families no longer rely solely on the subsistence economy. Lineage is breaking apart and traditional channels of access to land, inheritance, and other resources are being challenged. The implications for men and women differ and provide some insight into the constraints rural women face in the private sphere of the household economy, in participation in the formal labor force, and in being recognized for their work in the informal sector.

Matrilineal societies in Côte d'Ivoire are characterized by two features that have an impact on the household economy. First, social authority (i.e., control over matrimonial alliances and other socioeconomic household relationships) is exercised by the male members of the woman's original family. In other words, a father or brother makes decisions about his daughter's or sister's economic holdings and inheritance of her children in spite of her marital status. Second, family lineage is transmitted through the mother. In practical terms, goods and wages that a man accumulates through work are not passed on to his children but instead to his sister's sons. Thus, historically, the income of both parents is not combined to finance the household. The woman, combining her brothers' income and her labor activities, primarily provides for the children and other household expenses.¹¹

Since the early 1960s, when legal measures were adopted to change inheritance practices (Weekes-Vagliani 1990), the matrilineal system has been fraught with instability. Some traditional family arrangements have dissolved into more conventional ones (by Western standards). It is

¹⁰The discussion on the matrilineal system is drawn largely from Weekes-Vagliani 1990.

¹¹ That parents do not together provide for their own children can also be true of patrilineal societies, but is linked to matrilineal societies in the Côte d'Ivoire.

important to note that the evolution of the family structure toward a nuclear model has coincided with two interrelated country-wide **institutions** and **practices**: (1) development of a monetary-based economy and the plantation system; and (2) increased rural-to-urban migration. The demand for labor on plantations in the north and in the cities, although largely met by emigrants from surrounding countries, has also resulted in a large percentage of male nationals migrating in search of wage labor in an increasingly monetary-based market system. The rural exodus of predominantly men, but sometimes whole families, has physically broken apart households. Women who migrate with their husbands and leave behind their traditional socioeconomic support networks must enter into a contract with their husbands that previously had little or no economic value to them, potentially forfeiting some of their autonomy and security in family lineage. More prevalent, however, are women who remain in the rural areas but whose fathers and brothers migrate, causing a rupture in the traditional transfer of economic security. In either situation, a large portion of women's traditional economic base tends to fall apart. Women must rely to an even greater extent in these instances on their own subsistence crop output as an independent means of food security--another reason for their reticence to leave the rural areas and relinquish their age-old roles in food processing.

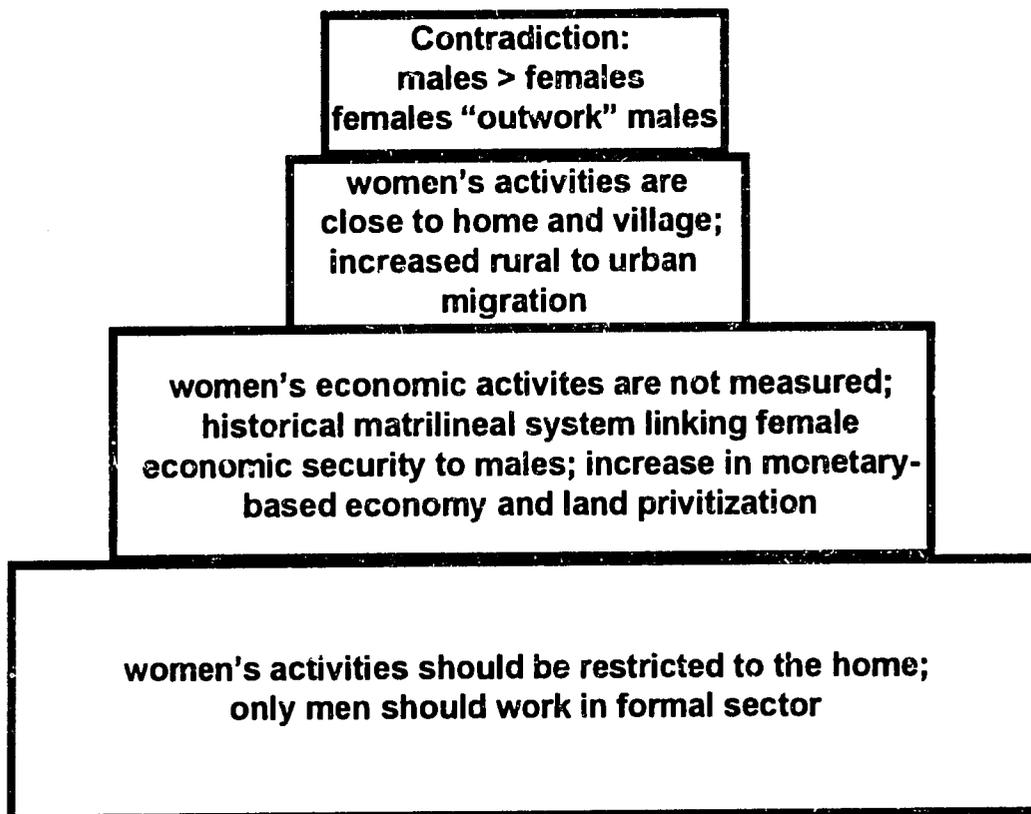
Frequently, however, subsistence and small-farm agriculture--many rural women's most stable and independent resources--face challenges from increased land privatization, also a result of a growing monetary-based economy. Land privatization further erodes the need for inheritance, since land can be bought with wages, contributing to the disruption of the matrilineal system. Thus, women are assuming more responsibility for their family's immediate survival due to out-migration, while encountering increasing constraints to their access to and control of resources.

How are all of these **practices** and **institutions** reflected in the distorted age-sex structure of the economically active population? First, women's activities and contributions to the household economy are largely contained within the informal sector and are unremunerated. Due to the gender division of labor in Côte d'Ivoire, women spend the majority of their time in the home or village preparing and producing food, caring for children, and performing other reproductive activities. In addition, women make up for the deficit in home-based agricultural production from male out-migration despite the increasing constraints described above. Therefore they are frequently mislabeled as not contributing to the labor force, or their activities are not easily quantifiable.

Second, female roles and responsibilities historically have been carried out within the confines of the home and community. Restricted mobility has become a **cultural norm** and therefore women are less likely than men to go into the public sphere (with the exception of the informal market), where the opportunities for wage labor can be found and where their economic contributions are more visible. Last, the matrilineal system as it relates to the household economy has not linked a woman's financial security and contract with her husband's income and labor and, in places where the matrilineal system still has value, a woman's economic concerns are not linked

to her husband--the official "head" and therefore representative of the household. The completed social map appears in Figure 11.

**Figure 11. Social Map of
Cote d'Ivoire, Economically Active Population**



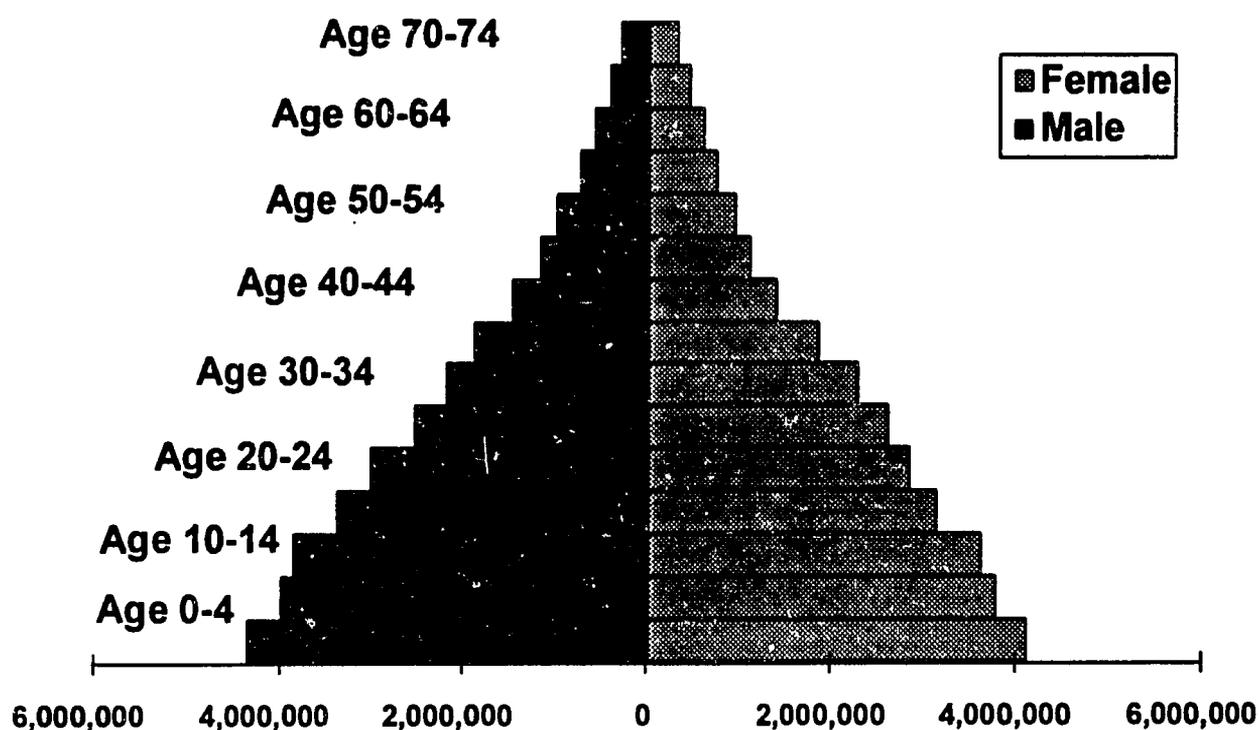
Case Study Three: Examining Sex Ratios over Time in the Philippines

Recently sociologists have reported that in the Philippines the gender construction of labor in production systems is fairly equitable, with men and women sharing the work load and facing similar opportunities in education and employment. Indeed the data on educational attainment and earned income suggest that the Philippines' course of development is a model to be replicated.

Yet while the disparity in gender relations in the Philippines is indeed less wide than in other developing nations, age-sex structures of various regions and sectors demonstrate that a division of roles and responsibilities based on gender does exist, especially at the household level.

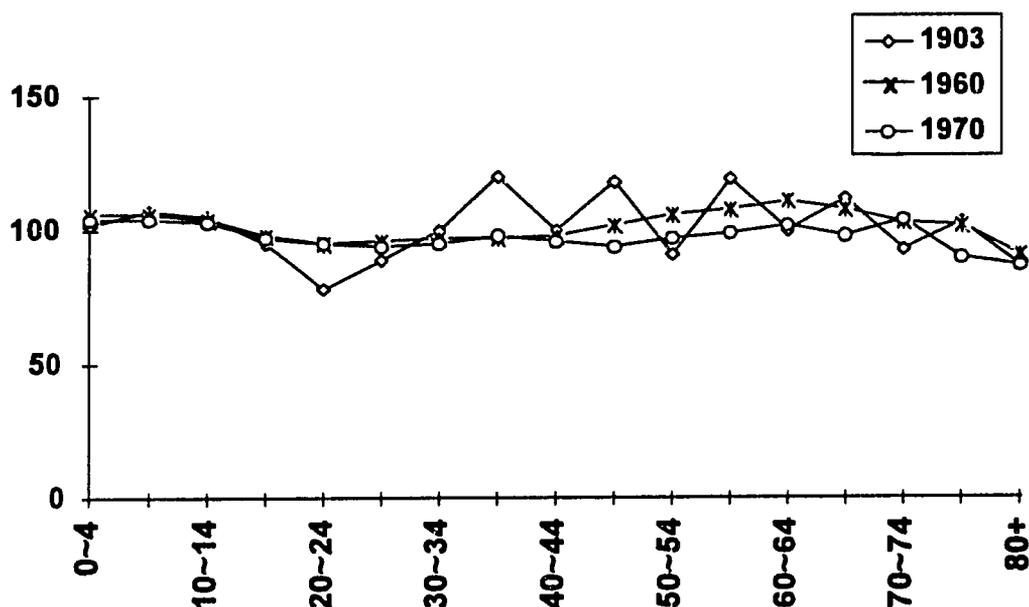
There is no great distortion in the age-sex structure of the overall population, which has a sex ratio of 100.1, although there are slightly more women (sex ratios of 93 to 98) in the productive years from 25 to 39 (see Figure 12). When the sex ratios are compared over time (see Figure 13), a slight trend toward an increasingly female-dominated population emerges. This phenomenon is observed in such practices, supported by previous research, as female-dominated internal migration and male-dominated international migration. Again the critical research question is formed in linking level 2 of the pyramid to its foundation: why does this pattern of gendered migration occur? This exercise in social mapping will demonstrate the strengths of historical analysis of gender issues.

Figure 12. Philippines, Total Population by Age and Sex, 1990



Source: United Nations Demographic Yearbook, 1990. De jure population.

**Figure 13. Philippines, Sex Ratio by Age for Total Population
1903, 1960, 1970**



Source: Bureau of the Census and Statistics, reports for 1903-1970.

External intervention and social change

Changes in gender roles in response to environmental stresses are clear in the Philippines. Some roles and responsibilities were divided by gender prior to the onset of colonialist policies and the value systems they introduced, but this traditional gender division of labor was not fixed and responded without much conflict to changing daily circumstances (Illo 1988). For instance, in the pre-Spanish period, both women and men contributed to market production activities, ranging from work in the fields to marketing of farm produce to other household manufactures. In this subsistence economy, wage labor was not a dominant means of income, and communities produced what they could consume, with little surplus. Although women tended to do the work that was less physically taxing (such as planting) while men cleared the land, the sexes often substituted for one another when a gap in labor needed to be filled. In communities where men were routinely called on to defend against attack, women were the primary agricultural producers. Women appeared to possess the same financial autonomy as men although a gender distinction in expenditure was common. Women were responsible for managing household budgets and meeting any deficits with their own income, although men typically did not surrender their entire earnings for household budgeting.

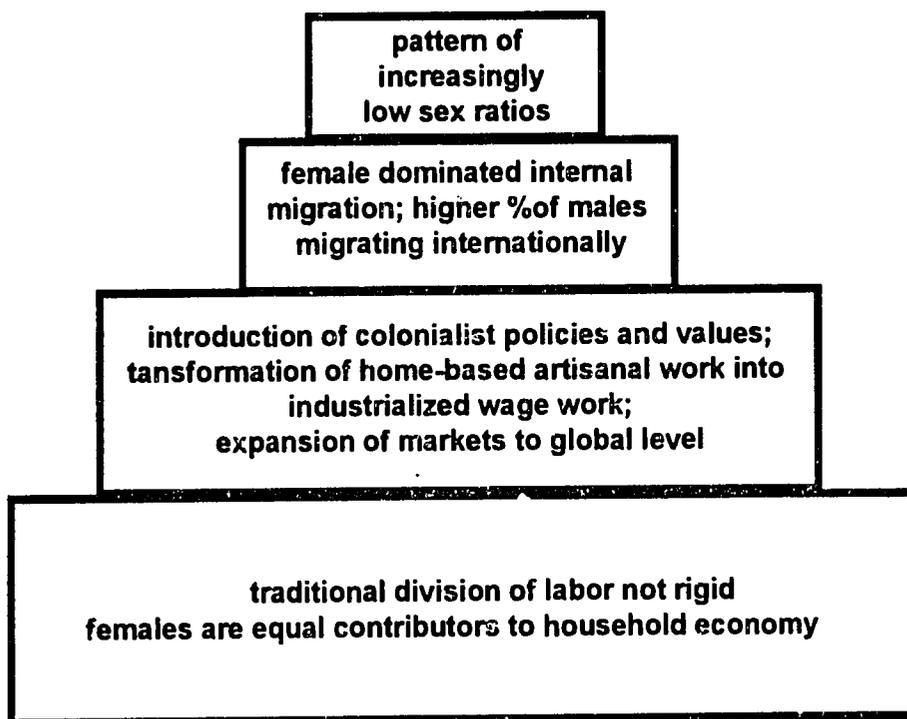
The influence of colonial value systems, rooted in the expansion of global market systems, has mixed with the traditional gender division of labor over the centuries to create a more rigid distinction between men's and women's roles. The Spanish period (1521-1800's), particularly in the last century-and-a-half of its colonial rule, began a shift from production and consumption of goods at the household level to expansion of agricultural production for export and consumption of foreign manufactured goods. Rural Filipino households grew poorer and hungrier while food was routinely supplied to a nonproducing colonial population and clergy. This emphasis on world trade away from small-scale production services had different consequences for women and men in different regions. In general, however, women's work as artisans (e.g., weaving, hat making, cloth making) was transformed into industrialized wage work, undermining women's economic autonomy and forcing many of them to abandon artisan work--most notably weaving--altogether. Furthermore, wage work that opened up at the ports or in clearing land for cultivation of export crops was principally allocated to men, while women fell increasingly to labor-intensive farm activities and the service industry. While the system of gender separation in both the home and work place was strongly supported by a Catholic ecclesiastical order during the Spanish years, the American colonial period helped solidify these distinctions.

Reinforced by an ideological framework of domesticity and family firmly rooted in American society, women in the Philippines became increasingly dependent on men's income during the American colonial period (1900-1946). The manufacture of wares and crafts in the household was nearly obliterated and women's work went unpaid, became wage labor, or was deemed secondary income (Eviota 1992, pp. 54-76). The rigidly gendered construction of social behavior is the legacy of the colonial period, and it persists in Filipino society despite data that overwhelmingly indicate that women are as well educated and literate as men.

Gender as a social construct at the household level

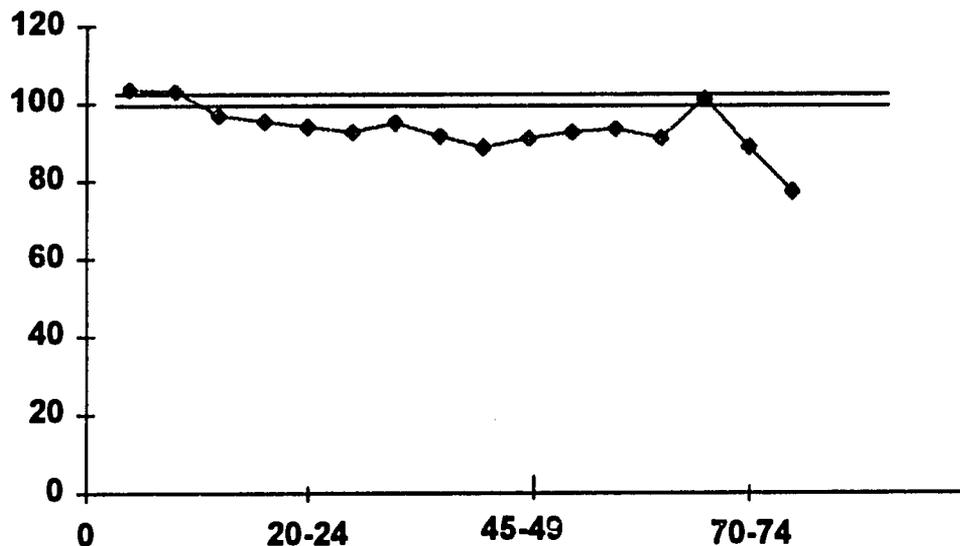
Figure 14 outlines the "social map" of female-dominated migration by tracing linkages between this type of migration flow and the relevant gender division of roles and responsibilities. As noted earlier, the sex ratios tend to favor women at the start of their productive years. Surveys suggest that it is primarily young, single women who migrate (Eviota 1992, pp. 54-76; Trager 1984). Closer examination of this **practice** at the household level reveals that migration is a household strategy for survival or upward social mobility (Trager 1984, p. 1265), and that it is largely rooted in the gender division of roles and expectations that parents have of their daughters and sons.

Figure 14. Philippines, Social Map



An example of gender-selectivity in migration comes out of fieldwork conducted in Dagupan City in the Central Luzon Administrative Region, where women significantly outnumber men during productive years (see Figure 15). Three trends in female migration emerged based on the household strategies of survival and social mobility (Trager 1984, pp. 1264–1265, 1273–1276).

Figure 15. Sex ratio by age group for Central Luzon Administrative Region (including Dagupan City), 1970



Source: The Philippines National Census and Statistics Office, census report for 1970.

Women are favored in migration in the Central Luzon Administrative Region for the following reasons. First, in poor rural households, young, single women with little education are encouraged to go to urban areas in search of jobs in the informal sector. The remitted wages are spent on basic necessities for the household. Trager (1984) suggests that this corresponds with a long-standing **cultural norm** of strong reciprocity in family obligations. Parents expect their children to provide for them once the children reach productive age, just as they provided for and protected their children during infancy. Male children are considered less faithful to this obligation due to their greater freedom of mobility and opportunity in the formal sector, which increases the chances that they will leave their parents' home region permanently. Therefore the responsibility to care for the parents is typically delegated to female children and young, single women.

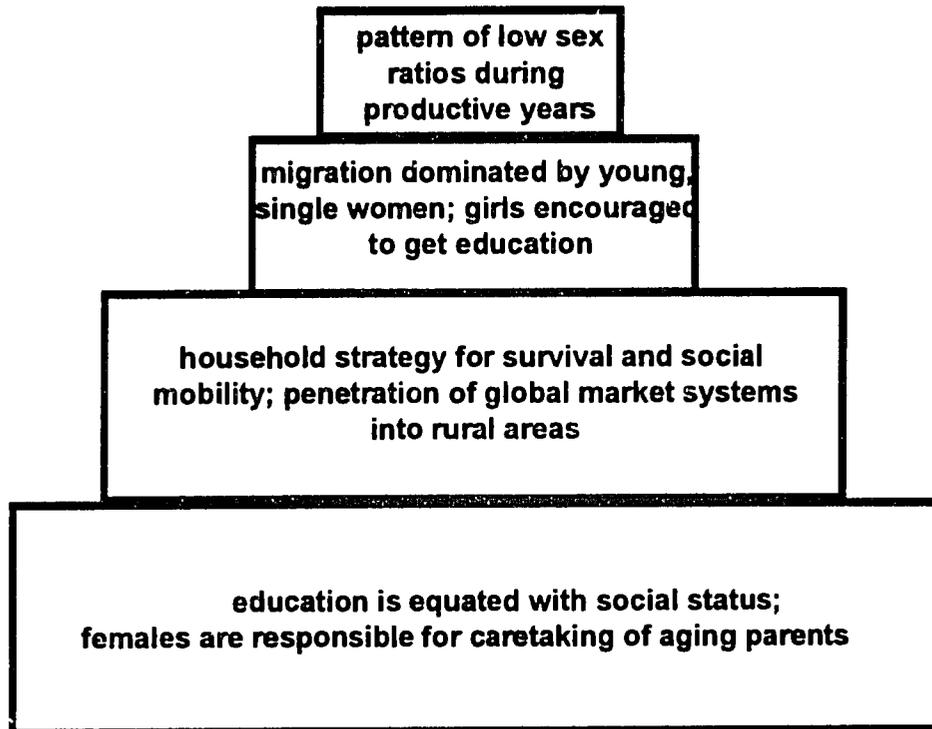
Second, there is a trend toward female-dominant migration in rural-based families who are not destitute and who can afford the time it requires for their daughters to get an education that will lead to work in the formal sector. In this study, parents anticipated that larger remittances would accrue to the household, and that they could then educate other children, thereby raising the social standing of the family in general.

Third, in families of middle-class and upper-class professionals, girls are encouraged to stay in school through higher education, even though remittances are less important to these families. Rather, the families seek to raise their social standing in the community. The fact that the family can afford the luxury of sending their daughters to school without the expectation of remittances gives the family a high social status.

The implication is that although education is typically equated with greater autonomy, earnings, and self-determination for women, in some regions of the Philippines it is a means by which females are expected to contribute financial remittances to the household economy or raise their family's social status. In addition, the level of education a girl attains frequently depends on the immediate survival needs of the family. Girls, especially in the poorest households, are often pushed to abandon their studies once they have acquired a skill that will be marketable in the informal sector. These females, thus, are forced into a poorly regulated system where they are less likely to receive minimum wages, health care, or formal protection of their jobs.

Other studies suggest that the trend toward female migration is "in part the consequence of capitalist penetration into the countryside" (Eviota 1992). A competitive market system leads to further fragmentation of land for individual sale and production. Smaller and smaller parcels of land are available for inheritance and are commonly entrusted to the male children, while the girls are encouraged to seek economic opportunity through education. While women's educational level increases, their access to more tangible productive resources such as land declines. On the other hand, men in the poorer households remain in the rural areas and consequently have less opportunity to acquire a formal education. The expanded social map appears in Figure 16.

Figure 16. Social Map of the Philippines



APPENDIX I

Considerations when using demographic data to explore gender issues

There are three main categories of sources for demographic data on national populations: (1) censuses, (2) vital registration data (official registrations of births, deaths, and migrations), and (3) national demographic surveys conducted by international agencies. This report uses primarily data from national censuses, which are easily accessible through the United Nations, the World Bank, the Center for International Research of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, and in-country census bureaus. Often census summaries are available through public and academic libraries, or the information can be requested through agencies such as those named above.

There are potential problems that the analyst should consider when using these data and attempting to draw conclusions about demographic phenomena in developing countries. These problems concern the great variability in the reliability, accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of data from national censuses. In many developing countries, comprehensive, periodic censuses have not been fully or regularly implemented because they are costly and time consuming, and governments are reluctant to commit scarce resources to such endeavors.

To ensure reliability, accuracy, and completeness, national censuses involve complex methodologies, skills that are often in short supply in developing countries, although the United Nations and other agencies have made technical assistance available to countries that wish to improve the quality of their demographic data. These agencies also encourage standardization of census procedures to facilitate better cross-national comparisons.

Cost considerations and cultural values, however, may still affect the completeness of census data. In some cases, for example, officials do not feel that it is necessary to collect data disaggregated by sex and age or data on household composition. Even when intentions and technical expertise are adequate, political and economic crises may interrupt the regular collection of census data or may produce distortions in the results when certain population segments are not proportionately represented. Fortunately, data published by international agencies such as the United Nations usually include an assessment of the quality of the data, which helps the analyst avoid drawing unwarranted conclusions about demographic conditions in a country.

The reliability of statistical information is not the same for all countries and depends to a large extent on the number of censuses that have been conducted in a country. Some countries have had very few censuses, and have very large margins of error in their enumeration, whereas others have nearly flawless information about the composition, location, and dynamics of their populations. However, less reliable population data can be improved by comparing the less reliable population statistics with population data from other countries of similar development and population profiles. The result is a reasonably accurate estimate of basic characteristics, such as the age-sex structure of a population.

More needs to be done, however, to encourage and facilitate the regular and comprehensive collection of demographic data in developing countries. As demonstrated in the case studies, these data are valuable tools for enhancing development, but their value is only as good as their quality and relevance. The world is changing rapidly, and thorough and current demographic data not only help monitor this rapid change, but also help plan for a rapidly evolving future.

APPENDIX II
List of Data Sources

The following is a list of sources where sex-disaggregated data are routinely collected and housed:

Center for International Research
U.S. Bureau of the Census
Room 205 A
Washington Plaza 2
Washington, D.C. 20233
(301) 763-5521

Demographic and Health Surveys
11785 Beltsville Dr.
Suite 300
Calverton, MD 20705-3119
(301) 572-0200
(301) 572-0999 (fax)

The Population Reference Bureau
1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Suite 520
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 483-1100

United Nations Information Center
1889 F St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 289-8670

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