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ABSTRACT Evaluates project to integrate women into the economies of developing African countries. Evaluation covers the period 6/76-9/80. No methodology is specified. Evaluation consists of a PES facesheet attached to a final report (cf. BIBID: 6980388006801) and special contracted evaluations of seven subprojects: Tivaouane (cf. BIBID: 6980388011701); Caca Cloth Industry (cf. BIBID: 6980388021701); Ghana Day Care (cf. BIBID: 6980288021701); Kassack Nord (cf. BIBID: 6980388041701); Silkworm and Vegetal Tannin Study (cf. BIBID: 6980388051701); Casamance Vegetable Growers (cf. BIBID: 6980388071701); and Income Producing Feasibility Study (cf. BIBID: 6980388081701).

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FINAL REPORT

A F R I C A N   W O M E N   I N   D E V E L O P M E N T

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## INTRODUCTION

The Foreign Service Act (Percy Amendment) was amended in 1973 to specify that United States aid shall "give particular attention to programs, projects, and activities which tend to integrate women with the national economy of developing countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort." Since the Percy Amendment, a wide variety of Women in Development (WID) projects have been funded by the Office of Women in Development (AID-PPC/WID), which was established in 1974, and other organizational units within the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID).

This evaluation report focuses on seven of these Women in Development projects funded by USAID. Its purpose is to determine whether discrete WID projects do in fact improve the welfare of women and integrate them into the development process. To determine how successful these projects have been in accomplishing this purpose, two key issues are addressed.

- Should funds continue to be provided for women's programs per se or are such funds better utilized for activities which involve women within the framework of larger, more comprehensive development projects?
- Are Women in Development projects improving the welfare of women and extending their potential as contributors to development?

In addition to these two fundamental questions, the evaluation also addressed the objectives which were outlined in the scope of work. They are:

- Determine if USAID and host country inputs were provided as planned and assess the quality, quantity, and timeliness of these inputs;
- Determine if the projected outputs were realized as planned and whether or not these outputs contributed directly to the achievement of the program goals; and
- Determine whether or not the program goals have been attained and further, whether or not this has resulted in changed behavior of the target group. Has there been a spread effect? Will there be a continuing impact or effect after termination of assistance funding?

#### METHODOLOGY

Jeffalyn Johnson and Associates, Inc. used two teams composed of two staff members each to conduct the evaluation over a four week period - February 17-March 18, 1980. Both teams were totally composed of minorities and women. The procedures used in the conduct of the study included:

- Review of all available documents at AID/Washington, USAID Missions in host countries, host government offices and visits to project sites.
- Interview of USAID personnel involved with the projects in Washington and in the recipient countries.

- Interview of project staff members and recipients of assistance.
- Visits to project sites and meetings held with local community leaders.
- Analyses of quantitative and budgetary data.

This methodology emphasized the identification and compilation of as much primary source data as was available. However, the team did experience some difficulty in obtaining requested documents, thus necessitating heavy reliance on secondary material and data obtained from interviews.

The framework within which this study was conducted included the six criteria identified by AID for selection of activities. Those criteria require that:

- The activities must relate to important development problems or opportunities to the priorities on which AID puts special emphasis, i.e., food production, rural development, nutrition, and health.
- Individual activities should fit within the parameters of the national plan of strategy regarding the advancement of Women in Development where one exists. If not, there should be a definitive expression of interest and participation.
- The focus should be on rural women who are low income farmers, herders, artisans or service workers in rural areas. The activities should relate to development

opportunities at the micro-economic level that will improve the status of the target group.

- To the extent possible, there should be emphasis on the participation of women in identification of their own needs and in the design and implementation of programs to address those needs.
- Priority will be given to innovative or experimental activities.
- When possible, prospects for replication or adaptation elsewhere will be considered in the selection and design of activities.

The report is an evaluation of African Women in Development No. 698-0388 with its seven sub-project evaluations appended.

#### COMMON THREADS

##### Project Design

The analyses of the project papers indicate that a number of the objectives of the designs were not stated in quantifiable terms. Measurable baseline data was not furnished, thus it was difficult to measure project performance and accomplishments.

Information about the methods used in the conduct of the feasibility studies and the circumstances surrounding the development of the project is essential and would have greatly facilitated the conduct of this evaluation. Feasibility

studies were not conducted for all the projects. Of the feasibility studies that were conducted, the findings appear to have been ignored or not fully utilized. The Kassack Nord Project Paper states that a study was conducted to ascertain the needs of the women. However, these findings do not appear to have been utilized. A similar situation exists with regard to the income feasibility studies in Upper Volta. The studies were not utilized, possibly due to a lack of interest and because they had not been translated.

In addition, the data collected in the studies often were not adequate to provide the kinds of information necessary for good project design or evaluation. Such studies lacked the following types of information which the evaluation team feels is needed for the design of a successful project.

- Baseline data essential to the quantification of project progress and the achievement of specific objectives, was often missing, i.e., nutritional status of the population, levels and patterns of migration, approximate level of income, current workload and division of labor, etc.

In the Casamance project, two of the stated purposes included improving the nutritional status of the population and reducing migration of young girls to the cities. However, the absence of base line

data regarding the pre project nutritional status of the population or the rate of migration prior to the initiation of the project made it impossible to evaluate the degree to which these purposes were achieved by the conclusion of the project.

- Greater input from the target population regarding the nature and scheduling of project inputs could contribute to more effective internal management of projects. The Tivaouane project, for example, would have profited from advice from the female beneficiaries regarding the type of trees best suited for cultivation in the area.

When a feasibility study is conducted, the contributions expected from the target population should be established and agreed upon. This might insure greater, active participation by the beneficiaries in the planning and design of the project. Then, they could assist in the scheduling of their contributions so these could be synchronized with the phasing in of AID and government inputs. The Tivaouane serves as a model for this pattern. Agreements were obtained prior to the initiation of the project and, for the most part, it appears as though the villagers are complying with their agreement. On the other hand, lack of clarity regarding the village contributions

in the Casamance Project has led to confusion, resentment and declining commitment and interest on the part of some of the villages.

- The general absence of market studies has resulted in serious shortcomings in the project design process. In the Casamance project, no adequate data was collected regarding the marketability of the vegetables produced. As a result, there was saturation of the markets in the area, thereby reducing the ability of individual women to sell their produce and generate income for themselves.

So far, market studies have not been conducted for the proposed income producing activities in the Tivaouane (sheep raising) and Kassack Nord (fabric dyeing, poultry and rice production) projects. Without such studies, the project activities may suffer from assumptions and miscalculations.

When such studies have been conducted, the time lapse between completion of the feasibility study and initiation of project activities is often lengthy. As a result, in some projects it has been necessary to conduct additional studies to gather relevant data for adequate project design.

- In general, the feasibility of project goals and purposes was not realistically assessed and the magnitude

of project outputs was overly ambitious for the allotted budget and time. Additional time would have improved the achievement of project purposes for all of the projects.

- One major factor which retarded the progress of projects was the late delivery of planned inputs. Oftentimes, the slowness of input was caused by routine delays and obstacles encountered in rural environments. External factors such as climatic conditions and personnel changes also affected delivery. Most of the planning did not allow for such commonly encountered delays. In short, the time frame for achievement of project purposes should be expanded.
- Budgetary constraints were apparent in most of the projects. It was found that budget levels were insufficient to supply the projected inputs, and that no contingency funds were included to cover unexpected increases in costs. These unrealistically low budgets seemed to have been planned in response to a need to have the project fall within certain funding levels. However, lower levels of inputs and less numerically ambitious outputs could, if properly managed, increase the chance for success of the project.
- Projections regarding the magnitude of outputs were also determined to be unrealistic. For example, the

target set by the Casamance Project of a yearly income of \$9,000 per cooperative, was very unrealistic, given the allotted time frame, the level of inputs, the number of women expected to participate, and their overall workload.

- There is a need to set clearly defined and well-stated goals. In the Tivaouane project, the purposes included lightening the heavy burden of work for women and providing alternative work activities. However, in spite of the introduction of the millet mill, the likely result for the women was additional work. Care should be taken to ensure that the programmed activities actually represent work alternatives rather than work additives.
- Purposes and goals must be measurable. Increased income was a stated goal or purpose of every one of the projects but the measurement of increased income was virtually impossible, given both the reluctance of village women to reveal their incomes and the absence of baseline data.
- None of the projects included evaluation plans in the project designs. Although it was assumed that AID personnel would conduct mid-project and end-of-project evaluations, there were no procedures for evaluations included in the project papers. Many inappro-

priate decisions regarding project management and delivery of inputs might have been avoided had there been adequate internal and external monitoring of the project to provide for early detection of such problems. Recognizing the constraints imposed by lack of personnel, limited funds for transportation and time, the evaluation team recommends that a model be designed specifically for the evaluation of small projects.

It is conceivable that the Casamance Project would have identified the need for technical training and that the Kassack Nord Project might have realized that the gap in communication between SAED and AID constituted a serious constraint to the implementation of the project. Oxen might have been substituted for donkeys at an earlier stage in the Casamance project and the Sierra Leone project might have been redesigned to assure appropriate training and to provide technical assistance.

### Project Implementation

#### Inputs

Adequate, appropriate, and timely inputs are essential to effective implementation of projects. The absence of just one of these factors has serious consequences for the project. Every one of the projects, except Tivaouane suffered

from the absence of at least one, if not all, of the above factors. The funding for the Ghana Day Care Project arrived eight months after the project commenced. Fortunately, the project was salvaged by the Ghana YWCA which provided the necessary resources to institute the project. The inadequate funding that plagued Kassack Nord resulted in a cutback of other inputs.

The Casamance Project called into question the appropriateness of the inputs when the pumps and vehicles were inoperable. In all fairness to the project, it has been suggested that the mobylettes were not rendered mechanically inoperable, but were none-the-less unavailable for project use. Although such inputs may have been technically appropriate, the totality of the mechanical breakdown suggests that there should not be such inputs where there are no trained personnel to maintain them or where there is an absence of spare parts.

The host country institution Societe d'Amenagement d'Exploitation (SAED) was unable to provide rice fields in the vicinity of Kassack Nord for the villagers. Consequently, the villagers were forced to travel eleven kilometers to cultivate their fields and found it necessary to live at this site for five months. Therefore, their opportunity for participation was seriously limited. In retrospect, the provision of the rice fields adjacent to Kassack Nord is essential to the fulfillment of the purposes and goals of the project.

The requirement that the commodities such as medicines and vehicles be American produced resulted in greater expense for the communities, and consequently, can hardly be said to be the most appropriate input.

### Outputs

The project outputs reflect the quality and timeliness of the inputs, the realism and skillfulness of the design, as well as the effectiveness of systematic management. There is no consistent pattern of achievement of outputs throughout the projects.

Income earning capability for the women was an objective in each of the projects, but it only had modest achievement. Several of the projects were involved in some type of agricultural production - garden production, vegetable growing, millet production - each of which had marginal results. While gardens and crops achieved varying levels of success, most production did not reach income producing levels.

One of the outputs that had immediate effect on both the men and women was the literacy instruction in both Kassak Nord and Ghana.

The Tivaouane Project did not have measurable outputs as the project has yet received all of its inputs, nor have the project activities gone into full production.

### Management and Technical Assistance

The success of the projects could be increased by incorporating management systems as a component of each. Technical

assistance in the development of good management in the projects could result in more effective implementation and greater benefits to the target population.

Most of the projects indicate a need for technical assistance to develop management skills among the project personnel. This assistance would result in more effective use of inputs, supervision of personnel, appropriate ranking of priorities, improved personal relations with officials, and more realistic planning. For example, technical assistance would have benefited the Casamance Project, particularly in the maintenance of its molyettes and pumps. The officials of SAED in the Kassack Nord Project desperately needed technical assistance to understand and comply with the requirements of AID accounting and reporting procedures.

#### Local Participation

These projects appear to establish a strong correlation between the extent of involvement in the project by its beneficiaries or target populations and the success of the project. As a result of mothers' requests for assistance in caring for their children between the ages of two and five years old, the Ghana Day Care Center was established. Thus, strong community support for the day care centers has developed.

External factors, such as drought, rather than a lack of interest of the people, were responsible for the non-production

of income-generating gardens in the Ghana Day Care Project. A similar pattern was observed in Tivaouane in Senegal where the villagers consistently contributed to the project by assisting in manioc and niebe cultivation. In sharp contrast, the Kassack Nord Project has lagged with only a few activities underway. There was no evidence to support the claim that women had requested the project. Although men provided labor for some of the construction, there was no indication that the women were participating in decisions regarding implementation of the project. Although the Kassack Nord's disappointing performance is not solely attributable to non-participation, it appears that it cannot achieve its purpose without a substantial increase of interest and involvement. The Casamance activity in Senegal suffered from the same disability, but, to a lesser degree.

#### Male Involvement

Interviews with participants indicated that men participated in the projects to a substantial degree, and generally, male attitudes appeared to be positive. However, there is no conclusive evidence that WID projects have caused a significant change in the traditional attitudes of males.

In the Kassack Nord Project, men interviewed stated that they approved of the project because benefits to their women were benefits to them. However, there is some evidence, as stated by women, that the men were reducing the amounts of

money that they normally give to their womenfolk in proportion to the women's increased earnings from the sale of vegetables. Many of the projects had men in management and production positions. In the Ghana Day Care Project, the men are functioning on two committees that plan for and operate the centers for the YWCA. The Gara Cloth Project had men in the bookkeeping and sales positions and many of those who tie the fabric are men. Both the Tivaouane and Kassack Nord Projects had male managers.

#### Host Government Commitment

The local support from official sources was generally deficient. However, in those projects where the host government project personnel was skilled, committed and cooperative, the level of official support seemed to be greater. However, this does not necessarily reflect strong government support, but rather the importance of the selection of the proper staff.

#### EXTERNAL FACTORS - CONSTRAINTS

There are many obstacles to project success which are beyond the control of those who design and implement the projects. In some instances, anticipation, creative design, careful planning, and consistent monitoring can convert an obstacle into an asset. However, some external factors can create constraints that cannot be overcome. All of the projects experienced some failures when they were faced with serious constraints imposed by either the weather, culture, economics, or education.

### Weather

Drought has presented the most fearsome obstacle to the income producing component of vegetable growing in the Casamance, Tiavaouane, and Ghana Projects. The lack of rain caused water tables to drop. Wells went dry and villagers were unable to dig them deeper, thus, seriously impeding their ability to provide adequate water supply for their produce activities.

### Religion and Culture

Religion and culture are inseparable and although not normally spoken of in terms of impediment to progress, nevertheless may constitute strong factors in development. Development implies change. Religion and culture are rooted in tradition which is often in confrontation with change. Traditional patterns of behavior are not easily abandoned, thus, they must be given careful consideration in designing development projects so that they become a part of the process, rather than a barrier to it. Orthodox Moslem attitudes tend to relegate women to secondary status in the society. WID projects are programmed to change that status. The evaluation team did not find clear evidence of cultural or religious resistance to the projects.

### Illiteracy

Illiteracy constitutes a serious handicap to development but is a concomitant of underdevelopment. The Sierra Leone

Gara Cloth Project is illustrative. The Executive Council of that project controls the operation of the cooperative project. However, the illiteracy of its members is directly related to the problems of management within the project. Reporting requirements, accounting procedures and record keeping are all affected. The Council is unable to monitor or supervise the project and its policy making is severely limited.

### Economy of the Nation

A development project must be planned and implemented within the economic and political conditions of the nation. All projects require some government commitment. At least there must be government approval before AID can mount the project. Priorities assigned to the project may depend upon the priorities of the national budget. The rising costs of petroleum, the shortages of trained manpower, government competition for budget and manpower have an immediate impact upon the projects funded by AID. The prompt reaction of the YWCA in Ghana to the needs of the Day Care Projects reflects more the nature of the organization than it does the state of the economy. In fact, the economy of Ghana is probably in greater stress than that of any of the project countries visited. It is conceivable that the ready availability of manpower for paying positions with the projects is indicative of high levels of unemployment among men rather than the acceptance of programs tailored for women. The failure of the SAED Organization

in the Kassack Nord Project could be attributed to the inability of government to react to the needs of the project rather than willful neglect.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Criteria for Selection of WID Projects

The team found that all of the projects conform to AID's priority emphasis on rural women, food production, rural development, nutrition and health. The projects are innovative, and experimental. The team concluded that with some modification of design and improvement in implementation, the projects would be replicable.

Some of the projects as noted in the body of the report were seriously lacking in local support and participation. This lack of participation is detrimental to the projects.

Host country initiative, interest and commitment were spotty. The outstanding exception was the Ghana Day Care Project where the host country is represented by a private voluntary organization, the YWCA.

Project design was so inadequate as to be non-existent in one project and defective in others.

There were no market studies conducted prior to the implementation of the income-generating activities.

The absence of base line data resulted in weakened design, called into question the validity of projections, and seriously restricted the measurability of project results.

The projects' goals and objectives were unrealistically ambitious. The limitations of budget and time were insurmountable barriers to achievement of the objectives.

Project designs did not build in evaluation procedures. Evaluation should be a part of project implementation for most effective management. Many problems could have been anticipated or corrected if evaluation had been utilized as a management tool during implementation. Project implementation was significantly limited by the lateness and inadequacy of inputs, weak management and the lack of technical assistance.

In some projects AID funding was not sufficient to supply the inputs necessary to produce the projected outputs. Inputs were often late, inadequate or inappropriate. Although AID is responsive to requests for additional funding in such circumstances, loss of momentum and time plus inflationary pressures inhibit project success. In some instances, the additional funds are not the only answer to the project's problems. Limited funding for inputs resulted from both underestimation and inflation of costs. (See Appendices 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7).

Many of the projects would have benefited from technical assistance. Technical assistance is needed in these projects to improve marketing, management and mechanical skills.

Projects or inputs to projects that are expensive (American made) or mechanically complex were inappropriate in most projects.

Closer monitoring of inputs and management is needed.

- Local participation in either the design or implementation of projects varied considerably. These projects reflect a close correlation between the extent of local participation and the degree of project success. Projects that lack community support are not viable.

Host government commitment to these projects was apparent in some instances but not always to a desirable degree.

**A KEY ISSUE: "Are Women in Development Projects improving the welfare of women and extending their potential as contributors to development?"**

Although these projects do not provide a conclusive answer to this question, on the other hand, they certainly do not indicate little or no impact. The inadequacies of the projects and even the failures cannot be attributed to the fact that women have been targeted by these projects, unless there can be a finding that Women in Development projects are the victims of benign neglect. The repeated low level funding of these projects, lack of useful feasibility studies, and absence of sound project design does suggest that WID projects do not enjoy high priority in AID's scheme of assistance programming.

To the extent that the projects were successful, the lot of the village woman was improved. Not one of the projects has been totally successful but most could be salvaged with the appropriate funding, technical assistance, management and monitoring. There has been enthusiastic reception of project activities that succeeded. Women have taken advantage of new training programs. They have discovered how to work together in cooperative structure. They attend literacy classes and take courses in hygiene and maternal health care. The enthusiasm of the women is the best answer to the question. These projects improve the welfare of women when they are viable. When they falter or fail they are of little benefit to anyone, but the failure is not the fault of the women.

Should funds continue to be provided for women's programs per se or are such funds better utilized for activities which involve women within the framework of larger, more comprehensive development projects?

A conclusive answer cannot be provided unless and until there is an analysis and evaluation of all of the discrete women in development projects funded by AID. If the results of such an evaluation reveal a dominant pattern of inadequate funding, poor design, absence of evaluation procedures, lack of technical assistance and poor planning, then the conclusion is inescapable. Such projects do not enjoy high priority and do not yield a good return on the money invested by AID.

Continuing them will only serve to defeat the intent of the law. Each project must be assessed individually regarding its viability and the cost/benefits trade offs involved. The project evaluation for each project found in the appendix provides additional information regarding findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Project Design

Based on the conclusions drawn from the findings, as stated earlier in this report, and on the sub-project evaluations found in the appendices, it was found that confusion over what appropriately constitutes a WID project can impact on the design of projects. In an effort both to clarify this question and to improve the design of projects, it is recommended:

- For rural development projects which include activities which are directed at improving several sectors, such as nutrition, health, agricultural production, income generation, and education, located in specific geographical areas, and designed for a specific target population, the resources currently used for separate WID projects should be integrated into the design and implementation of the larger development project.
- To those situations in which specific needs are identified and requested by women to meet their specialized

needs, such as day care or women-specific income-generating efforts, it is recommended that well-designed, carefully implemented, and adequately funded WID projects be developed.

- In designing any project, feasibility studies which address the social, economic, cultural, and political impacts of the proposed projects be conducted prior to project design. Such studies should:
  - include base line data upon which progress on project objectives can be measured;
  - include market studies which provide data on the appropriateness and feasibility of proposed activities;
  - clarify the contributions that can be expected from the target populations and contain information on their expected interest and participation in the proposed project; and
  - be conducted in a timely manner so that there is not a significant time lapse between the preparation of the study and the design and start-up of the project.
- The project design should include:
  - realistic and measurable statements of expected outputs, purposes, and goals for the project;
  - sufficient time allotted for project implementation;

- sufficient funding to assure the provision of required inputs; and
- careful consideration of constraints impacting the project, such as climatic conditions, inflation, and political circumstances.
- plans for interim and final project evaluations.

### Project Implementation

In order to assure that projects are effectively implemented, it is recommended that:

- Inputs intended for the projects are appropriate for the project activities and environment; and ensured by the existence of budget adequate to support such inputs; and are delivered in a timely manner so as not to delay the implementation of project activities.
- Expected outputs should be carefully monitored to determine if delays in outputs will affect the achievement of project goals and modifications should be made in the project design when necessary.
- Improved management and technical assistance for project personnel and participants to increase their abilities to manage and implement project activities.
- Target populations and project beneficiaries should be involved in the planning and operation of all project activities. Such participation can insure that the planned inputs and activities reflect the needs and

capabilities of project target groups and can increase their commitments and contributions to the project.

- Men should be included in the planning and implementation of all projects in order to enlist their support for and assistance in project activities.
- The cooperation and support of host government officials in the design and implementation of projects should be solicited. Whenever possible, personnel who are skilled, committed, and interested in the project should be selected and involved in project activities.
- Project personnel should monitor the external factors-weather, religion and culture, the economic and political situations in the host country, and the literacy rates-which can impact on project implementations. They need to develop "early warning systems" which will enable them to take corrective action, including budgetary or project redesign, at points early enough so as not to jeopardize the entire project.

#### Strengthening the Evaluation Process

The evaluation team is cognizant of the many pressures on officials in AID and the time constraints that constantly plague them. It is aware that despite such pressure, AID officials made a diligent effort to assist the team members prior to departure for project sites. The following recommendations are made in appreciative recognition of those efforts:

- Criteria for evaluation of projects should be restructured into two major categories: quantifiable and soft data. The quantifiable criteria should be measurable and related directly to the base line data upon which the project was originally designed. The soft data, which is based on perceptions, intuitive responses, and hearsay, will form the basis for subjective evaluations. This could assist evaluators in selecting methodologies to be used in gathering data needed to meet the criteria in each of the two categories.
- In preparing for the evaluation, sufficient time should be allowed for the evaluation team:
  - to review all project documents available in AID/Washington and to contact and discuss the project with former and current project personnel who are in the United States;
  - to review all in-country documents, to schedule and conduct interviews with project personnel, appropriate host government officials and organizations, and project participants.
  - to write and analyze the data collected, and to prepare a draft report of the project evaluated.
  - to write and modify the final report to be submitted to AID personnel.

- Because evaluations recommendations often contain valuable information which may be applicable for future evaluations and project designs, mechanisms for the transfer of such recommendations and technology contained within those recommendations should be developed.
- It is further recommended that a central repository/ data base of all evaluations on WID and WID related projects be developed in order to facilitate the utilization of such evaluations and transfer of technology.