

FINAL DRAFT

**Successful Approaches to Integrating Gender
In
U.S. Development Assistance:
USAID/Honduras**

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GLOSSARY

AIFLD	American Institute for Free Labor Development
DF	Development Finance Office
DMD	Deputy Mission Director
DP	Development Programs Office
FEHMUC	Honduran Peasant Women's Federation
FINCA	Foundation for International Community Assistance
FSN	Foreign Service National
FUNADEH	National Foundation for the Development of Honduras
FY	Fiscal Year
GCID	Gender Considerations in Development
GENESYS	Gender in Economic and Social Systems
GOH	Government of Honduras
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRD	Office of Human Resources Development
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LUPE	Land Use and Productivity Enhancement
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PACR	Project Activity Completion Reports
PEEP	Primary Education Efficiency Project
PIO/T	Project Implementation Order/Technical
PO	Program Output
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RFP	Request For Proposal
SAR	Semi-Annual Report
SDI	Strengthening Democratic Institutions
SO	Strategic Objective
SOW	Scope of Work
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/W	United States Agency for International Development/Washington
WID	Women in Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID experience has demonstrated that integration of gender issues across development activities contributes significantly to overall development goals for both men and women, and particularly to women's social, economic and political empowerment. Therefore, USAID has sought to encourage and support such integration by its field missions. This Honduran case study is one of a series that documents USAID's successful approaches to integrating gender issues into its development activities. The study identifies how the Mission has built gender into its systems and processes, how gender integration has improved effectiveness, and its impact on participants, beneficiaries, and institutions. The studies in this series are meant to provide examples of useful strategies to assist other Missions in strengthening attention to gender.

Much of Honduras' population still lives in poverty with limited access to quality education and economic opportunities. Despite significant improvements in the status of Honduran women over the past two decades, they still are a minority within the formal economy and face obstacles which impede their access to land, credit, employment, and decision-making structures.

USAID/Honduras has made a serious effort to link its sustainable development goals with gender equity and the increased participation of women and men as agents of change. It has incorporated gender into many projects in all sectors of its development portfolio, and has achieved some significant impacts in the areas of policy reform, economic growth, education, natural resource management, and democratic initiatives.

The Mission has made substantial progress in addressing gender considerations at all stages of the project cycle, starting at the early design stage. Gender-disaggregated data are collected for almost all Mission projects and project evaluations consider gender when appropriate.

Projects discussed in this case study which have demonstrated significant attention to gender include the following:

The agricultural component of the Policy Analysis and Implementation Project encouraged the involvement of the Honduran Peasant Women's Federation in the review and development of Honduras' Agricultural Modernization Law which addressed land access and agricultural credit, and was instrumental in ensuring that the new law gave women the right to own agrarian reform lands both individually and collectively. The project also supported efforts to disseminate information about these new legal rights to women throughout the country.

The Small Business II Project, through the FUNADEH small business program, has successfully incorporated women entrepreneurs engaged in larger-scale microbusiness and formal sector small business into its credit, training, and technical assistance services;

women now account for 45% of both the number of loans and the amount lent. The project has also supported microenterprise development through FINCA's village bank program in which ninety-nine percent of the program's borrowers are women.

The Primary Education Efficiency Project, in collaboration with the Honduran Congressional Commission on Women, supported the production of gender-balanced textbooks. Through the project's innovative school construction component, local female construction teams built 56 classrooms, which, in addition to the classrooms, provided much-needed income and created a new supply of skilled labor in several communities, with the potential for increasing the earning opportunities for women and improving the economic status of their families.

The Land Use and Productivity Enhancement Project works with women and men to improve the profitability and sustainability of hillside farming, while promoting improved natural resource management practices. It has trained local women and men to disseminate new technologies to increase production, improve marketing of crops, and protect resources. As a result of a strong focus on gender in the mid-term evaluation, the project has become more gender-integrated and has begun to train both female and male extensionists to work with all members of rural families, rather than separately by sex.

The Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project has provided support to the Congressional Commission on Women and is planning to work with women's NGOs; it also tries to capture the gender impacts of its legislative, judicial and civic education components. The Municipal Development Project has been instrumental in training local women leaders and tracking participation by gender in town meetings. Women's growing participation has brought their perspectives to identifying and solving community problems.

As well as implementing gender integration in its project activities, USAID/Honduras has been among the LAC Missions giving the greatest attention to gender in program-level planning and performance reporting. For example, the FY 94-95 Action Plan disaggregated nearly 40% of all indicators by gender and reported on gender issues and impacts in the narrative. The Mission has incorporated high levels of gender-disaggregated data and gender-specific impacts into Semi-Annual Reports, sectoral assessments and inputs to reports to Congress. Gender monitoring and assessment activities have shown Mission staff the importance of using and analyzing gender data to measure performance in achieving objectives and improve strategic planning.

The Mission has also moved from an exclusively women in development (WID) approach to gender considerations in development (GCID) to focus on socially-defined gender roles which affect the participation of both women and men in development. To ensure sufficient attention to gender integration a GCID Specialist and Committee were appointed to assist in Mission programming and project design. The Mission has also benefitted from and been influenced by

Agency gender resources, such as gender training for staff, official LAC bureau guidance and technical support on addressing gender in Action Plans, and information resources at USAID/W. As a result of these measures, the Mission was one of only three LAC Missions that addressed gender across all Strategic Objectives in FY 94-95 Action Plans.

In summary, the most important factors in USAID/Honduras' success in gender integration include:

- ✓ Clear policy statements emphasizing the importance of attention to gender throughout the portfolio.
- ✓ Appointment of a GCID (Gender Considerations in Development) Specialist, properly placed for maximum impact, and with sufficient commitment, time, and support to act effectively
- ✓ Formation of a GCID Committee, chaired by the Deputy Mission Director, with representation from all key offices and well defined functions and responsibilities
- ✓ Active involvement of GCID staff and committee members in strategy development and performance assessment, as well as project design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
- ✓ Use of USAID/W resources, technical assistance, and training to support and complement field work and the work of all GCID staff.
- ✓ A participatory approach that creates collaboration between the Mission, the Honduran government and local NGOs on gender issues.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This case study is one of a series that examines USAID country programs with successful approaches to the integration of gender issues in development. A gender approach examines the ways that the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the household, the community, and at the national level may differentially affect their access to and benefits from development activities, and thus affect development outcomes and sustainability. While a gender approach provides the basis to ensure that women are a part of the development process, it focuses on both men and women in their socio-political and economic context, not exclusively on women and women's issues.

Initiated by the Office of Women in Development, Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support and Research, these case studies document a range of successful approaches the integration of gender issues in development and trace the driving forces that influenced their effectiveness. The studies also look at the impact of attention to gender issues on the effectiveness and sustainability of Mission development efforts. The aim is to provide examples of useful strategies to assist other Missions to strengthen attention to gender in their own programs and projects as well as to inform regional and central bureaus how their guidance and support have affected attention to gender in the field. The case studies also enable USAID management to share these successes with Congress, other donors, and other development practitioners.

Methodology

USAID/Honduras was selected for an effective approaches case study because of the high quality of reporting on gender considerations in both standard and special reports submitted to the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) Bureau. In addition the Mission had given attention to gender across all sectors of its program portfolio and expressed a willingness to participate in the study.

A few projects with substantial attention to gender were selected for in-depth examination based on a review of the latest Semi-Annual Report (SAR). Selection criteria included: projects which represent as many of the Mission's Strategic Objectives (SOs) as possible, major projects (both in scope and funding), and projects with some evidence of positive impacts on women as well as men. In addition, there was an effort to include a policy project and one involving nontraditional activities for women. Based on these criteria, four projects were selected: Land Use and Productivity Enhancement; Primary Education Efficiency, Small Business II, and Policy Analysis and Implementation (Agriculture Component).

Field data were collected between November 29 and December 10, 1993, by a three-person team including two Development Associates policy analysts and the USAID LAC Bureau Gender/WID Advisor. The team interviewed Mission management, program and project staff, representatives of counterpart organizations implementing the selected projects, the director and staff advisors of the Congressional Commission on Women, and project participants. Interviews included focus group sessions with women who had participated in the USAID projects selected for in-depth examination. A list of people interviewed is presented in Annex A. The team also reviewed key program and planning documents, project documents for the four selected projects, and other relevant materials. A description of methodology is included as Annex B.

Organization of the Report

The report begins with an overview of the major development problems facing the country, the major gender issues, and the particular development problems addressed by USAID in its country strategy. The second section describes the impact of USAID/Honduras' development activities on the women and men of Honduras. The third illustrates, in broad brush strokes, the integration of gender considerations into Mission strategies and operations. This is followed by more detailed accounts of the ways in which gender considerations are incorporated at the program level and in the project cycle. The last section analyzes the various internal and external factors that have brought about USAID Honduras' current level of integration of gender considerations. The report concludes with a summary of key lessons learned from the experience in USAID/Honduras.

COUNTRY SITUATION

Key Development Problems

Honduras has undertaken sweeping economic reform in the 1990s in response to the economic crisis of the late 1980s. The results have been economic growth, reduced inflation, and a recent increase in real incomes nationwide. Nonetheless, many Hondurans remain poor with more than two-thirds living below the poverty line. The need for foreign exchange is critical to enable the country to obtain inputs for continued economic growth and further improvement of social welfare. With a high external debt, only 60 cents of each dollar of foreign exchange is available for inputs, including capital investments. Fertility and infant mortality rates have declined significantly, but they are still high (5.3 and 63/1000, respectively). While the overall educational level of Hondurans has increased over the last decade, too many fall through the educational net. The country is one of the most geographically and biologically diverse in Central America, but its natural resources have been badly exploited. Millions of hectares of forest have been lost, nearly 50 percent of land used for agriculture is unsuitable, and traditional hillside farming causes serious soil loss and damages water resources. Honduras continues to take steps toward fuller democratic participation. The fourth free elections were held in November 1993, and power was peacefully transferred from one party to another in January 1994. Political corruption is strong while key administrative institutions are weak.

Gender Issues

Over the past two decades, Honduran women have gained greater access to all levels of formal education, increased their participation in the labor force, and created an active network of women's organizations. Despite these advances, however, women of all socioeconomic and ethnic groups still face significant gender inequities in access to social and economic resources, as well as to household, local, and national level decision-making structures. In addition, limited access to quality health care and water supply has contributed to low life expectancies for both men and women, 61 and 63 years respectively, and high morbidity rates for women during their reproductive years.

Access to primary and secondary education is approaching gender parity in Honduras. In 1988, 68% of both women and men were literate. Nonetheless, completion rates and the overall quality of education remain quite low for both boys and girls. Of all females who enroll in first grade, 35.4% enter the sixth year (slightly higher than the national average of 32.5%). Gender stereotyping in most educational, training, and extracurricular activities further limit women's access to many of the economic opportunities which are available to men with similar or lower levels of education.

Women's participation in the labor force doubled between 1961 and 1988, but they still constitute only 21% of the economically active population (EAP), as officially defined. In addition, women are largely concentrated in traditionally "female" professions; women constitute 70% of the service sector and 46% of the informal sector. The male EAP, by comparison, concentrates in agriculture (55.8%), followed by services (27.7%), and industry (16.5%). The growth of textile and food processing maquilas and non-traditional export agribusinesses, such as melon and shrimp, is gradually increasing the demand for female workers in industry and commercial agriculture.

Honduran women have had much less access to land, credit, and technical assistance than men. Women represented less than four percent of all agrarian reform beneficiaries and less than two percent of the membership of agrarian cooperatives between 1970 and 1989. Nonetheless, women are actively involved in food production for household consumption and local sale, and are important managers of community natural resources. Women's involvement in on-farm activities and home-based commodity production has increased with the growing number of female-headed households (approximately 25% of all Honduran households), male migration, and the incorporation of both male and female children in wage labor.

Women and men participated equally in the national electorate in 1985. However, there are still few women in national and municipal leadership positions. In 1991, 27 of the 256 congress persons and 19 of the country's 290 mayors were women. In addition, the increase in women's membership in grassroots organizations has not been accompanied by proportional increases in their participation as leaders and managers or in participation in local and national policy dialogue.

National fertility rates have decreased over the past two decades, but the average number of children per woman in Honduras is still approximately 5.3: 3.9 in urban areas and 6.7 in rural areas. Obstetric-related illnesses and anemia are the principal causes of mortality and morbidity among women 15-44 years of age. According to PAHO figures, direct obstetric causes account for 92% of maternal deaths. Women's mortality rate due to anemia is five times greater than men -- 49% of all women who go to health centers in the country suffer from anemia, due in large part to poverty and malnutrition.

USAID Development Goals

The USAID/Honduras program has been built around the concept that Honduran development requires integrating its people -- women and men, young and old, at all income levels -- into its economic, social, and political processes so that they may contribute to and benefit from national progress. The Mission has been working at policy, program, and project levels to create the conditions and mechanisms necessary for accelerated economic growth and a broad sharing of the benefits of growth among the poor. These goals are pursued through four Strategic Objectives (SOs):

- 1) Enhanced economic participation and increased incomes for the poor.
- 2) Effective stewardship of key natural resources for sustainable economic growth.
- 3) Improved family health.
- 4) More responsive democratic processes with greater citizen participation.

IMPACT

This section provides some examples of how the integration of gender considerations into Mission operations has translated into positive impacts on women and men, girls and boys, as well as Honduran institutions. It also illustrates how both male and female participation has affected project success, sustainability, and progress toward the Mission's Strategic Objectives.

Enhanced Economic Participation and Increased Incomes for the Poor

Land Rights and Rural Credit

The agriculture component of the Policy Analysis and Implementation Project supported development and passage of the Agricultural Modernization Law, which directly contributes to agricultural production by modifying the legal constraints affecting access to land and agricultural credit. This law includes a provision giving women the right to title to agrarian reform lands as individuals, jointly with their husbands, or through collective title. It also provides the opportunity to request credit using land as collateral once titles are provided. Many rural women stated that agricultural work, unlike other job opportunities in the cities, allows them to keep their children nearby and respond to their needs while tending their crops. Their agricultural work also provides food for both household consumption and sale. Therefore, increased access to fertile, productive land will positively impact the well being of women and their families.

Enactment of the Agricultural Modernization Law has raised expectations that it will improve standards of living for rural families and communities, increase agricultural production and exports, and open these opportunities and rewards to women as well as men.

In order to maximize the impact of this law, the project also supports the dissemination of information on the opportunities offered by the new law, including access to land, credit, and extension services. The Mission was instrumental in bringing the Honduran Peasant Women's Federation (FEHMUC) into the negotiation process which developed the law, and thus facilitated FEHMUC's key role in disseminating information to women. FEHMUC has offered seminars to its members on their rights under the law, and has organized, in coordination with other organizations, groups of women interested in seeking title to agrarian reform lands. As a result,

Box 1
The Agricultural Modernization Law

A key objective of the agricultural component of the Mission's Policy Analysis and Implementation Project was to enhance GOH's capacity to address policy reforms affecting agricultural productivity and investment, including modification of the laws governing access to and use of land under Honduras' agrarian reform program. This objective was accomplished through the Agricultural Modernization Law, which went into effect in April, 1992.

Among its many provisions, the law extends to women as well as men the right to hold title to land under the agrarian reform program. The original agrarian reform law specifically excluded women from holding title to reformed agricultural land except if widowed with dependent children under age 16; even then, a woman had to relinquish title when her eldest son reached age 16. The reported rationale for this discriminatory provision, passed during a time of tension and conflict with El Salvador, was to prevent Salvadoran men from obtaining Honduran land by marrying Honduran women. This and other discriminatory provisions not only excluded women from independent agricultural production under the reform program, but also limited their access to credit for agricultural activities by excluding them from obtaining land as collateral. The new law provides for the following: women as well as men can hold either collective or individual titles, joint titles can be issued in the names of both spouses, women can inherit land, and both men and women can rent land (no one could rent land under the original law). It also gives women the right to agricultural credit.

The Honduran Peasant Women's Federation (FEHMUC) was actively involved in the negotiations establishing these provisions; it and other peasant groups have sponsored groups of women seeking title to reformed land. The interest in securing land is high. According to FEHMUC, at least nine women's groups have obtained collective titles and more are in the process of doing so. The case study team visited a site in Choloma, Tapón de los Oros, where women from six different local groups were awaiting land titles. These women, who have occupied the site since March, 1993 under provisional papers certifying that titles were in process, had still not received their titles at the time of the team's visit in December. These women had suffered substantially from appropriation by others of land promised them, from flooding which destroyed crops, and from disease aggravated by the swampy conditions. Happily, a subsequent news report indicated that titles would be granted before year's end and houses would be built for these women. These problems, nonetheless, illustrate the importance of adequate implementation and both legal and technical support in fulfilling the intentions expressed in policies.

a number of these groups have already secured collective titles.

The National Secretary for Projects of FEHMUC emphasized the positive impact of secure land tenure on the social position of rural women. Since land tenure is the basic source of power for rural people, secure access to land by women gives them confidence and power with respect to men. This contributes to equalizing their rights.

Small Business Income and Employment

BOX 2
Gender-Balanced Textbooks

One of the components of the Primary Education Efficiency Project (PEEP) supports the production of improved textbooks for grades one to six through the initial provision of expert advisors and support for production and printing costs. The Mission's collaboration with the Honduran Congressional Commission on Women was instrumental in significantly improving gender balance in the textbooks.

The Women's Commission became interested in textbooks through a UNICEF-funded study of gender in primary education texts conducted in 1991, under which UNICEF provided expert consultants and training to governmental offices on women in Central America. As a result, the Commission conducted a detailed study of the first set of books (for grades one to three). While the Honduran textbooks were significantly better with regard to gender balance than those in use elsewhere in Central America, the Commission recommended a number of improvements. However, the production process was too far along to make changes in these texts without greatly increasing costs. The set of books for grade four was nearly ready to go to the printer, but the Mission halted production of the texts to permit a full gender review by experts approved by the Commission and incorporation of needed revisions. The sets of texts for grades five and six were also reviewed by experts approved by the Commission and relevant changes were made. As a result, these texts are models of gender balance, showing girls and boys not only with equal frequency, but equally engaged in active leadership and non-stereotypical activities. For example, while illustrations for the earlier set of books showed scenes such as a boy lecturing to a group of girls, the new books showed boys helping with household chores and a woman driving a tractor.

Under the Small Business II Project, the National Foundation for the Development of Honduras (FUNADEH), a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in San Pedro Sula, has successfully incorporated women entrepreneurs into their credit, training, and technical assistance services. FUNADEH operates at the micro-business to small-business levels, rather than at the survival level of microenterprise where many other financial programs targeting women operate. About 40% of the businesses FUNADEH serves are in the formal sector. Overall, the 4,243 loans granted in the period 1985-93 have supported or created 23,165 jobs. Further, FUNADEH has achieved near parity in both the number and size of loans for men and women; figures through July, 1993 indicate that women accounted for 45% of both the number of the loans and the amount lent, up from about 20% when the program was initiated in 1985.

Elements vital to this success include: 1) improved access to project loans for female entrepreneurs by actively encouraging them to be principal loan applicants and by promoting signature by both spouses for loans granted; and 2) equal treatment in project training and technical assistance. Thus, FUNADEH provides equal training for men and women, regardless of whether the loan applicants are a husband and wife, a male, or a female. The

organization strives to build the capacity and self-confidence of all of its clients. As a FUNADEH official described, "We walk with them (the borrowers) up the road. We provide advice, teach new skills, and promote new values like initiative to reach their business dreams."

FUNADEH has encouraged spouses to work together. Rather than trying to eliminate gender differences, an effort has been made to eliminate gender stereotypes which constrain progress and productivity, while encouraging productive complementarity and harmony within family businesses. Participants report that FUNADEH's approach has influenced basic social relationships between men and women involved in the program and has encouraged more equitable work relationships.

The case study team observed two interesting examples of gender differences in a context of gender equality. One example was a T-shirt factory in which the wife and husband manage complementary components of the same business. The wife manages the shop which cuts and sews the T-shirts, where 18 women are employed; the husband manages the silk-screening operation which prints designs on the T-shirts, with approximately 20 male and female employees. As the husband explained, "This way we can each excel in our areas of interest." The other example was a shoe factory owned and operated by a husband and wife, with about 25 employees, mostly men. The husband manages the production of men's shoes, while the wife manages production of women's and children's shoes and also decides on designs. Each receives separate loans to buy materials, but both sign for all loans.

As a result of FUNADEH's effective approach to gender-sensitive support for small businesses, hundreds of women have expanded their businesses, increased production, and created new jobs, thus advancing achievement of SO 1.

Credit for Microentrepreneurs

The Small Business II Project also supports smaller microenterprises through the village bank program implemented by Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA). Ninety-nine percent of the village bank program's borrowers are women. Currently there are 177 village banks, both urban and rural, with over 5,000 beneficiaries. About 60% of the beneficiaries are involved in commerce. The program provides credit and minimal business training through a structured system of communal banks run by groups of approximately 30 women each (there is currently only one men's bank). Larger loans are gradually granted in accordance with savings deposited.

FINCA has found that as a result of these small loans and technical assistance, women doubled their income relatively quickly. Some banks have become self-sustaining and no longer need FINCA funding. Some borrowers have increased the size of their businesses substantially, but most stay at a relatively low level. Extra income usually goes to household expenses rather than capital investment and business expansion.

The challenge is to find ways to overcome constraints and promote business growth. One means to accomplish this, as the FUNADEH Director suggested, may be by finding ways to link such incipient microenterprises with the more dynamic business sector covered by FUNADEH. FINCA staff noted the need to find a way to broadly disseminate technical and marketing assistance, as it has done with credit, either on its own or in collaboration with other NGOs, in order to promote greater growth. They are also exploring the possibility of making larger loans through commercial banks, with a FINCA guarantee, and of promoting the conversion of village banks which graduate from the FINCA program into formalized savings and loan associations. Another possibility is to work with other institutions to promote production training geared to increasing production or entering new areas with greater demand. Currently, FINCA works only with existing microenterprises or with borrowers already engaged in an activity, and does not encourage establishing new businesses or changing business activities.

Education and Skills Development

The Primary Education Efficiency Project (PEEP) has contributed to the achievement of SO 1 in several ways. Overall, the project has contributed to a 21% increase in initial primary school enrollment, a 32% reduction in the drop-out rate, a 26% reduction in the repetition rate, and a 40% increase in primary school graduates since 1986 when the project began. Ministry of Education statistics show that there are no significant differences in test scores between boys and girls in grades one to six. More girls than boys complete primary school, indicating the need for greater attention to and analysis of the constraints facing boys.

The project has made a significant contribution to the quality of education by supporting production of gender-balanced textbooks, in order to reduce the stereotyping which limits opportunities for girls. (See BOX 2). USAID's collaboration with the Honduran Congressional Commission on Women ensured that texts for grades four to six provided gender balance, without gender stereotypes. The project has also supported teacher training on how to use these materials effectively, to become aware of gender prejudices and to overcome them. While it is too early to determine the impact of these efforts, school directors and teachers interviewed expect that they will have a positive effect. They also highlighted the importance of schools in overcoming the gender prejudices and constraints common in Honduran homes, particularly in influencing parents' expectations for their daughters' post-primary education and entry into trades and professions.

The PEEP component supporting school construction by women has also had significant impacts, both in contributing to elimination of gender stereotypes as well as producing school classrooms at reasonable cost and providing income beneficial to women and their families. (See BOX 4, p. 22.) On the community level, schools are symbolically important -- education is the pathway to a better life -- so the women involved in school construction feel that providing a better school has increased their social status. Further, seeing their mothers involved in such activities may influence the expectations and life choices of their daughters. The director of one elementary school highlighted an unexpected benefit of the school building process by explaining that the women builders got to know the teachers well during the construction process

and learned a great deal about education. As a result, the builders are now very supportive of their children's studies and are the most active members of the parent-teachers association -- they are the ones with whom the director talks about school issues and asks to contact other parents.

For most of these women this was their first opportunity to earn income, which they used for family needs. They have also used their construction skills to improve their own homes. These impacts are important, but they could be increased if follow-up support were available to help the women builders to continue to use their skills in ways which benefit their communities and provide income for their families.

Effective Stewardship of Key Natural Resources for Sustainable Economic Growth

The purpose of the Land Use and Productivity Enhancement (LUPE) Project is to improve the productivity and sustainability of hillside agriculture, while at the same time encouraging protection of land and water resources through sustainable use and management practices. (See BOX 3.) The project has enhanced conditions and opportunities for participant families, women as well as men. LUPE helped improve natural resource management techniques on farm and in household gardens ("patios"), increase agricultural production and crop diversification, and encourage home improvements. LUPE also contributed to improving the marketing of horticultural crops, such as lettuce, radishes, and carrots, by a federation of farmer associations which has approximately 400 members. Working predominately with the women federation members who market fruits and vegetables, the project encouraged them to take the produce directly to the national stadium in the capital city to avoid the intermediaries ("coyotes") and to use attractive bags to display their products. The bags were originally donated by the project but now are purchased by the farmers. The results have been higher incomes for these hillside farm families.

BOX 3

The Land Use and Productivity Enhancement (LUPE) Project

LUPE was designed to improve the productivity and sustainability of hillside agricultural practices. The design incorporated women through a component directed at home improvement, family gardens, and small animal husbandry, promoted by female extension agents. Male extensionists worked with male farmers in agriculture and land management. Both male and female contact farmers were expected to disseminate newly learned techniques to other men and women in their communities.

Interviews with LUPE staff and beneficiaries indicate that female participation is contributing to increased production, family well-being, and sustainable management of resources. In an isolated community, for example, Asunción Cardona is a contact farmer, that is, a local community leader working as a project promotor. She has made significant contributions by introducing peas, soy, yucca, tomatoes, and other new crops. In another community, Trinidad Cárcamo not only convinced her neighbors of the benefits of a more efficient wood stove, but earned money by building the stoves for them.

It has become clear that women are as interested as men in protecting farm resources. Women have worked enthusiastically in micro-watershed management, for example, because they recognize the connection between deforestation and the depletion of the local water supply -- the water scarcity forces them to walk further daily to fulfill their water needs. Technological innovations have also allowed greater female participation. For example, LUPE initially promoted the construction of stone walls to control erosion, but with the introduction of living erosion barriers -- prairie grasses -- women joined in the planting and tending of these barriers to erosion and flooding.

Nonetheless, a midterm evaluation revealed that greater impact at less cost would be possible if certain changes were made to transform LUPE from a gender-segregated project to one which integrates gender considerations throughout its activities. Rather than duplicating efforts by having both male and female extensionists visit the same families, an effort is now underway to train both male and female extensionists to work with both men and women. They are also trying to recruit more female agronomists to work in all project activities. The project now seeks to avoid reinforcing stereotypes about the gender division of labor which prevent the optimum use of resources and constrain achievement of objectives. It also promotes role flexibility. This is especially important in a difficult economic context which has forced many women and men to get involved in new productive activities both inside and outside of their communities.

According to the Sub-Director of LUPE, "contact farmers are the strongest part of the project and the key to sustainability." LUPE now works with about 500 contact farmers, one-third of whom are women. Their goal is to train 1,500 contact farmers, maintaining the proportion of one-third women. Sustainability depends on the motivation of contact farmers to continue innovating and to teach their neighbors improved technologies.

More Responsive Democratic Processes with Greater Citizen Participation

Institution Building

The Strengthening Democratic Institutions (SDI) Project has worked closely with the Honduran Congressional Commission on Women. Under the legislative strengthening component, the project has provided gender resource materials and equipment to enable the Commission to create and maintain a database on gender. Thus, the SDI has strengthened the Commission's capacity to review and influence legislation with respect to gender issues. Further, the impact of this assistance goes beyond Honduras. The Commission is a member of a regional network of governmental offices on women, and the head of the Commission is currently the coordinator for the sub-region covering all of Central America and the Caribbean. Thus, the data and equipment are useful in a wider context, as the Commission is synthesizing and disseminating information on gender issues reported by the various offices throughout the sub-region.

The project is also considering supporting attention to gender issues through strengthening NGOs, including women's organizations, to help them become more effective watchdogs and advocates to ensure local level participation and governmental responsiveness.

The project also impacts men and women as trainees, service providers, members of committees, and beneficiaries of improved democratic institutions and processes. Gender--disaggregated data track participation in all aspects of the project. For example, 26% of court system participants in administrative seminars were women and about one-third of leadership trainees (supported by the project through AIFLD) were women. In addition, three-quarters of the beneficiaries of an interactive radio adult civic education program are women.

The project has focused on how the institutional improvements that it promotes affect women. For example, judicial reform seeking to eliminate corruption has particular importance for women -- since women are less likely than men to be able to afford to pay bribes, they are disproportionately disadvantaged when seeking justice before corrupt courts. Similarly, increasing access to legal services is especially beneficial to women who generally have fewer resources than men, less knowledge of the system, and limited political influence to obtain either redress or an effective defense. In addition, strengthening the medical-forensic unit should increase the availability of reliable evidence for cases of rape and violence against women.

Leadership

The Municipal Development Project has been instrumental in training women leaders and tracking participation by gender in town meetings. The data show a significant increase in community members attending town meetings, especially women. Women's participation in town meetings has increased the integration of their perspectives into identifying and solving community problems. For example, their participation enabled them to influence the design of community water projects to meet household needs. Women have also expressed particular concern about municipal accountability and care in handling money and other resources.

Impact on National Organizations and Policy

Most of the positive impacts for women as beneficiaries have been recorded at the project level. In order to make these impacts more sustainable in the long term, efforts are also being directed to promoting the attention to gender issues within Honduran institutions, both governmental and nongovernmental. The Mission is supporting the improvement of Honduran policy, democratic processes, and systems in ways which contribute to gender equity, and it is also encouraging Honduran organizations to take gender into account.

Mission support for groups such as the Honduran Congressional Commission on Women and FEHMUC has had clear impact. The synergy achieved through the Mission's work with the Commission, for example, has benefitted both. The Commission increased its impact through the support it has received through the SDI project, and the Mission-supported education project increased its effectiveness through the Commission's work promoting gender sensitivity in textbooks. Mission encouragement of FEHMUC's participation brought rural women into the policy dialogue and substantively influenced the content of the Agricultural Modernization Law.

OVERVIEW OF THE MISSION'S APPROACH

This case study confirms that attention to gender issues is becoming an integral part of the way USAID/Honduras operates. The Mission is well along in the transition from Women in Development (WID) to a focus on Gender Considerations in Development (GCID).¹ As a result of the positive impacts achieved, Mission staff are developing greater understanding of the need to consider how gender roles affect the participation of both women and men. These results have also clarified how gender-related factors can affect project success, sometimes in unexpected ways. As a result, the focus is shifting from viewing women and men primarily as beneficiaries to seeing them as participants and as agents of development and change. Further, the Mission's attention to gender has become much more systematic and strategically focussed.

¹ GCID is the term adopted by the Mission to replace WID, so as to include men when appropriate.

Gender issues are addressed by the Mission across organizational systems and structures and are a part of all relevant program and project activities. Mission policies are in place to support these efforts. A GCID Specialist, a GCID Assistant, and a GCID Committee provide input throughout the project cycle as well as in program level strategic planning and performance reporting. The Mission is also collaborating with national women's organizations and the Honduran Congressional Commission on Women.

INTEGRATION OF GENDER AT THE PROGRAM LEVEL

This section describes the way in which gender considerations are woven into the overall program strategy for USAID/Honduras, the indicators used to report on program performance, and other management and reporting tools.

Program Strategy Development

In response to Agency-wide directives from USAID/W beginning in 1990, the Mission's strategy was reoriented from a project-centered focus to a focus on program-level Strategic Objectives (SOs), with projects and other activities shaped to support the achievement of one or more objectives. Further, pressures within the Agency have increased to demonstrate program impacts in terms of improved social, economic, and democratic development for women, men, and children in rural and urban areas. This process required a critical examination of both program objectives and project activities over the last several years, and has resulted in changes in how Mission strategy is developed and progress is reported.

Program-level committees define SOs, Program Outputs (POs), and indicators which constitute the Mission program. These committees represent the technical offices which contribute to each SO, with support from the Offices of Development Programs (DP) and Development Finance (DF).

The current strategy consists of four Strategic Objectives.² The SO framework is, however, still a work in progress. Most of the Mission's projects predate the switch to a programmatic strategy and, therefore, had to be fit within the new SO framework. The development of the framework, therefore, has been influenced by these pre-existing projects. All four SOs address gender to some degree. Specifically:

- 1) **Enhanced Economic Participation and Increased Incomes of the Poor** addresses gender in terms of access to factors of production and markets.

Recent budget cuts have resulted in consolidation of Strategic Objectives. This consolidation took place shortly after the case study research, and this report reflects the change.

Gender differences in employment opportunities and access to credit are considered. It also includes attention to educational completion and performance, as well as employment and income levels for vocational training graduates by gender.

- 2) **Effective Stewardship of Key Natural Resources for Sustainable Economic Growth** focuses on both male- and female-headed households with respect to adoption of sound cultivation practices. This SO also addresses both men's and women's attitudes about the environment and forest management training.
- 3) **Improved Family Health** addresses maternal mortality and HIV transmission for both women and men.
- 4) **More Responsive Democratic Processes with Greater Citizen Participation** measures public opinion, and participation in local decision-making and leadership training by gender.

USAID/Honduras is one of three LAC Missions that addressed gender across all of its Strategic Objectives in FY 94-95 Action Plans. The process of integrating gender across Mission programs and in key planning and reporting documents is guided by the GCID Action Workplan, developed in 1992 by the GCID Committee and GCID Specialist. The Action Workplan details how GCID should be addressed in key Mission processes and documents; assigns coordination, support and technical responsibilities; sets completion dates; and is updated periodically to show the status of these activities (see Annex F).

The move from a project to a program strategy focus allows a more careful look at issues which cut across projects and sectors. Mission staff suggested that reexamining projects in terms of supra-project objectives to develop the strategic plan permits greater consideration of cross-cutting issues such as gender. The development of specific indicators to measure progress also has provided an opportunity to track impact on people by gender.

Program Performance and Reporting

Progress toward achievement of the SOs and POs is monitored through measurable indicators and reported in the Mission's annual Action Plan. The Office of Development Programs (DP) oversees strategy development and performance reporting. The GCID Specialist, GCID Assistant, and GCID Committee members work with the program-level committees that refine the strategic framework for the Action Plan.

An analysis of all FY 93-94 and FY 94-95 LAC Action Plans by the LAC Bureau Gender/WID Advisor indicated that Honduras was among the six Missions giving the greatest attention to gender in performance reporting. The last Action Plan disaggregated by gender those indicators that the Mission considered appropriate; nearly 40% of all indicators were gender-

disaggregated. These indicators will be used to measure overall Mission performance. The Action Plan also reported on gender issues and impacts in the narrative, including a box summarizing the program's contribution to improving equity and benefitting poor women and men.

The Mission is now collecting program-level data for the indicators for each SO. In many cases, lack of adequate baseline data at all levels -- including gender-disaggregated data -- was cited as one of the most important constraints to effective performance measurement. As data are gathered, the focus will shift to analyzing the data and using the findings to make programming decisions which are informed by a better understanding of gender issues in specific areas.

Performance reporting and data for program-level indicators depend on data from the Mission's project and non-project activities, which are grouped and monitored in accordance with the strategic framework. Project-level reporting is synthesized in the Semi-Annual Reports (SARs). In the context of the SO framework, the Office of Development Finance (DF) coordinates the development of the SARs by each technical office. GCID Committee members representing technical offices participate in this process to ensure that data are gender-disaggregated where appropriate and that relevant gender issues and impacts are addressed. The GCID Specialist and/or Assistant also provide support. In addition, the GCID Committee as a whole may meet to review the SAR for attention to gender, as they did for the September, 1992 SAR.

Most SAR project summaries now disaggregate project outputs by gender, such as training, loans made, employment promoted, and adoption of improved practices. Even so, there is still some tendency to disaggregate only those items that involve simple counting; e.g., training. As was recommended by the GCID Committee, some summary narratives also report gender issues and impacts in addition to quantifiable outputs. This type of analysis and reporting is most useful for relating gender impact to achievement of objectives. For example, project summaries for the September, 1992 and 1993 SARs reported that the titling and inheritance provisions of the Agricultural Modernization Law and women's involvement in building rural schools had favorable impacts on women.

Such reporting also can indicate the need for further investigation. When, for example, a trade and investment project summary reported that the great majority of export-processing jobs were held by women, USAID/Honduras commissioned a study on the extent and impact of export-processing employment in the Sula Valley, disaggregated by gender. This study shed light on factors affecting female employment. Similarly, the Mission is also considering a study to determine the impact of increased agricultural production and exports on the poor, particularly women.

In addition to the Action Plan and SAR performance analyses, the GCID Committee conducted a thorough gender analysis of the Mission portfolio for the LAC Bureau report to Congress and the USAID Women in Development Report. It was by far the most

complete response by any Mission to a LAC Bureau cable requesting information on gender impacts. This report provided substantial information on how men and women participate and benefit, and how this has contributed to the success of all relevant projects under each Strategic Objective.

Conducting the analysis, in turn, made people aware of the importance of addressing gender considerations in projects, and the extent to which gender differences can affect project outcomes. For example, the Assistant Program Manager of the Strengthening Democratic Institutions (SDI) Project reported that he had not specifically considered gender relevant to the project before the gender-focused analysis. The analysis, however, brought out the direct linkage between the project's key objectives and promotion of equitable treatment of women by selected Honduran democratic institutions. Thus, even though the project focuses on the institutional and policy levels rather than on beneficiaries, the analysis made it clear how decreasing corruption and improving access to legal services benefits women. It also clarified the need for attention to family law, rape, and violence against women, and for support to advocacy and reform groups which promote women's rights.

All of these monitoring and assessment activities have contributed to a clearer understanding by Mission staff of why and when it is important to use and analyze gender-disaggregated data to measure performance in achieving objectives. The GCID Specialist has worked closely with project officers, as well as the program-level committees to help identify and incorporate gender data which is likely to affect project and program outcomes. However, cost is also a factor -- some gender related studies may be considered too costly to undertake. The GCID Specialist helps staff make decisions about necessary studies within the Mission's budget.

INTEGRATION OF GENDER IN THE PROJECT CYCLE

Project-level activities are those which most directly reach people, both women and men. Projects also generate most of the data for indicators of progress toward strategic objectives. Thus, gender issues receive attention throughout the entire project cycle in USAID/Honduras. All stages of the project cycle -- design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and closeout -- offer opportunities for the integration of gender issues. The ideal for most projects is: 1) to incorporate gender at the design stage; 2) to track gender considerations during implementation, using project monitoring and internal and external evaluations; 3) to make necessary project modifications taking gender roles and responsibilities into account in order to increase project impact; and 4) to record impacts in terms of gender in the closeout report, stressing implications for the future.

The GCID Specialist has taken the lead in promoting consideration of gender issues in projects. She has used a variety of strategies that have been effective in encouraging project designers and project officers to address gender issues at every stage of the project cycle.

While she does not always influence various project stages as much as she would like, she usually establishes a base for attention to gender upon which to build at future points in the project cycle. She maintains a dialogue with Mission staff and remains open to compromise. This flexibility often makes project designers and project officers more amenable to considering gender when it is appropriate.

The GCID Specialist acknowledges that gender issues may not always be a priority. She stresses, however, that it is important to consider the gender-specific implications of every project, and to assess whether or not these issues require attention at a later stage. Thus, in each subsequent project status review, it is necessary to examine new developments, including the availability of new information, and reassess the need to address specific gender issues. She explains to the project officers, when appropriate, how taking gender into account can increase the overall success and sustainability of their projects.

The following subsections deal with each of the project cycle stages.

Design

Projects in Honduras are designed by a project design committee. The committee is chaired by an officer from Development Finance (DF). It includes staff from the relevant technical office and the GCID Specialist from the Development Programs (DP) Office. The GCID Specialist, who is also the Evaluation Officer, focuses on integrating gender into project designs and developing a monitoring and evaluation system that includes gender-disaggregated data. Recently agreed to by DP and DF, plans call for DF to work with the GCID Assistant and GCID Committee members to integrate gender into project designs and to develop the M&E plan with the GCID Specialist serving as reviewer. This proposed change will allow the GCID Specialist to focus more time and attention at the program level and increase decentralization of GCID by giving more responsibility to the GCID Assistant and Committee members.

Mission staff has agreed that gender considerations should be incorporated into a project at the very beginning of the design stage. There are two places where gender is typically most fully addressed in the Project Paper -- in the social soundness analysis and the monitoring and evaluation plan. The key objective is to ensure that the gender variable is properly analyzed during this stage.

The GCID Specialist's approach to gender and evaluation in project design begins with a review of the concept paper, then continues with discussions with DF staff to understand the project. With that grounding, the GCID Specialist develops gender questions which are discussed primarily with the project officer and DF. They focus on who will implement the project and who will benefit, with an emphasis on community participation where feasible.

A few of the current projects have taken gender considerations into account from the beginning. For example, the Honduran Environmental Protection Fund project, authorized in July, 1993, includes an umbrella PVO (Fundación Vida) which received a grant from the

Mission and subsequently issues sub-project grants to local PVOs to implement proposals. Responsibility for addressing gender issues has been transferred to the PVOs by requiring that selection criteria include gender considerations. To support this mandate, the project will offer training and technical assistance to the umbrella and local PVOs on how to conduct gender analysis. On the monitoring and evaluation side, the project will disaggregate information on such variables as sub-project participants and beneficiaries, and specific impact indicators such as households practicing one or more environmentally sustainable cultivation practices.

In an amendment for the Forestry Development Project, community involvement will be emphasized through participation of women in vegetable gardens, environmental education, and home improvements. In addition, one of the two forest industries working in the project area employs women in the production process. This represents nontraditional jobs for women, a new concept in this part of Honduras. Furthermore, the forest industry provides the best paying jobs in that area of the country.

The Land Use and Productivity Enhancement (LUPE) project focused on men and women from the outset (see BOX 3, p. 11). Its goal was to reach both the men and women of farm families, using male extensionists to work with men and female extensionists to work with women, on activities which differed by gender. This strategy, however, was determined not to be the most appropriate and had to be revised during implementation, as described in the next section.

It is especially difficult to address gender issues in the design of policy projects. They typically develop an agenda of policy targets to be enacted in the form of new or revised legislation or regulations. Because these projects do not usually consider beneficiaries, gender is rarely considered, and little attention is given to the impact of policy changes and laws on people, either women or men. Nonetheless, such analyses would be especially useful in light of USAID's increased emphasis on achieving and reporting positive people-level impacts.

Gender analysis (together with analyses of other relevant social variables) is particularly important when policy changes are likely to create an imbalance or have differential benefits and burdens on different social groups. The Deputy Mission Director suggested that the focus for analysis should be those policies which seem likely to have a differential gender impact or be affected by gender. One existing resource for doing this type of analysis is the Honduran Congressional Commission on Women. The Commission has a mandate to review legislative proposals for gender impact, and it already has an established working relationship with the Mission.

A major policy accomplishment, supported by the Mission and facilitated by the Commission, was the passage of the Agricultural Modernization Law which accords women important land rights (See BOX 1, p. 6). This component of the law has the potential to greatly enhance women's access to the benefits of the agrarian reform.

However, such policy projects are complex and, as noted in BOX 1, impacts are dependent on interpretation and implementation. The fact that there have been four project amendments for the agricultural component of the Policy Analysis and Implementation Project attests to this complexity; the latest of these provides substantial funding for the implementation phase. It is noteworthy that the design for this project specifies that gender-disaggregated data will be collected on access to benefits under the law.

Implementation

In preparation for implementation, the GCID Specialist encourages the project officer to include a request in the RFP that prospective bidders include someone with gender expertise who will be responsible for gender considerations in the project. The PIO/T stage presents another opportunity to add gender considerations in the Scope of Work (SOW) if it was not in the project design, since the Development Programs Office (DP), where the GCID Specialist is located, must approve the PIO/T before the contractor can begin work. DF also ensures that gender considerations are addressed before clearing the PIO/T, and assists DP in ensuring that the contractor's reports properly discuss gender.

Once implementation is underway, project officers may be reluctant to retrofit gender considerations and it is usually more difficult to do so. However, it is not impossible. Changes are being made in the implementation strategy for the Land Use and Productivity Enhancement (LUPE) Project as a result of recommendations made in the mid-term evaluation (See BOX 3, p. 11). The LUPE Project used male extensionists to work with men on agricultural productivity, and female extensionists to work with women on home improvements, family gardens, small animal husbandry, and cooking. Evaluators, responding to SOW requirements to address gender, observed that the gender-segregated approach outlined in the project design actually constrained fulfillment of project objectives by not using human resources efficiently. They concluded that LUPE needed to move quickly and effectively from a gender-segregated to a gender-integrated approach. The focus of LUPE's services and technologies, the evaluation concluded, should be women and men in the context of the hillside farm family, not the separate treatment of men and women who live in areas served by LUPE. The change in strategy is transforming LUPE from a project with a strong WID component to one which is shaped by gender considerations by project staff at all levels.

Under the gender-integrated approach, male extensionists will be trained to provide assistance to women as well as men; female agronomists will be recruited and trained to provide assistance in agricultural productivity practices to both men and women. This revised approach will improve the efficiency of extension services to beneficiary communities since only one person will need to go to each community. Furthermore, and more significantly, the project has become more efficient and effective by encouraging women to improve their agricultural production and natural resource management techniques as well as their domestic and home garden activities.

The LUPE Project Director believes that a recently instituted system of objective quarterly performance evaluations and a process of open job competition for extension agents also benefits women by avoiding traditional labor patterns which usually excluded women. He expects, for example, that within the next year, at least three women will out-compete men for positions as extension agency chiefs (there are 41 agencies). Increasing the presence of highly trained women in the project, together with the democratization of hiring and promotion practices, will increase the input of female project staff in planning and decision making at all levels.

Project implementation sometimes offers unexpected opportunities to address gender issues. The Primary Education Efficiency Project (PEEP) includes two examples. One resulted from making a link between a video of Jamaican women building houses shown during the Mission-wide gender training and the school construction component of PEEP. This inspired the PEEP engineer to propose training women to build schools (See BOX 4). The other example from the PEEP project is the development of gender-balanced textbooks for grades four to six as a result of the textbook review done by the Honduran Congressional Commission on Women as part of a UNICEF-sponsored study of primary education textbooks in Central America (See BOX 2, p. 8).

Sometimes gender plays a role in overcoming apparent roadblocks during project implementation. For example, under the policy project that contributed to the passage of the Agricultural Modernization Law, larger commercial farmers made up the initial "sounding board" for developing policy options. The result was a proposal opposed by peasant organizations that were not represented in its development. Consequently, peasant organizations were brought into the process, including the Honduran Peasant Women's Federation, FEHMUC. It was these women who suggested compromises which all representatives could agree to, thus moving the process forward.

In other cases, project implementation reveals assumed gender patterns that may not be valid. In the Private Sector Population II project, there were constraints to participation that were not initially recognized. Men did not want to talk with male promoters about vasectomy; they preferred to talk to women, who were viewed as less threatening. Men who contemplated or already had had vasectomies were loath to reveal less "manliness" to other men. Using female instead male promoters in this area has proven to be an effective way of promoting male vasectomies in Honduras.

While in many areas the need is to involve women to a greater extent or in more significant ways in development project activities, the foregoing is a good example of the need to give greater attention to men in the areas of health and population and activities such as PL 480 programs, which have traditionally focused on women.

Although initial efforts to incorporate women as well as men may not be successful, effective follow-up can promote success. For example, the Strengthening Democratic Institutions project sought good proposals from PVOs, including women's groups. However, the

BOX 4
Women Build Community Schools

The innovative design for the school construction component of the Primary Education Efficiency Project (PEEP) proposed using local labor to build schools from adobe and other local materials rather than imported brick and block at much lower cost. At the same time, they planned to create airy, light-filled classrooms which are very different from traditional dark, damp adobe construction. During implementation, an even greater innovation was introduced: use of local female as well as male workers to build the schools.

This innovation emerged during the 1991 gender training, provided by the WID Office's GENESYS project, attended by Mission staff. When they watched and discussed a video on a Jamaican project in which women successfully built houses, the PEEP supervising engineer for school construction asked: "Why can't women build schools?" He then convinced the Ministry of Education that this was possible by showing them the video and sharing ideas from the gender training. Convincing local communities also took considerable effort (interestingly, there appears to have been as much resistance to use of local materials -- seen by the communities as "second rate" -- as to construction by women). But now that the effort has proven successful and female construction teams have completed 56 adobe classrooms in 20 schools, the word has spread and interest is high on the part of communities, women, and other ministries with similar projects. Use of female labor, although it has meant increased costs due to the need to hire supervisors to train the women, has enlarged the labor supply and made up for shortages of male labor in some communities. The most important benefit, however, has been the earning opportunities made available to women. For all eight women on one construction crew interviewed, the school construction project was their first opportunity to earn a salary, and has been very significant in improving conditions for their families. They reported spending their earnings on food, clothing, and school supplies for their children. Some had also used their skills to improve their own homes. In addition to money and skills, the women also gained pride and respect, in their own eyes and those of their communities, thus helping to breaking down negative gender stereotypes.

proposals submitted were generally weak and lacked details. Next year, therefore, the project is considering strengthening PVOs, including women's groups, to improve their ability to plan and implement effective programs, so they will be able to submit stronger proposals.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Closeout

Gender-disaggregated data are collected in virtually all Mission projects. Typically, indicators that are gender-disaggregated involve simple counting (e.g., number of contact farmers, number who receive training, number of new jobs created, amount and number of loans made). While project officers are reasonably comfortable collecting and reporting such

data, they are less comfortable analyzing the data for their implications. It would be useful to address this topic in a future gender training session for Mission staff. Moving beyond data collection to analyze the implications of the gender-disaggregated data may provide concrete suggestions for modifications that can increase project impact.

Collection and review of gender-disaggregated data as part of monitoring identifies problems that might otherwise go undetected. The project design for LUPE included an estimate that 25% of hillside families were headed by women, so the target for reaching women headed households with project services was set at that level. Subsequent gender-disaggregated data showed that only 8% of families reached were headed by women. To explain this discrepancy between actual and planned levels, LUPE conducted a survey which confirmed that only 8% of hillside farmer families in the project area were actually headed by females, indicating that the project was indeed reaching women-headed households in proportion to their prevalence in the target area. The previous baseline estimate had been extrapolated from the smaller predecessor project which had utilized a different gender approach. It might also be useful to collect data on families where the men leave the farm for at least a month a year to work on coffee or melon plantations or in shrimp harvesting (estimated to be about 10-15% of the total), in order to determine whether this additional category of household has different needs which are not taken into account by the current project structure based on male- or female-headed households.

Gender-disaggregated data show that males as well as females can be disadvantaged. For example, in the Primary Education Efficiency Project, it is boys who are disadvantaged in terms of educational completion. While more boys enroll in first grade, about 20% more girls are likely to finish sixth grade. After fourth grade, when boys have generally learned to read and write, they are often taken out of school to work on family farms.

Continued collection of gender-disaggregated data reveals patterns or trends that may require further exploration. For example, the proportion of women employed in export processing decreased from 85% to 70% between 1992 and 1993. Why this happened has implications for future economic growth interventions and should be explored to determine the causes, which could include factors such as depletion of the available female labor force within certain age ranges or lack of access to transportation.

As a result of monitoring, gender-related ideas and opportunities may emerge which are outside the original project scope. If such ideas are captured, not lost, they may lead to project modification, be incorporated into other on-going projects, or be included in a new project design. For example, in the school construction component of the Primary Education Efficiency Project, women who worked together as a crew to build new classrooms in their communities wanted to use their construction skills and continue to earn income. Besides modifications to their own homes, the project's supervising engineer suggested other options which should be considered, including adding kitchens to the schools they built, and building health clinics or homes for wealthier residents in nearby communities. If they decide to develop a construction business, they will need training in business skills.

Data collection on impact measures, including gender, is a serious undertaking. For LUPE, a representative random sample is now being drawn to obtain production information on basic grains and home gardens, as well as income from small-animal husbandry activities (mainly fowl and swine). The latter two activities are associated with tasks traditionally performed by women. LUPE is training local community-based contact farmers (promoters), one-third of whom are women, to collect field data because they have the access to and confidence of individual farmers. This approach to data collection is efficient and should be effective.

All mid-term and final evaluation Scopes of Work (SOWs) include gender requirements. While this was initiated about two years ago, it has since been refined to be more precise. Early efforts were too general. Now the evaluation SOW includes specific gender questions, requests an evaluation team member with a background in gender analysis, and includes a statement that the team leader has overall responsibility for assuring that gender is taken into account. Gender is also covered in the entrance briefing for the evaluation team, emphasizing that it is not just an add-on topic, but an integral part of the evaluation.

Despite these steps, however, there is no guarantee that gender will be adequately considered in the evaluation. Thus, it is also important to review the draft evaluation report for the extent to which gender is addressed. An example was given of a final evaluation draft report in which gender questions were addressed in only the most superficial way. After reviewing the draft, more specific gender-related questions were developed for the contractor, to be answered in the revision.

The closeout report is the last opportunity to reflect gender considerations. Therefore, the closeout report is reviewed from a gender perspective and additional information on gender is requested as appropriate.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE INTEGRATION OF GENDER CONSIDERATIONS

Factors that have contributed to the Mission's success in integrating gender issues into the overall program are identified in this section. These include internal factors generated within the Mission, as well as the broader USAID context, and host country context. Many of these factors are interdependent, and the synergy among these different forces helped the Mission develop its effective approaches to addressing gender considerations. This section examines Mission policies that have been important in promoting consideration of gender. It also identifies the key actors, events, approaches and mechanisms involved in the integration of gender at the program and project levels.

Internal Factors

Mission Management and Policy Support

Mission policy and top management support for attention to gender have been important motivating factors. Mission policy statements have reinforced gender as an important issue. Mission Order 490 (Annex C), dated June 26, 1990, established Mission policy and procedures for women in development activities, assigning this responsibility to all staff members. This policy is based on the USAID WID Policy Paper of 1982. It requires integration of gender concerns into programs, projects, support, and research efforts, information systems and policy dialogue -- specifically listing strategic planning and performance reporting, project design, implementation, and evaluation, SARs, and project assistance completion reports. It also assigns responsibility for disseminating success stories. The mission order and the order establishing a gender committee were drafted by the current GCID Specialist as one of her initial tasks.

The current Mission Director reinforced this commitment to gender issues and communicated it in a clear policy statement to Mission staff. In support of this policy, he approved participation by Mission staff in gender training provided in October, 1991 by the WID Office through a Mission buy-in to the GENESYS Project.

Other important policy decisions were to change the placement of the GCID Specialist, to allow her to devote a substantial portion of her time to GCID, and to appoint a GCID Assistant to share responsibilities.

The GCID Specialist

Selection of the right person to fill this position is of prime importance. The talent and motivation of the current GCID Specialist are key factors contributing to her success. She has actively sought information, broadened her own expertise, capably trained others, and worked very effectively with Mission staff to encourage gender sensitivity and to share knowledge and methodologies. The strategy and style employed by the GCID Specialist has been very effective in promoting sensitization and collaboration of project officers. (See BOX 5.)

The decision to change the placement of the WID Officer (and later to convert the title to GCID Specialist) was vital to the process of increasing attention to gender issues. The WID function was previously located in a technical office, and the designated WID Officer also served as a project officer. The move to the Development Programs Office (DP), which occurred when the current GCID Specialist was appointed, was instrumental in giving the GCID function access to the entire Mission program and a broad view of interrelated gender issues across sectors. The fact that GCID responsibilities were assigned to the Evaluation Specialist is also significant, since the evaluation support function, like GCID, requires working with all of the technical offices, the Development Finance Office (DF), and DP to promote effective monitoring and evaluation throughout the project cycle, as well as at the program level, across the entire portfolio.

The current GCID Specialist is a Foreign Service National (FSN). She took on the GCID responsibility approximately four years ago. For the prior three years, she had handled evaluation exclusively. She serves as the vice-chair and coordinator of the GCID Committee. Her responsibilities are to:

- Coordinate Mission GCID activities at the project and program levels, with the support of the GCID Committee.
- Advise project officers and office directors on how to set up and monitor gender indicators as part of ongoing project and program monitoring activities.
- Coordinate integration of gender concerns into Sector Assessments, Action Plans, Congressional Presentations, SARs, project papers, and Project Activity Completion Reports (PACRs).
- Ensure that GCID information is distributed within the Missions and to counterparts.
- Coordinate GCID training activities for Mission staff and project implementors.

The current GCID Specialist is exceptionally knowledgeable and effective. She gained expertise by using WID/gender documents provided by USAID/Washington. While her position description calls for 20% of her time to be devoted to GCID, in actuality she dedicates much more time to these responsibilities.

The Mission has assigned an FSN Program Assistant to support the GCID Specialist at 20% time. The GCID Specialist trained this GCID Assistant over a two-month period in 1993 through readings and discussions. The GCID Specialist has also given orientation in gender issues to the Deputy Program Officer and the Budget Specialist in DP.

The following efforts by the GCID Specialist are especially important to the integration of gender considerations at the program and project level.

- **Working with program level teams** to encourage gender integration, in coordination with GCID Committee members, ensures greater attention to gender in program strategies.
- **Working with project officers**, in coordination with GCID Committee members from technical offices and the GCID Assistant, to review all stages of the project cycle has 1) identified important gender issues, 2) provides a basis for discussion with project staff, and 3) results in the provision of specific assistance to address agreed upon issues.
- **Maintaining a Mission-wide emphasis on collecting and monitoring gender-disaggregated project data** increased the use of key data to inform program-level indicators and analyze people-level impacts.
- Ensuring the **inclusion of gender in project evaluation Scopes of Work** and review of draft evaluation reports for substantive attention to gender improved evaluations and made them more useful for identifying GCID issues and recommending needed implementation adjustments.

Another important initiative by the GCID Specialist was the development of the GCID program/project manual currently under review by the Mission. When it is finalized, a brief workshop will be scheduled to orient Mission staff on its use.

The GCID Committee

A gender committee was created by Mission Order 245 (see Annex D) dated June 26, 1990. Established as the WID Committee, the designation was changed to GCID after the 1991 gender training. The GCID Committee is chaired by the Deputy Mission Director (DMD). Membership originally consisted of one representative designated by each technical office and DF, as well as the DP GCID Specialist. Membership was later expanded, at the request of these

BOX 5
Hallmarks of an Effective GCID Officer

- 1) **Effective placement.** In USAID/Honduras, placement in the Development Program Office (DP) gives the Gender Considerations in Development (GCID) Specialist access to the entire Mission program and has facilitated cross-sectoral links.
- 2) **Motivation.** This is key to the successful integration of gender consideration in USAID/Honduras, and affects factors 3 and 4.
- 3) **Knowledge and credibility.** The GCID Officer gained a high degree of expertise and credibility with Mission staff and management.
- 4) **Strategic thinking and tactical skills.** The GCID Officer assesses where attention to gender is important to success, is persistent in achieving her objectives, is willing to compromise when necessary or to approach issues by different means, and emphasizes the advantages of considering gender in terms of the interests of those she is dealing with.

offices, to include representatives from the Controller's and Executive Offices.³ The GCID Assistant was also added as a member. HRD (Office of Human Resources) now has two representatives because it is the largest technical office and two people volunteered. The Order creating the Committee specifies that it should include both Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) and U.S. staff, and both women and men, with a wide range of backgrounds and technical expertise. At the time this study was conducted the Committee's eleven members consist of five women (including the chair, the DMD) and six men; four members were U.S. nationals, and six were FSNs (see Annex E for current membership). The GCID Committee meets at least twice a year and convenes at other times as needed (e.g., to review SARs).

The main function of the GCID Committee is to promote and guide Mission staff in integrating gender into USAID-supported activities in Honduras. The Committee aims to achieve this by: 1) reviewing the Mission portfolio to determine the extent to which projects address gender; 2) advising technical offices on areas where a greater focus on gender should be considered; and 3) recommending reviews of projects to assess the impact on men and women, in terms of access to and control of resources and benefits. The responsibilities of the members are well defined:

- Ensure that gender considerations are incorporated in all project documents and SARs produced in his/her office.

Participation of the Executive Office will be determined during the next GCID Committee meeting.

- Ensure that gender-disaggregated indicators and data for his/her office are examined in all Mission reviews, as needed.
- Bring to the Committee any gender issue that arises in his/her office and sector.
- Provide technical gender analysis during project conceptualization and design, in coordination with the Project Development Officer and GCID Specialist.
- Serve as liaison between the Mission and GOH offices, international institutions, PVOs, and other institutions concerned with gender matters in their areas of specialization.

The Committee has helped to ensure that responsibility for gender is decentralized and program performance and reporting documents address gender issues and present gender-disaggregated data. The Committee's key accomplishments include: developing and monitoring the implementation of the Mission GCID Action Plan; conducting a gender analysis of the Mission's portfolio; increasing the number of summary project narratives on gender impacts in SARs; and working with program level committees to incorporate gender into SOs, POs and indicators.

While the GCID Committee has made considerable progress, it does not yet work perfectly. For example, the GCID Committee recommended more thorough and timely involvement of its members in the SAR process. One new GCID Committee member reported that, prior to joining the Committee, he had bypassed the GCID Committee representative in his office and had gone directly to the GCID Specialist or Assistant. [Note: When Project Officers feel they need to consult directly with the GCID Specialist, the Specialist, together with the GCID Committee representative from the appropriate technical office, provides guidance. The goal is that, over time, project officers will be able to address gender issues within their technical offices, resulting in the decentralization of the Mission's gender activities.]

Program Level Committees

Ad hoc program level committees were formed to develop the Strategic Objectives, outcomes, and indicators which made up the initial SO framework at the program level; this was presented in the FY 93-94 Action Plan submitted in 1992. These groups met again a year later to refine the framework for the FY 94-95 Action Plan. It has been proposed that these committees become permanently institutionalized and that a formal member of each committee be responsible for the review of program documents and the integration of gender considerations into the strategic plans. In addition to the GCID Specialist and/or Assistant, both DP and DF also backstop this process. Their coordination has been important in developing coherent project/program linkages. As a result of these efforts within the program level committees,

approximately 40% of the SO and PO indicators in the 1994-95 Action Plan were disaggregated by gender.

Working with Counterparts

Because most efforts to integrate gender have been at the project level, the Mission is exploring various avenues for promoting gender-related policy analysis (e.g. the Agricultural Modernization Law and the process by which FEHMUC was encouraged to participate, as outlined earlier), and promoting the GCID approach in counterpart organizations. A key initiative to advance this effort is the gender training planned for counterpart organizations, to be provided by the WID Office.

The Mission has also worked to strengthen other women's organizations as advocates for gender issues. There is also an effort to promote attention to such issues by men and to "desegregate" gender so that it is not only a women's issue. For example, when attending meetings of women's organizations, the SDI Assistant Program Manager regularly notes that "I am disappointed that I am the only man here." He feels that women's groups also need men as members and advocates. The Director of the Honduran Congressional Commission on Women is sensitive to the importance of involving men and hopes that the seven-member Commission, now all women, will be able to bring on three men to serve along with four women.

When possible, the Mission brings gender issues to the attention of their counterparts. For example, the Small Business II project officer noticed a newspaper advertisement in which a counterpart agency solicited job applications only from males. In response, he requested that the agency change its hiring policy to include women. In one of the Mission's newest projects, a great deal more emphasis is placed on incentives to NGOs to take gender into consideration. As noted earlier, the National Environment Trust Fund and Fundación Vida are requiring from the start that all proposals for funding explicitly address gender considerations.

The proposed gender training should also be effective both in raising consciousness with regard to gender and providing counterpart organizations with practical tools and methods to address GCID. To date, gender is generally not considered by PVOs and other implementing agencies at the institutional level (i.e., the organization's institutional structures and processes which encourage or impede effective attention to gender), but rather, only at the level of the organization's participants and beneficiaries.

Factors Within the USAID Structure

Training and Technical Assistance

The gender training provided through a matched buy-in to the WID Office's GENESYS Project sensitized staff to the importance of addressing gender in order to achieve program objectives. The training, held October 22-29, 1991, was a catalytic event that spurred increased attention to gender considerations by Mission staff. It consisted of a two-day workshop (given three times), attended by a total of 97 Mission staff members. The workshops linked attention to gender to program and project effectiveness, and developed skills in conducting and applying gender analysis and developing strategies for integrating gender at project and program levels.

Following the workshops, the training team provided technical assistance sessions over a one-week period for 15 project, strategy, and program teams (approximately 60 participants), as well as special sessions with members of DP, DF and the Agriculture and Rural Development Office (ARD). This technical assistance built upon work that participants started in the workshops, and focused on specific design and implementation issues.

One immediate result of the training was that Honduran women were encouraged to participate in nontraditional areas such as school construction (See Box 4, p. 22.) An even more important result was the Mission-wide understanding of the basics of GCID and their readiness to move to a new level of gender analysis in future trainings and applications.

The 1991 training was also instrumental in shifting the Mission's focus from WID to gender. The initial suggestion to change the terminology from WID to GCID was made by the former Deputy Mission Director as a result of his participation in the 1991 gender training. This change was approved by the Mission Director, thus initiating a change in policy. While the current Mission Orders were written in terms of WID, there are plans to update them to reflect the Mission's shift (in both nomenclature and policy) to GCID.

The GCID Specialist also noted the importance of the technical support she has received from the LAC Bureau Gender/WID Advisor.

LAC Bureau Guidance

LAC Bureau guidance with clear instructions on addressing gender in Action Plans and SARs was cited as important in ensuring that gender is included. It was noted that inclusion of gender in official guidance from the Bureau is very influential at the Mission level and has greater impact than other types of USAID/W guidance or supplemental directives on gender. The annual LAC Bureau analysis of Mission Action Plans and SAR reporting on gender also provides feedback on performance reporting and the progress made by each LAC Mission.

Information Exchange

The LAC Bureau Gender/WID Advisor and the WID Office have provided valuable materials and information for the GCID Specialist, which she has used for in-house

orientation, training, and for the GCID manual she has compiled. The LAC Gender/WID Advisor sends periodic Gender/WID Briefs to all LAC WID Officers and interested Mission and USAID/W staff to update them on available publications and resources, and on important events related to WID and regional gender issues.

External Factors

From experience to date, it is clear that a participatory approach that creates synergy between Mission GCID efforts and the Honduran political and institutional context is key to development success and sustainability. The collaborative relationships among Mission programs and national and local institutions and interests are promising. They need to be broadened and deepened to increase both effectiveness and sustainability.

Recent successes for women in the national and municipal elections have implications for the Mission's Municipal Development and Infrastructure Project as well as democracy initiatives in general. Several women were candidates at both the national and municipal levels in the recent election. At present, one of three Vice Presidents in the new administration is a women, and other women won additional seats as mayors. While early assessments showed that female politicians tended to remain within the mainstream political agenda, there is recent evidence that many women support women's rights and may feel more comfortable than men in addressing specific women's issues. This too provides a potential opportunity for advancing women's contributions to municipal development, as well as central government policy and action.

Women's political, economic and professional participation is not a new idea in Honduras, nor is the cultural context particularly hostile to women in non-traditional roles and activities, although gender stereotyping is certainly prevalent. There are a number of women's organizations which are active in advocacy and direct activities on behalf of women. Consciousness about the importance of gender issues in development exists in many Honduran NGOs and some public officials. However, it is still somewhat difficult to promote gender concerns in institutions which are not specifically oriented to women's issues, including governmental ministries, contractor firms, and NGOs.

Demand for equal participation and benefit by Honduran women in the development process is important in reinforcing Mission interest in gender issues. The interactions the Mission had with the Congressional Commission on Women and FEHMUC were particularly valuable in this respect. While WID and gender have received recognition both in Honduran society and the Mission over a long period of time, the current degree of emphasis and conjunction of interests provide an opportunity to address gender issues in a much more strategic, systematic and comprehensive manner.

Issues for Future Consideration

The following are issues identified for future consideration by the Mission. They will be important in determining the sustainability of the gender institutionalization which has occurred in the Mission and the positive impacts this has facilitated.

- Periodic training on gender issues for both Mission staff and counterparts in order to maintain and enhance this process to achieve increasingly sophisticated and effective levels of social and gender analysis and application. Particular emphasis should be placed on analyzing gender data and making use of it to improve performance.
- Continued strong GCID support functions are key to sustainability, particularly when the current GCID Specialist, as planned, takes on different responsibilities. Various proposals for maintaining GCID support are now under consideration, and ensuring the effectiveness of this function should be a priority.
- Formalization of the current ad hoc program-level committees and their role in SAR as well as Action Plan reviews may provide an additional structure for institutionalizing gender as a key element of program strategy (as well as other cross-sectoral and cross-project issues), and should be explored as a means of sustaining the momentum achieved.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

The foregoing lays out in some detail what the Mission has done to build gender into its systems and processes, how this has worked, and the impact that attention to gender has had on participants and beneficiaries as well as on institutions. This section summarizes the factors that appear to have been the most important in bringing about these results.

- ✓ **Clear policy statements emphasizing the importance of attention to gender.** This was done through Mission Orders and the Mission Director's policy statement introducing the 1991 gender training, and was reinforced by LAC Bureau policy statements and guidance.
- ✓ **Effective structures and systems for supporting GCID.** These include: 1) appointment of a GCID Specialist, properly placed for maximum impact and with sufficient commitment, time and support to act effectively; 2) appointment of a GCID Committee chaired by the DMD, representative of all key offices and functions, and having clear and specific functions and responsibilities; 3) integration of GCID staff and committee members into the mechanisms for strategy development and performance assessment (Action Plan and SAR) as well as project design, implementation and

evaluation, which has resulted in consideration of gender throughout the Mission's program; 4) coordination between DP and DF in promoting programmatic integration, including attention to gender when needed.

- ✓ **Appropriate persons for GCID functions and support for their work, particularly the GCID Specialist and Committee.** The GCID Specialist was selected for her skill and motivation, allowed time for self-training, encouraged to transmit her very effective methods to others through training, has been given support from the GCID Assistant, and encouraged and recognized for her accomplishments by DP and the Mission at large, including top management. Care has also gone into selection of others involved in GCID, including the GCID Assistant and committee members.

- ✓ **Gender training for Mission staff.** The 1991 GENESYS training was key in raising the consciousness of staff and giving them a common context and tools for gender analysis, and was the catalyst for shifting concern from WID to GCID.

- ✓ **Collaborative relationships with Honduran institutions.** Positive impact for both the Mission's program and Honduran institutions increased when synergy was created through a participatory approach which involves all development partners fully and is open to ideas from all sides.

The Mission Director characterized these points as the essential factors for changing mind sets to bring about openness to considering gender, and for providing the support needed for effective action.