



World Education

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Final Report

**Support for the Women's Associations of Yemen
SWAY**

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Section 1	
Introduction	6
1.1 Country Background	6
1.2 Original Contract Design & Aims	7
1.3 Budget and finances	9
1.4 Amended Design	10
Section 2	
Implementation Approach and Rationale	12
2.1 World Education's Approach	12
2.2 Description of SWAY Project Activities	13
2.3 Operating Context and Constraints	16
2.3.1 National politics -- Unification	16
2.3.2 International politics -- the impact of the Gulf War	17
2.3.3 The Cultural Setting	18
2.3.4 The 1994 Civil War	19
Section 3	
Findings and Lessons Learned	20
3.1 General Findings on building YWA capacities	20
3.1.1 Leadership and staffing	20
3.1.2 Personal relationships	20
3.1.3 Economic incentives and volunteerism	20
3.1.4 Community involvement	21
3.1.5 Turnover and continuity	21
3.1.6 Breaking new ground	21
3.1.7 Social welfare mentality	21
3.1.8 Centralization	22
3.2 Training and Technical Assistance	22
3.2.1 Empowerment through participation	23
3.2.2 Appropriateness and Level of Training	24
3.2.3 Field follow-up between workshops	26
3.2.4 Skills Training	27
3.2.5 Scheduling	27
3.2.6 Tailoring training materials for Yemen	28
3.2.7 Residential training	29
3.2.8 Need for a full time Training Officer	29
3.2.9 Turnover and Continuity of Participants	30
3.2.10 The value of study tours	31

3.3	Income Generating Activities	31
3.4	Communications, Coordination, and Government Relations	33
3.5	Commodities	34
3.6	Subgrants	35
3.7	Management and Administration	36
3.8	Training materials and documentation	37
3.9	The role of advisory groups	37
3.10	Reporting	38
3.11	Database	38

Section 4

	Recommendations for Future Activities	40
4.1	Development, Capacity Building, and Empowerment	40
4.2	Integration, Coordination, and Communications	41
4.3	Design	41
4.4	Management	42
4.5	Training	43
4.6	Income Generating (I-G) subgrants and local contributions	43

Executive Summary

This report offers a comprehensive, if necessarily condensed, overview of the experiences, achievements, and challenges of the very first long-term WID activity funded by USAID in Yemen. Implemented by World Education from mid-1991 to mid-1995, the four-year program of Support to Women's Associations in Yemen (SWAY) was an exhilarating, often challenging, process of adjusting programmatic goals and approaches to situational realities in order to ensure that the women of Yemen did indeed benefit from project resources and support. By analytically viewing SWAY activities within their operating context, this document draws some instructive lessons about the programmatic, managerial, cultural, and political factors that affect WID program design and implementation in Yemen.

Yemen is considered one of the world's least developed countries, and it was against this backdrop that the SWAY program unfolded. After introducing the reader to 1990s Yemen, **Section 1** of this report presents the basics of the project, which was designed to work with Yemeni Women's Associations, the only recognized bodies representing rural women, in the two northern governorates of Taiz and Ibb. SWAY's broad goals were to increase women's participation in -- and the benefits they receive from -- development. To achieve these goals, the project was supposed to pursue five main objectives, including extensive participatory institutional strengthening, and undertake 13 tasks of varying magnitude and relevance. Only one of the nine staff positions (that of director) was to be filled by an expatriate, while the other eight -- including the crucial one of trainer -- were to be filled by qualified Yemenis. Given its broad mandate and slim staffing, it appeared that SWAY was expected to be too many things to too many people. Thus a number of programmatic and financial amendments, summarized at the end of this section, were negotiated in order to bring more focus and cohesion to the disparate activities.

Section 2 more fully discusses SWAY's operating environment -- particularly the far-reaching impact of regional and national politics and conflict; changing donor priorities; and the realities of working within a hierarchical and patriarchal social structure.

The 1990 Gulf War had the immediate impact of delaying project start-up by nearly nine months. But its long-term implications for SWAY's success were even more debilitating -- with subsequent drastic reductions in USAID/Yemen's budget and staff, a reordering of priorities, and a worsening economic situation in the country generally. The unification of North and South Yemen earlier that same year was also to result in political infighting and varying perceptions of *what* the project should be doing and *where*. But, at the time of its occurrence, unification did not prompt USAID to review or reassess the aims, merits, or

practicality of its original project design. In the years following, local YWA Centers found themselves enmeshed in the country's newly emerging party politics and electioneering systems -- and SWAY activities or personnel were often used as pawns in the power struggle between provincial bodies and the grass-roots. More extensive political and economic upheaval occurred towards the original three-year end date with the eruption of civil war, which brought all activities to a halt for five months, resulted in the permanent evacuation of the Project Director and her family, and effectively derailed plans for substantial project expansion.

In addition to changing external circumstances, the project was also challenged by the unchanging aspects of local tradition and culture -- notably the constraints on women's full and free participation in activities outside the home and on their ability to make informed choices or independent decisions. Due to the country's cultural and religious legacy, there were few women with the necessary technical education or organizational experience to fill critical staffing needs -- especially in the training and income-generating sectors. While these deficiencies seriously hampered the project, several of them were apparent at the outset and should have been tackled at that time.

Nevertheless, despite the prevailing uncertainties, SWAY was able to offer an unprecedented array of training opportunities and technical support to the YWAs and their members -- through which Yemeni women acquired skills in project planning and financial management; confidence and leadership abilities from involvement in truly "participatory" development; exposure to innovative income-generating approaches and options; and practical experience in applying these skills and setting up income-generating projects.

The formalized training activities included: a three-part Planning Activity Workshop series that was conducted twice; a series of four TOT workshops, one of which was conducted twice; a Volunteer Workshop conducted twice; a Small Business and Marketing Workshop; and a workshop on the Women's Union Constitution and by-laws. There were seven out-of-country training activities that included study tours, workshops, and conferences, and specialized training for local SWAY staff. In addition, YWA Centers received regular technical assistance and support, and seven of them received subgrants to set up enterprise activities.

Section 3 of this report translates specific SWAY achievements and challenges into broader observations on the general status and potential for WID activities in Yemen. Generally, the key variables affecting the Centers' abilities to function and take advantage of SWAY support were the quality of local leadership and staffing; political and personal relationships between Branches and Centers and between Center/Branch staff and SWAY staff; the extent of community (i.e. male) support for Center activities; a social-welfare perception of the YWAs' role; and the tension between participatory, grass-roots capacity-

building and the trend towards centralization in the Women's Union structure.

The lessons from implementing SWAY's training and technical assistance activities were numerous. The benefits of a participatory approach, of residential, group training, and of national and international study tours were clearly evident in the change in women's outlook and openness to innovation. However, the appropriateness of some course content and the quality of field follow-up between workshops needed improvement, and maintaining continuity among participants was problematic due to reasons beyond the project's control. The main stumbling block, however, was the lack of a full-time, in-country Training Officer to provide continuity, oversight, and to troubleshoot when Center participants experienced problems in implementing their field activities.

The experience with administering the subgrants program to support income-generating activities for the Centers was also instructive, even though the project ended up supporting only seven of the 33 proposals received. There was a need for clearer grant application and approval guidelines, and a more transparent process of funding, as well as common understanding of the kinds of activities that could or should be funded. Because of lack of technical expertise on the SWAY staff team, the project did not early on identify potential weaknesses in Centers' action plans -- and had to depend on occasional consultant visits and input to correct problems that arose. Further weakening the support to Centers in this area was the fact that energies were being devoted to design and set up of a credit program which, it was expected, would replace the grants activities very soon. This never came to fruition, though.

Communications and coordination proved inordinately difficult and time consuming not only because of the Project Office's distance from Sanaa, the capital, but also because of lack of clarity between the donor and implementer on who was responsible for liaison with various levels of interested Yemeni ministries. The inefficiency of an already cumbersome procurement process was heightened by SWAY staff's lack of familiarity with USAID procedures and the differing interpretations offered by changing USAID staff. The project's emphasis on capacity-building rather than "things" was difficult for most Yemenis to grasp, and efforts should have been made to make this approach better understood and more palatable. In those instances where "things" were provided for/funded by the projects, concerted effort was needed to ensure that the right things were in the right place at the right time.

In terms of project administration, personnel management was the toughest aspect. World Education staff were not immediately familiar with the underlying political currents and cultural constraints at play -- and thus were not always able to address them in a timely or appropriate fashion. It appears that the Project Director's nationality and somewhat forthright personality caused some friction. Relationship building with key local and central

authorities was also problematic for reasons described in the preceding paragraph. One activity that had mixed success was the effort to establish a database to provide a baseline on the various Centers and, through ongoing, updated information, monitor changes in performance. Although a directory of all Centers was produced in the first year - and updated and reissued before the close of the project -- the database system installed proved too complex and, in the end, unworkable.

The numerous findings and lessons learned during SWAY's implementation are crystallized in **Section 4** into a few concrete recommendations for pursuing future WID activities in Yemen. The first point to keep in mind is the importance of matching beneficiaries and project activities. For instance, while groups and organizations can benefit from institution-building efforts, they may not be the best suited to carrying out economic or income-generating projects. Risk analysis and strategic planning are vitally important in ensuring success. In terms of communications and coordination all stakeholders' needs and expectations should be discussed openly at the outset -- in order to assure congruence with project goals as well as to identify differences.

World Education always has and will continue to advocate de-centralized, grass-roots planning and implementation in development projects -- as that is the best way to ensure responsiveness and to build in sustainability. In the Yemeni context, such decentralization is difficult, but can be achieved through judicious design and building of local networks and relationships. Any women-centered project must take into account the limited freedoms of Yemeni women, their inability to travel outside the local area, and the long distances between YWA Centers. Finally, WID projects should be designed to reinforce various aspects of women's lives -- making deliberate efforts to promote cross-cutting initiatives and to draw linkages among issues such as income, health, education, and agriculture.

That any capacity-building activity needs a full-time, resident Training Officer goes without saying. In addition, the sequencing of training workshops with field practicums and the quality of field support need careful attention. Sequencing and scheduling should also take into account women's abilities to make and keep long-term commitments. As already noted, income-generating activities should target those with a financial stake in the activity -- or else the activity will not be given the attention and effort necessary for success. Any subgrant support should be designed with a required contribution from the Center or community to ensure local commitment and ownership. And the implementing agency should make clear to partners what role it expects to exercise in ongoing oversight and implementation of the income-generating activities.

Effective management and administration will call for establishing very clear written administrative and personnel policies, so that they are understood by all local players. Documentation of decision making processes and outcomes is just as important as

ongoing documentation of project processes and outcomes. Both help stakeholders identify where they have come from and are going to, and to measure appreciable change and progress towards project goals.

In all, World Education views SWAY as moderately successful and believes that it has indeed had a transformative impact on the lives of those women who participated in the participatory training activities. While we would have liked the opportunity to further the sustainability of this positive change -- through additional time and resources -- we believe that a foundation for future WID activities has been laid in Yemen.

Section 1

Introduction

1.1 Country Background

Until its first civil war in 1962 and the overthrow of the ruling Imam, Yemen had been a closed society, with few modern influences reaching the people. While remaining religiously conservative, the nation has made strides in improving some of the basic infra structural systems but is still ranked as one of the world's least developed countries.

The Republic of Yemen, as it is now known, was born in 1990, through the unification of what were formerly North Yemen (a conservative Arab Republic) and South Yemen (an avowedly Marxist People's Democratic Republic). The difficulties inherent in the process of merging two divergent systems of government were painfully underscored by the outburst of civil war in 1994.

Economically, the North was dependent on the remittances sent home by the 1 million Yemenis working in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf states, and on direct financial support from the governments of those countries, while the south was dependent on economic support from the old communist block. Conditions were expected to improve with the discovery and sale of modest amounts of oil in the mid 1980s. However, Yemen's professed neutrality towards Iraq during the 1990 Gulf War resulted in the expulsion of the expatriate workers, causing the loss of an important source of foreign exchange earnings. This was further compounded by the loss of Arab and other international aid and an unexpected 10% spurt in population (from returnees) most of whom were unemployed.

The development that has taken place in Yemen has been of much greater benefit to men than women, as is apparent from various quality of life indicators:

- An average literacy rate of 38% (53% for men; 26% for women).
- Maternal mortality rates of 10/1000, one of the ten highest in the world.
- Infant mortality rates of 112 /1000 live births, again one of the world's highest.
- A total fertility rate of 7.2 children per woman.
- A society where 70% of the population is rural and where health care for women and children is not available.

The constraints to women's involvement, and subsequent lack of benefits they have received from development, include traditional tribal and Islamic law, a dispersed rural settlement pattern in a geographically rugged and remote setting, and limited government resources.

The program of **Support for the Women's Associations of Yemen (SWAY)** resulted from a Request for Proposals issued by the USAID Yemen mission in 1990. This was the first WID/gender specific project designed and undertaken by USAID/Yemen which, until then, had supported women through other projects and short-term WID needs assessment and training.

As the successful bidder, World Education Inc. (WEI), a US PVO based in Boston, Massachusetts, signed a contract to undertake the SWAY activity in April 1991, after it had been held in suspension for nine months due to the Gulf War. This was World Education's first involvement in Yemen and the SWAY contract (279-0080-C-00-0003-00) was an activity under USAID/Yemen's Development Training III Project.

1.2 Original Contract Design & Aims

The SWAY Project was designed to work primarily with rural, independent Yemeni Women's Associations (YWAs) in Taiz and Ibb governorates, located in what was formerly North Yemen. The YWA network -- grouped under a central Women's Union -- was the only established, indigenous NGO body which could legitimately claim to be extending development directly to women in rural areas.

Of those provinces with functioning YWAs, USAID chose Taiz as the area with the most capacity to utilize development resources and assistance focussed on institutional development. (Taiz was also judged to be the most open-minded on women's issues and had the longest history of women's associations.) As NGOs, these Associations were originally each independently registered with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs as prescribed by Yemeni law.

The goals of the SWAY Project were:

- To increase the participation of rural and urban Yemeni women in development activities.
- To increase the benefits -- social and, especially, economic -- that women receive from this development.

The original design included five overlapping objectives and 13 tasks,¹ of which few were directly tied to specific objectives. The **original objectives** were to:

1. Provide organizational training to the leadership of the Yemeni Women's Associations primarily but not exclusively to the Ibb and non-urban Branches of Taiz through technical assistance in planning, management, and implementation of projects.
2. Assist the YWAs to implement and improve the quality of their priority projects in the fields of productivity, income generation, employment, and education (formal and non-formal).
3. Develop a framework for improving the productive activities of YWA Centers and realize increased income for associations and their members.
4. Increase opportunities for women in education, vocational training, and employment.
5. Move the YWAs toward financial sustainability and constructive linkages with key government entities (local councils, governors, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs); other USAID programs; and projects funded by other donors.

SWAY's activities focussed exclusively on women and their needs through the independent YWA Centers in Taiz and Ibb, with the contract specifically excluding activities with the urban Branch in Taiz. This was due to the practice in Yemen of dividing donor activities geographically and the fact that the Dutch development agency was working with the Taiz City YWA Branch.²

Originally, the RFP's staffing design consisted of one expatriate Director, with eight remaining positions (Coordinator, two Program Officers, a Training Officer, a Financial Officer, a Secretary, and two Drivers) to be local-hire Yemenis. All positions, except the drivers, required some English and were to be filled with women to the maximum extent

¹. For a complete list of original tasks, see Annex I.

². The Dutch had recently completed the construction of two large buildings, costing between \$ 1 - 2 million each, for the Taiz YWA and the Hodeidah city YWA. This created some problems, as discussed later.

possible given the nature of the program and the cultural setting. WEI's candidate for Project Director, who was accepted by USAID and met all the qualifications, except prior experience managing USAID contracts, was hired as soon as the contract was signed. She visited the home office in Boston for orientation and workplan development before departing for Yemen.

The design and organization of SWAY provided the opportunity and mandate for a wide variety of activities, including technical assistance, training, grant making, and income generating. It did not, however, prioritize among them nor allocate sufficient staff resources to accomplish all the tasks. Initially, objectives and tasks were mixed and inconsistent in their level of strategic importance. For example some were stated as broadly as "building the income-generating capacity of the association," while others were so specific as to state that the project would provide a vehicle to the Ibb Branch.

In hindsight, it is clear that SWAY tried to be too many things to too many people and, spurred on by USAID's encouragement to expand from the outset, failed to take stock of its limited resources and consciously focus its activities in consonance with key objectives and available staff skills. As the implementing agency, WEI did not formally raise the issue of setting priorities among the unequal and overlapping objectives -- thus identifying those which could contribute most to the establishment of capable, self-sustaining local institutions. These objectives were revised as a result of the mid-term evaluation in May 1993 and incorporated in the contract.³

1.3 Budget and finances

Table 1 illustrates the original contract budget and the contract budget by line item, as amended with the extension of the contract to June 30, 1995.

³. See section 3.3 for a more complete discussion of the issues and a listing of the contract amendments. Annex II contains the complete revised objectives and tasks.

Table 1

SWAY

The original and revised contract budget.

COST & INPUT CATEGORIES	PREVIOUS BUDGET	CHANGE	NEW BUDGET
1. SALARIES	\$ 580,000	\$ 261,456	\$ 841,456
2. FRINGE	100,000	89,771	189,771
3. ALLOWANCES	75,000	66,561	141,561
4. TRAINING	100,000	96,236	196,236
5. TRAVEL	135,000	46,322	181,322
6. PER-DIEM	110,000	55,168	165,168
7. TRANSPORT	15,000	- 4,500	10,500
8. SUPPLIES	160,900	- 59,355	101,545
9. OTHER DIRECT COSTS	90,000	53,943	143,943
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	1,405,900	605,602	1,971,502
10. OVERHEAD (38%)	534,242	230,129	749,171
11. GRANTS YWA'S	390,000	-	390,000
12. COMMODITIES*	40,000	6,000	46,000
13. SUBCONTRACTS	50,000	68,207	118,207
TOTAL INDIRECT COST	974,242	304,336	1,303,378
14. GRANT TOTAL	2,380,142	909,938	3,274,880
15. ADDITION CORRECTION	11	-	-
CORRECTED GRAND TOTAL	\$ 2,380,153	\$ 909,938	\$ 3,274,880

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1.4 Amended Design

Along with an initiative to expand activities geographically (see Sec. 2.3), talk of changing the project's grant-making component into a small/micro-enterprise credit program began in the very early days of SWAY in 1991. A feasibility study and design of a women's credit component were recommended at the same time that the criteria and process for grant selection and review were being established in February 1992. The study and design were complete in July 1992 and were under continual consideration for over two years, during which time:

- i. \$200,000 of the \$390,000 grant fund was earmarked and held back to start up the loan fund;
- ii. All parties, including the Centers and advisory groups, thought a credit program was imminent; and
- iii. The contract was amended to include a credit/administrative officer position and a candidate for the position was recruited and approved.

However, in August 1994, USAID decided not to proceed with a credit activity, thus negating the investment of time and energy that went into the credit design.

A midterm evaluation in May 1993 specifically recommended that SWAY focus more directly on activities which would develop and sustain local institutions to better address the needs of women, rather than directing activities towards individual women. SWAY and the evaluators ranked the objectives and tasks in relation to their importance in helping to create self-sustaining YWA Centers, which were identified as the primary beneficiaries. This helped reduce ambiguity when various stakeholders acted on differing assumptions about what was more important and who were the primary beneficiaries. Rather than duplicating the skills training services provided by other projects and donors, the amended design directed SWAY to emphasize institution-building and to coordinate its activities with other donors and projects.

The approved work plans of May 1993 - April 1994, and April 1994 - August 1994, and Contract Amendment number 4 of August 14, 1994 formalized these modifications.⁴

⁴. Please see Annex 2 for the complete amended objectives and tasks.

The **Contract Amendments** were as follows:

Amendment 1, June 16, 1991

- Modified method of payment to WEI's existing letter of credit

Amendment 2, August 24, 1991

- Increased the incremental funding to the full contract amount of \$2,380,153

Amendment 3, April 12, 1994

- Provided a no-cost contract extension from April 14, 1994 to August 15, 1994.
- Modified the contract budget line items
- Modified the Scope of Work for the extension to emphasize small enterprise activities, grant commodities, and building of Centers' management and planning capacities
- Authorized a replacement Chief of Party, and short-term expertise in business

Amendment 4, August 14, 1994

- Increased contract amount from \$2,380,153 to \$3,274,880
- Modified the line item amounts in the budget
- Modified the contract's Objectives and Tasks
- Added two additional expatriate positions and instructed WEI to hire a replacement Chief of Party
- Extended the completion date from August 15, 1994 to June 30, 1995.

Section 2

Implementation Approach and Rationale

2.1 World Education's Approach

World Education brought to Yemen an approach based on its organizational philosophy and a history of successful development in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and the United States. The overall approach holds that local, indigenous groups and individuals are equal partners throughout the development process and must be actively involved in achieving the goal of sustainable development. World Education's experience working with women's organizations in other countries was valuable in establishing SWAY.

WEI's approach is not one that provides direct services to individuals at the community level but one that builds the service delivery and management capacity of local organizations so that *they* can serve their communities more effectively. This develops local capacity to sustain activities when foreign assistance is withdrawn. Thus, the SWAY design focussed on the Women's Union Branches and Centers rather than on individual YWA members. And, WEI's institutional philosophy fit well into the staffing design of the contract which required all but the Director's position be filled by local hire staff.

However, the overall status of development in Yemen, the limited availability of qualified or experienced female staff, and the cultural restrictions on women presented significant challenges to project implementation. SWAY was required to make substantial modifications to address local conditions. For instance, female empowerment was not a specific project objective but, given the status of women and development in Yemen, it was an essential starting point or precursor for activities. WEI thus had to institute an empowerment process that gently exposed the women to new ideas and helped them think creatively about ways they could strengthen their institutions.

An integral part of a learner-centered approach is allowing time for follow-up activities between workshops for participants to practice what they have learned in the field. SWAY designed training activities to take Center members through a process of needs identification and planning that would help them identify priority activities and institutional development issues -- with the production of three-year action plans. SWAY would then support these activities through Program Officer field trips and follow-up technical assistance; reviewing funding proposals and providing commodity support; and providing specific training workshops, especially training of trainers.

WEI believes that the development of local staff is an important component of sustainable development. Therefore, SWAY staff training included formal short-term training courses in Yemen, third countries, and the US.

In a project such as SWAY, there is a natural tension between institutional objectives (i.e. focus on an organization) and economic objectives (which could focus on the organization or on individuals). In SWAY's case, a successful balance between the two was never quite struck. The YWA Centers were the direct beneficiaries of institutional development activities. However, when the economic development activities focused on the Centers, problems arose with the size and complexity of the operation and the welfare mentality of Center management.

2.2 Description of SWAY Project Activities⁵

Upon the Project Director's arrival in Yemen, the main SWAY office was established in Taiz, which had more YWA Centers than Ibb. All the staff, with the exception of the trainer, were recruited and hired by July 31, 1991. As the YWAs were registered with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (later renamed the Ministry of Insurance, Labor and Social Affairs, MILSA), this became the official agency for World Education's interface with the Government of the Republic of Yemen. Liaison with Sanaa (USAID, ministries, and other donors) was challenging and time-consuming throughout the life of the activity. All project activities were centered in Taiz and Ibb, staff was limited, and yet many important discussions and negotiations needed to take place in the capital.

Introductory conferences were held in Taiz, Ibb, and Sanaa at which government officials, donors, and local dignitaries were introduced to SWAY's design and purposes. Soon after that, World Education's first major program activity -- a series of three interconnected workshops or **Planning Activities (PAs)** -- took off in September 1991. This workshop series aimed to begin a process of team and confidence building, problem and needs identification, planning and project implementation. The approach to such workshops was very hands-on, and sought to involve the participants in the day-to-day design and facilitation, as well as practicing skills with the presenters, so that they learned from experience and received immediate feedback and reinforcement. For example, the participants had to assess their Centers' and members' needs based on what they learned in PA I and bring their findings to PA II ready to apply this information. PA II presented skills in assessing feasibility, setting up, and managing small businesses through which the Centers would generate funds for their activities and meet a felt need

⁵. For a detailed list of achievements and activities undertaken during the life of the project, please see Annex 3.

in the community. The participants in PA II took various businesses as models and went through the process of identifying, establishing, analyzing different costs, and conducting market surveys. In PA III, the last workshop in the series, each Center was to prepare an action plan incorporating the small business activities as well as other priorities for implementation over the next three years. The first 1991-92 series included eight Centers and the Ibb YWA Branch.

A key element of WEI's approach to sustainability was the preparation of SWAY staff to conduct training activities. Thus, in addition to a series of four Training of Trainer (TOT) workshops, a 2 - 3 day TOT for staff accompanied each training activity throughout SWAY's life. **Other activities during the first year included:** establishing three Advisory Groups; recruiting hiring and training staff; opening and furnishing housing and an office; establishing local administrative and financial systems; establishing SWAY relations with donors, development groups, and government ministries; developing the first annual workplan; establishing guidelines and criteria for the grants and income generating activities; collecting information for a data base on the YWAs and contracting for a customized computer software database; and conducting needs assessment in a number of areas directed in the contract including volunteerism, training kits, kindergarten programs, secretarial training, employment services, and training of trainers. Additionally, SWAY began exploring geographic expansion (in Aden and Hadramout) and sectoral expansion (MCH/NFE and credit) at the request of USAID Yemen.

In its second year, SWAY expanded and replicated the **Planning Activity series** with nine additional YWA Centers from Taiz and Ibb. Additional workshops included two on Volunteerism, one on Business Management and Marketing for Year 1 PA participants, and a first aid training workshop. Commodities were granted to the initial eight Centers as a result of their action plans following USAID's procurement requirements. Centers interested in establishing kindergartens participated in an in-country study tour to Sanaa, and UNICEF assistance was obtained for supplying the Ibb kindergarten with educational materials. The Ibb kindergarten was started with SWAY assistance under the income generating sector. Other income-generating support was provided to a bakery project in Qubaita. A study tour focusing on women's income generation activities was arranged to Egypt and Jordan for 10 Center participants.

The first phase of the database activities was concluded with the production, printing, and distribution of an English and Arabic directory of the Taiz and Ibb YWAs, while work continued on the computer software. Collaboration and coordination with the Dutch resulted in five SWAY participants being invited to attend an early childhood training program and a survey on secretarial employment opportunities in Taiz. Research was conducted on women's adult education and WEI began registering as a local NGO at USAID's direction. Expansion included the design of a small scale credit program by two

consultants and the preparation of two proposals to expand SWAY geographically and sectorally.

SWAY's third year (May 1993 - April 1994) began with a formative mid-term evaluation and concluded with the suspension of activities due to the outbreak of civil war. The evaluation's major recommendation was to narrow the focus of SWAY's energies and attention from the overly ambitious initial design. During that year, a number of staff changes at USAID altered several procedures and approaches, which required a reformulation of WEI workplans and other submissions. Formal training workshops focussed on Training of Trainers for Center participants and a Constitution workshop to introduce Centers to the new Women's Union structure, roles, and responsibilities. Staff focused on supporting and problem solving with the Centers as they implemented their action plans. A study tour was conducted for Center participants to Tunisia with the primary focus on women's groups activities. Other training included a two-week TOT workshop for SWAY Program Officers in Egypt and a six-week Management Seminar for the Coordinator in the US, and a proposal writing workshop in Kenya intended for two SWAY staff and the external affairs secretary of the Women's Union, which only one participant was able to attend. Problems with the development of the data base software arose when the staff tried to produce reports.

Discussions on expanding activities continued with USAID and relevant ministries, and SWAY was authorized to rent an apartment in Aden, and another credit consultant was contracted to refine the credit program design. No new income generating activities were funded but a total of 33 proposals had been submitted and were under review. Amendment 3 was signed as a no-cost extension with a new completion date of August 1994.

A fourth and final contract amendment was signed adding funds to the contract and extending the contract until June 1995. During this period WEI and USAID revamped many aspects of SWAY, including staffing, and restarted activities after the civil war interruption. Consultants conducted two assessments -- on institutional development and on income-generation.

During Year 4, the TOT series for participants was concluded with workshops 3 and 4, and a supervised field activity which bridged the two. Four participants were asked to play a more involved role in preparing for these last two TOTs. The commodity procurement process that was interrupted in April 1994 picked up again and concluded in the closing weeks of the contract. The Qubaita bakery oven design was judged to be flawed, resulting in its demolition, and the contracting for a new design and construction which was completed in the last month of the project. A financial consultant provided assistance to all the income-generating activities and on-the-job financial training to all the operational Centers in bookkeeping. Ten participants from the Branches and the Executive Committee

attended the regional UNIFEM-sponsored NGO conference in Amman, Jordan. As staff were given a final training in operating the data base software it became evident that the software was flawed and could not be repaired.

SWAY's close out activities included disposing of all property following USAID procedures, translating, printing and distributing all relevant training manuals and reports, and concluding all administrative, personnel, and financial procedures.

2.3 Operating Context and Constraints

As is already clear, the SWAY contract was implemented during an era of extraordinary economic and political changes in Yemen, as well as in US government and USAID policies and procedures toward the region and the country. Some of these changes were natural corollaries to translating a program from paper to practice in a developing country context. Other shifts, however, were quite unforeseeable and beyond the influence of the program implementers or participants.

The following discussion attempts to fill in the operating context of the SWAY project and highlight those environmental factors that had very specific implications for the project's implementation, outreach, and impact.

2.3.1 National politics -- Unification

The unification of the two Yemens spawned a new era for the nation, a time in which all levels of society had to learn new and different roles, responsibilities, and procedures. Neither USAID nor WEI redesigned SWAY to specifically reflect the changed realities of a unified Yemen (largely because, in 1990, these realities were not quite apparent). It is clear in hindsight that political unification affected SWAY in numerous ways.

The once-autonomous YWA Centers now became part of a hierarchical Women's Union, in which the Executive Committee in Sanaa had power over Branches at the provincial (governorate) level, and the Branches had control over local Centers. The evolution of this relationship created a number of adverse effects.

The national level politics of unity affected the Executive Committee and also filtered down to the Centers. The Executive Committee, formed at the time of unification to produce a Union, consisted of 13 members appointed to represent the old South (Socialist party) and the North (supporters of Islah, the conservative Islamic party,

and the President's People's Congress party). This resulted in constant infighting, and planned elections never took place. By June 1995, all but four members of the Executive Committee had resigned. One positive SWAY response to the confusion created by the formation of the Women's Association Union, was to initiate and help facilitate a Constitution workshop in February 1994. SWAY proposed more direct support with the Executive Committee in its April 1994 extension work plan.

National politics also spilled over to the local level as the three major political parties organized at the grass-roots to gain support and votes. The Centers became players and/or pawns in vying for votes and influence. If a Center became affiliated with the same party as the Branch President for that governorate, the Center would generally receive Branch support. If the Centers were affiliated with another party, support was likely withheld. SWAY had no control or direct role in this but was clearly affected by such alliances, as when a Branch president forbade Center members to attend a SWAY workshop.

With unification, USAID felt some urgency to extend US foreign assistance beyond the northern provinces to the former South. Thus, from the start of the contract, the mission strongly encouraged WEI to expand sectorally and geographically to both Aden and the Hadramout region. Between 1992 to 1994, much staff time and effort were expended on designing credit programs and expansion activities, writing and submitting proposals and budgets, and registering as a local NGO. At the end, however, USAID decided against expansion and what was once a major priority suddenly withered away.

2.3.2 International politics -- the impact of the Gulf War

The Gulf War delayed the signing of the SWAY contract and the beginning of activities by approximately eight months, but had an even longer term impact on the project. USAID's Yemen program was cut from about \$40 million per year to \$3 million as a result of official Yemeni positions taken in the UN Security Council vis-a-vis Iraq and the Gulf crisis. The tone at the SWAY Opening Conference was distinctly antagonistic when MILSA staff made politically loaded speeches regarding US government actions against "the mothers and children of Iraq."

USAID/Yemen's staff was cut from 19 direct-hire Americans to two, and from 200 local staff to less than 50. The SWAY contract which had initially been a small pilot activity of less than 2 % of the mission's budget, suddenly took center stage as one of only two ongoing activities. The USAID Contracts Office was also relocated from Sanaa to Amman, Jordan.

Concerned at the lack of manpower, USAID sought ways to reduce its management duties and work load. One option it explored was to change SWAY from a contract to a cooperative agreement, which would require less direct USAID oversight. In order to do this, USAID instructed SWAY to register with the Yemeni government as an NGO -- a process that required the attention of one full time professional staff person away from programmatic and managerial activities in Taiz and Ibb and shifted it to Sanaa for six months. After successfully registering WEI in six months (an astoundingly short time in Yemen), USAID then decided to continue SWAY as a contract.

Furthermore, the period between the Gulf War and the end of the contract saw four USAID Country Directors and five different USAID Project Officers come and go. SWAY was often required to change direction and reorder priorities in response to the changing personnel and their changing approaches and priorities.

2.3.3 The Cultural Setting

Yemen is one of the most culturally conservative countries in the world, often described as still emerging from the 12th century in terms of the lack of physical infrastructure and prevalent cultural practices. Until very recently the mainly rural population had little contact or exposure to modern thinking, practices, education or health care. Additional cultural restraints placed on women have meant that Yemeni women are at the bottom of the development ladder in experiencing any benefits from the improvements that the country has seen in the last 25 years, since the overthrow of the Imam.

While our organizational philosophy and SWAY's mandate to improve opportunities for Yemeni women meant that World Education would try to fill as many staff positions as possible with local women, the RFP's strict limitation on expatriate positions created difficulties. In Yemen, the pool of literate, professional women is extremely small -- and shrank further every time another criterion was added, such as the freedom to live in Taiz, to travel alone with a male driver after dark, or experience and skill in areas such as training or community development. The original design offered only one expatriate opening, that of Project Director. This placed a constraint on what could be accomplished and an extra burden on the Project Director who had to train the Yemeni staff. It was not until May 1993 that SWAY requested USAID approval for additional long term expatriate positions.

2.3.4 The 1994 Civil War

The Civil War, which officially ended in July 1994, actually interrupted SWAY activities for nearly eight months. Local staffing problems, which could have been resolved internally in April, lingered into November, embroiling lawyers, MOPD, MILSA, and USAID. As a result of uncertainty, three expatriate staff declined to take on assignments to which they had previously agreed. This brought about four revised work plans for the last 10 months and the hurried recruitment of a new Team Leader who began her assignment in December 1994. Longstanding plans to expand the program in the southern governorates and for the credit component were also canceled.

Section 3

Findings and Lessons Learned

3.1 General Findings on building YWA capacities

There are a number of factors which affect how well Centers function and to what extent they can make use of resources such as those which were available from SWAY. The key variables that influenced the organization, potential, and effectiveness of the Centers, and SWAY's ability to interact with them, were:

- 3.1.1 Center leadership and staffing:** In cases where the Center leadership had previous experience outside the immediate locale with other groups, or beyond women's traditional rural roles, there was a much higher level of activity. A strong, dynamic, outgoing leader generally made a significant difference to the Center's effectiveness. The more education and training leaders and staff had, the more likely they were to apply what was learned in the SWAY workshops.
- 3.1.2 Branch relationships:** Many Centers, especially the newer ones, were formed as a result of the networking of the Branch President, and the relationship between Center leaders and the Branch President had a great impact on support provided by the Branch. Relationships between the SWAY Program Officers and Center leaders also affected support to individual Centers. When relations between SWAY and the Branch leadership worked well, SWAY was able to persuade or prod the Branch leader to take an active role in resolving problems at the Centers. On the other hand, when there were disagreements between SWAY and the Branches, the Branch leaders delayed, held ransom, or occasionally sabotaged activities. One example of how this affected SWAY was that the Branch Presidents required SWAY staff to obtain their advance permission to visit Centers.
- 3.1.3 Economic incentives and volunteerism:** Although volunteering has some cultural basis in Yemen, it did not transfer easily to the Centers or to development activities. The question of money constantly came up and was often a first concern. It was the hook that got some Centers started, as in cases when the Branch president would promise that those who taught at the Centers would be paid and/or hired by the Ministry of Education. Food donated from the World Food Program and distributed through the Centers was another hook used by Branch Presidents to entice local women to start a Center. In cases when the promised food did not

materialize, the Center evaporated. While new Centers with active programs did open and continue to function without incentives (e.g. Badaan), it was clear that payment to leaders and teachers made a significant difference in the amount of time and attention devoted to the Center. Other Centers whose leaders performed their duties in the capacity as paid employees of SURDP also functioned noticeably better.

- 3.1.4 Community involvement:** When communities (i.e. the local male power structure), supported the idea of a women's Center and were involved in assisting its establishment, the chances of success increased. On the other hand, problems among the men had a spillover effect, and splits within communities were mirrored in the Centers. The local councils (development groups) by their charter were supposed to earmark 2% of their funds for women's development activities. This occurred occasionally, but never in cases where the local community frowned on women's activities. Culturally, men must be included as partners to ensure sustainability, community support, and credibility.
- 3.1.5 Turnover and continuity:** The number of women at the village level who are trained or educated and are able and willing to risk challenging age-old customs by taking on non-traditional roles is scarce. Such women have other opportunities and may not be as tightly tied to the community. Thus, when they leave (to attend secondary school or university, to get married, or when they become pregnant), there are few to replace them. Several Centers have closed permanently as a result of such attrition, and any institutional strengthening approach which builds successively on previous learning experiences will be at a disadvantage under such circumstances, as SWAY was.
- 3.1.6 Breaking new ground:** SWAY demonstrated that it is possible to introduce and involve women in untried activities, or those previously considered impossible for women's participation. Traveling and sleeping away from home or traveling outside Yemen were new and horizon-expanding experiences for many participants. Some of the women were exposed to ideas and opportunities that have changed their lives forever, as in the case of the Qubaita bakery and the Ibb kindergarten/primary school. But clearly, any such innovation needed to be undertaken with forethought, care, and sensitivity to local traditions.
- 3.1.7 Social welfare mentality:** Although Yemenis are generally astute in money matters, the YWAs and the Union are perceived, and perceive themselves, as organizations which provide free services to poor women. This welfare mentality is not conducive to starting or operating a profit-making activity or business. Wider experience in the small and micro-enterprise sector has also documented that the

chances of failure increase when those running the enterprise do not have a personal financial stake in its success. This puts into question the project design's emphasis on income-generating activities by the Centers. The potential for success would have been greater if income generating activities and resources were to be focussed on individual women members.

3.1.8 Centralization: The creation of a centralized Women's Union structure may not be the best approach to women's development in Yemen based on past experiences with centralizing local development efforts. Yemen had an indigenous tradition of community self-help that turned into the Local Development Associations during the 1960s around the Taiz area. As word of their success grew the concept spread to other areas of the country. Through local fund-raising and identifying local priorities, communities implemented relatively successful activities -- such as construction of roads, schools, clinics, and water projects -- which they had identified as needs. Over time, the government created a central ministry in the capital to represent and advocate for, then coordinate, and finally supervise and control the local councils. The changes in government policy -- along with the change in titles from Local Development Association to Local Councils for Cooperative Development to Local Council -- was synonymous with the loss of community control, effectiveness, and involvement.

Similar problems can be expected in subsuming local Centers into a hierarchical Women's Union structure with power centralized in Sanaa. In the initial years since the Union was created, local activities have been affected through confusion, political infighting, and lack of decisions at the Executive Committee level in Sanaa. Center members are not aware of their duties and responsibilities or those of the Union or Branches.

As already noted, Branch involvement in Centers has also had a significant impact on Center activities. In one case, a Branch President held up the annual 15,000 YR contribution from MILSA to each Center, which flows through the Executive Committee, the Branch, and on to the Center. In the final phases of the project, SWAY was able to advocate successfully and get some of this money released to the Centers, which were then able to pay their rent and avert closing down or having to relocate.

3.2 Training and Technical Assistance

Originally, training had been planned as only one of several major SWAY activities, along with procurement and income-generating support to YWA Centers. But, as events

unfolded, training turned out to be the primary focus of SWAY, with all types of training in great demand, given the previous lack of educational opportunities for women.

Determining which training need to address was done on the basis of which would have the largest return on investment and provide the best chances of long term impact through sustainability and replicability. Given that other donors were addressing skills training, SWAY chose to focus on institutional development and training of trainers (TOT), two areas in which World Education had substantial prior experience. In addition to requiring general organizational and planning skills, it was clear that the YWA trainers and volunteers needed improved training skills to ensure institutional impact and sustainability.

To sum up the training activities over SWAY's life, they included: a three-part Planning Activity Workshop series that was conducted twice; a series of four TOT workshops, one of which was conducted twice; a Volunteer Workshop conducted twice; a Small Business and Marketing Workshop; and a workshop on the Women's Union Constitution and by-laws. There were seven out-of-country training activities that included study tours, workshops, and conferences.

In an attempt to place in perspective the impact of SWAY's training activities, and to better inform future WID/capacity-building activities in Yemen, the following discussion highlights several key issues -- in both their positive and less than positive aspects. By analyzing what worked and what didn't, our hope is that in future, sufficient time and support are allowed for positive interventions to achieve their full potential and that steps are taken to iron out the planning and organizational wrinkles that resulted in delays and confusion.

3.2.1 Empowerment through participation

The use of participatory methodologies and the interspersing of workshop training with related field activities was a conscious design approach to engage the trainees, empower them with confidence in their knowledge and skills, and give them an opportunity to practice newly acquired skills during and after each workshop.

It was quite a breakthrough for SWAY to use such methods in Yemen, where theoretical/lecture approaches to education with authoritarian instructors and passive learners is the overwhelming norm. For example in PA II, SWAY introduced bargaining, getting quotations, and comparative shopping to the women. The trainees and trainers then visited the *sug* to carry-out assignments and practice these skills. Prior to conducting TOT IV, in March 1995, four of the best participants were invited to participate as co-trainers and co-designers for the workshop -- which was conducted twice, once for Ibb and once for Taiz.

Another approach to replicating and sustaining training capacity was to invest in the training of the SWAY Program staff, primarily in TOT skills. From the first PA in September 1991, each workshop included a 2 - 4 day TOT for program staff. The two Program Officers also attended a formal two week TOT workshop conducted by an Egyptian training NGO in Cairo. In September 1994, the Program Officers indicated the only part of training they felt uncomfortable with was having to design a training activity from scratch. This was surprising given their involvement in the activities of the preceding three years. Nevertheless, SWAY then proceeding to make sure they were integrally involved in designing the last two TOTs from the very start. The three program staff all had education backgrounds and after SWAY ended were planning to return to their old jobs. The training and experience they received from SWAY should benefit the educational and development programs to which they are returning.

On the positive side, the participatory training approach set in motion an empowerment process which started by building participants self-confidence. It broke new ground in Yemen for large numbers of village women who had never felt they had a say in community development issues. There were also inherent difficulties in using an approach which diverged so dramatically from traditional approaches -- mirrored in resistance and misunderstanding among participants, who appeared reluctant or unable to take on the responsibility and initiative that are intrinsic to participatory development.

Despite the problems, World Education holds that a participatory development approach has tremendous long-term potential and should be adhered to for the very real benefits it brings to women individually and collectively. The sense of possibility, the impetus for change that are spawned by participatory development were aptly captured in the sentiments expressed by one workshop participant, who said: "I thought before that ... I had nothing to share with others, but I was wrong. I am not useless to my community. Now I am certain that I can make a difference in my life and my sisters' lives."

3.2.2 Appropriateness and Level of Training

The May 1993 evaluation documented that the skills learned in the training workshops were not being put into practice in the Centers. Although discussions, and workshop evaluations suggested that the participants were increasing their skills and experience, the Centers were not demonstrating this by applying these skills to their field work. Participants commented to the evaluators that the last PA workshop had been the best -- not surprisingly, since they were being asked to

compare a very recent event with the previous workshops, which had faded in their memories. This underscored the need for scheduling post-workshop activities (such as delivery of commodities or marketing training) in a timely manner so as to reinforce the learning process.

The evaluators recommended designing and implementing a more deliberate field follow-up process to address the participants' inability to translate their hands-on learning to the Centers' management and programs. The two semi-annual reports immediately following the mid-term evaluation indicate that program staff spent significant amounts of time conducting this follow-up, but it is clear that the Program Officers themselves needed training and guidance in providing field support. To do this well and consistently would have required a full-time resident trainer (which the evaluation also suggested). In addition to the field support problems, the disjunction between Centers' learning and practice was also affected by extraneous issues such as local politics, the turn-over in Center leaders/SWAY participants, lack of time to participate more fully in income generating activities, and lack of funds.

While the mid-term evaluation did not pinpoint specific shortcomings in the training methodology, it did question the appropriateness of the training materials and subjects. However, clear indication of such a problem was not conveyed to SWAY until *after* TOT III -- when a participant asked, "Why learn this? We know how to plant seeds and know about ORS treatment for diarrhea." In this case, the specific subject *content* -- rather than the methodology and approach -- was perceived as the purpose of the workshop. From a training standpoint, the particular subject was only an example which was interchangeable and chosen for its simplicity and familiarity. Unfortunately many of these questions, findings, and recommendations only surfaced in the closing months of SWAY. This made it difficult to implement changes, such as those recommended in February and March 1995.

In a Western learning setting, teachers worry about the range of bright to slower students within a class. In SWAY's case, some sessions included women who completed Sanaa University along with participants who could not read or write. Even with the use of creative training techniques to handle such situations, the effectiveness was severely curtailed.⁶ Future designs should be more conscious of different literacy levels, personal and professional experience, and social status.

⁶. One approach in May 1993 might have been to discard the institutional development approach (the results of which take time to be apparent) and focus on skills training. But, given the potentially greater impact of the focus on institutional development and the relatively short time SWAY had been active (less than 2 years), it was decided to stay the course.

3.2.3 Field follow-up between workshops

Field follow-up was SWAY's response to participants inability to transfer hands-on workshop learning to practical action at the Centers. As early as April 1992, SWAY was aware of and emphasized the importance of field follow-up to reinforce workshop learning. A field support reporting system was instituted with Program Officers to guide and monitor their activities. The field activities planned between the PAs were implemented with some difficulty. Early semi-annual reports refer to problems being solved and increased numbers of Centers keeping minutes of meetings, filing, and preparing regular reports. But the effectiveness of this support was affected by personality differences, travel distances, the complexity of the subject, and the skills and knowledge of the Program Officers.

Field support after the last PA (III) was crucial, as participants were struggling with inexperience in implementing work plans, lack of resources, mixed quality and realism of the plans, and inability to resolve problems. However, SWAY did not realize this immediately and, when it did, had problems providing appropriate, timely help as it lacked sufficient transport or program staff to make frequent site visits. Furthermore, the Centers had limited hours of operations and were quite some distance from Taiz. Another hindrance was insufficient supervision of and lack of clarity about Program Officers' roles.

In retrospect the dearth of more demonstrable success seems due to the lack of a clear understanding of what the goal was, how to go about reaching it, and the Program Officers responsibilities, and abilities. SWAY was in the process of redefining the Program Officers' roles point by point, along with each Center's present and planned capacity in the spring of 1994, when activities were suspended.

SWAY continued to learn and adapt its approach through the final months of the contract. The original TOT design was based on participants taking what they learned in the SWAY workshops and applying it to improve the various training programs the Centers provide to their members. SWAY learned during TOT III and the follow-up that the participants were not automatically able to connect what they were learning and practicing in the workshop and apply it to their Centers training programs. In order for them to make the transfer it was necessary to state and explain every assumption or implication. This is an outgrowth of the type of instruction to which they were accustomed -- rote memorization. The educational system had not taught them to analyze situations or be able to transfer issues and ideas from one setting to another.

In contrast to the difficulties experienced during the earlier PA workshops, the field follow-up designed and conducted between TOT III and IV was a success -- being well planned, closely supervised, equipped with sufficient vehicles to allow the Program Officer to carry out the assignment, and having an identified, immediate goal of preparing for TOT IV.

3.2.4 Skills Training.

There was a clear need for skills training in order to improve the Centers' offerings in areas such as sewing and handicrafts, which were resulting in extremely low-quality goods. The literacy programs, though in demand and well attended, were not producing many positive results. However, SWAY had made a conscious decision to focus its limited resources on training for institutional development (a strategy reinforced and encouraged by the mid-term evaluation, WEI/Boston, and by USAID's work plan approvals). Skills training was being provided through collaboration with other donors, primarily the Dutch -- who had hired sewing, crafts, and a literacy trainer for the National Institute for Administrative Sciences; and included SWAY participants in an early childhood education workshop that they sponsored. Unfortunately, in late 1992 the Dutch temporarily suspended assistance to the Taiz Branch and, by late 1993, canceled all further assistance to it. SWAY collaborated with the US Peace Corps to organize, facilitate, and conduct a first aid course in the Haifan area.

As SWAY learned in the closing months of the contract, more direct links needed to be made between the TOTs and the Centers' skill training and other activities. USAID decided not to include an NFE/MCH/Literacy component in an expanded SWAY activity after initially asking WEI to include one. This was unfortunate, since this directly addressed one of the widely felt needs of the women and the Centers and WEI had spent time designing the program.

3.2.5 Scheduling

In most cases, with the exception of the Civil War, activities were accomplished within a reasonable period (1 - 2 months) of when they had originally been planned. Workshops were scheduled sequentially to follow on previous training and provide time for practical opportunities to gain field experience. But, as is the case in most development work -- and especially in Yemen -- plans were constantly changing.

The worst results of schedule misalignment involved the Business and Marketing

Training, which had been planned to follow the delivery of commodities and the awarding of income-generating grants to the Centers. It was not possible for the trainer/consultant to advise the Centers on business operations because the commodities had not been delivered and, in all but a couple of cases, the approval process for the income generating activities was incomplete. The delay was largely due to the fact that both USAID and SWAY personnel were unfamiliar with USAID procurement policy and regulations. Once the approval process was completed, it took time to implement the procurement according to policy, buy the items, and deliver them. However, SWAY went ahead with the business and marketing training rather than postpone it, and lose several more months in the process.⁷ Subsequent procurement also did not improve because of changes in the procurement approval process initiated by new USAID staff, and a succession of activities outside the stakeholders control such as the civil war.

The lesson to be learned here is to establish all procedures early on, so that all players are familiar with the requirements and responsibilities in advance, and that later interpretations of policies do not delay work.

3.2.6 Tailoring training materials for Yemen

The training materials and approaches used by SWAY had been developed, tested, and successfully used in other countries. Part of the reason WEI was selected as the SWAY contractor was because of its previous experience. There was little benefit in recreating the wheel, and certainly no time for it.

The small business training manual, Faidika!, developed by World Education and a partner Kenyan NGO, was the basic guide for PA II. It was translated into Arabic with assistance from UNESCO, in Amman, Jordan. This was used as the design, tested, and adapted to Yemen, using Yemeni examples, surroundings, and dialogues. Based on this test it was edited and rewritten for Yemen, printed and distributed as a training manual.

SWAY's first approach to training designs was to have the consultant/trainer prepare a design prior to heading to Yemen, review and revise it with local staff in country, and then conduct a TOT with the local staff. This was the most cost-

⁷. The training had already been postponed once because of visa difficulties and USAID approval.

effective and efficient approach given the lack of local trainers. Other workshops, such as the second year PAs, the volunteer workshops, and the constitution workshops were completely local products.

In the final months of SWAY, the Program Officers expressed uncertainty in their ability to design a training workshop by themselves. SWAY immediately addressed this issue by designing the last two training activities, from scratch, in Yemen, with the full participation of the Program Officers.

3.2.7 Residential training

Residential training for women that takes them away from their homes overnight for several days was a ground-breaking approach that most people familiar with Yemen's conservative ways would not have recommended. In this case, SWAY succeeded in breaching the barrier. Future activities should not be shy about using this or other untried approaches -- but should exercise caution and make efforts to obtain the public support of influential people in each new area.

3.2.8 Need for a full time Training Officer

The original design included one expatriate Director, one local coordinator, two local program officers, and one *local* trainer. SWAY was unable to find a qualified local NFE trainer -- female or male. The Director was the *de facto* training officer for the first three years, which took time and energy away from project management. While a Training Officer candidate was identified well into the second year of SWAY, it soon became clear that she was not compatible with the requirements of the job. Thereafter, the position remain unfilled.

Short-term, expatriate trainers took the lead in designing, and conducting a large part of SWAY training. Continuity was provided by the SWAY Director, who was an experienced trainer, as the local Coordinator did not possess the skills or personal traits needed to play an effective leading or supporting training role. Local SWAY staff played a role in facilitating and co training in all the training sessions.

In future, the staffing structure of a project which concentrates heavily on adult training should without question call for an experienced, resident, Arabic-speaking trainer (who could be an expatriate, if necessary).

3.2.9 Turnover and Continuity of Participants

This was a major constraint in both training and the ability of the Centers to sustain or improve their activities. Women found it difficult to keep long term commitments, often because it was out of their control or because it was assumed they were making long term commitments when they were not. This was true more so for the younger, single women who tended to be workshop participants. Working with them was a type of Catch-22: They were the most educated, the most interested in new ideas, the most willing to experiment, and had more free time. On the other hand they were less in control of their lives, and were subject to the decisions of fathers, brothers, or new husbands. Once married these women would come under the control of their husbands, who took them away to their village, or curtailed their activity outside the house, or they became pregnant and could no longer participate. Though the numbers may not be absolutely correct it is safe to say that very few (i.e. less than 10) of the participants who attended the PA workshops remain with their respective Centers.⁸

As the length of the training activity increased, the number of participants completing it declined. This was the case with the PA series which spanned a period of four to six months, and the TOT series which was begun in September 1993. Slated to be completed within a 6-8 month period, the TOT series ended up stretching out over 18 months.⁹ This interruption meant that only eight of the original 16 participants attended the last two TOTs, and continuity suffered. To make up for this, the number of participants for TOT II and IV was also expanded to include more representatives from each Center.

These are not issues over which the project, the project implementer, nor USAID could have exercised much control. The participants -- as well as Center leaders -- were asked to make a commitment to attend the complete series of PAs, and they did. But making a commitment and being able to keep it are two different things for Yemeni women. Future designs and decision makers need to be aware of these realities and start with appropriate expectations. Though World Education was aware adjustments were needed, local staff were not able to make these adjustments in a timely or effective manner.

⁸. For more accurate statistics and details please refer to the January 1995 Institutional Assessment.

⁹. The second workshop, planned for November 1993, was delayed until late December due to disagreements with the Branch President. The third and fourth were planned for April and June 1994. But the outbreak of civil war meant that they were not held until January and March 1995.

3.2.10 The value of study tours

The primary purpose of international study tours was to expose participants to other women's NGOs, volunteer groups and their activities, and income generating activities as was the case with three visits -- to Amman, Jordan, in 1994; Tunisia in 1993; and Jordan/ Egypt in 1992. The other three international trips, which focused on training SWAY staff, included a TOT for the two Program Officers in Cairo; a Women in Management workshop for the Coordinator in the US; and a Proposal Writing workshop for the Program Officers in Kenya.¹⁰ An in-country study tour to research kindergartens in Sanaa was also organized and conducted for Center participants interested in starting kindergartens.

The study tours expanded participants' horizons and showed them what other women had accomplished -- a most useful encounter in the sense that "a picture is worth a thousand words." Actually seeing the range of women's success was an eye opener for women who had no previous experience outside Yemen.

The final evaluation criticized SWAY for taking participants to see unrealistic activities that could not be replicated in Yemen. But we feel this assertion is misguided -- as it was never the stated purpose to expose women only to activities immediately replicable in Yemen -- which would have been scant indeed. In fact, given the limited examples of women's successes to date in Yemen, there were tremendous advantages to be gained by exposing the women to completely new activities. A balanced approach to types, sizes and styles of activities was stressed as appropriate for the orientation and introductory nature of these study tours.

3.3 Income Generating Activities

Economic activities were an important part of SWAY's efforts to create self-supporting YWA institutions, and these activities continued to evolve over the life of the project, as players came and left, priorities shifted, and experience was gained and evaluated. Various problems that arose were addressed with differing degrees of success.

In its initial stages, SWAY focussed on setting up a system to make small grants to Centers to start or improve income-generating activities. A consultant was hired to design the system, in the course of which findings pointed to potential for a women's credit program. A small credit program was subsequently studied, designed, proposed, and accepted by

¹⁰. After this workshop there was an opportunity to visit women's NGO activities in Kenya.

USAID -- after which the grants program lost momentum and focus. Grants continued to be made on a limited basis while the stakeholders waited for a credit program to begin.

Insufficient attention was given to the problems and issues of implementing some seemingly small, but in this context complex, income-generating activities -- largely due to the lack of experienced staff. Problems in the Centers income-generating plans and implementation were addressed on an *ad hoc* basis. It would have been useful to invest more time in considering various approaches to income-generating activities *before* proceeding with the grants and/or credit component. Given the context of SWAY, where the direct beneficiaries of the institutional development activities were the Centers, a clear demarcation should have been made as to whether the Centers or individuals were the most appropriate participants in and beneficiaries of small business activities.

The Centers submitted 33 proposals for income generating activities, of which seven were funded: the Ibb kindergarten, the Aziiaz sewing center, the Qubaita bakery, the Turba cafeteria, a Mokha sewing center and typing center, and the Taiz Branch computer training center. Three projects closed down due to local political disputes. Of the four that remained in operation at the end of the contract, it appeared that only two -- the bakery and kindergarten -- had reasonable chances of generating income for the Centers. The future of the two training activities that charged fees (sewing and word-processing) appeared very tenuous.

In April 1994, the Civil War and resulting staffing problems overtook SWAY and it was not possible to refine the grants process nor bring in the necessary expertise to support existing or new income-generating activities as planned. In its last year, however, SWAY began the process by assessing income-generating activities (February 1995) and providing training in bookkeeping (March 1995).

Based on SWAY's experience in supporting women's income-generating activities in Yemen, we offer the following observations:

- Welfare-oriented groups with no economic stake in an activity should not be expected to successfully run profit-making businesses. Instead, small, simple, individual women's businesses are more appropriate for donor funding than women's group-operated businesses.
- Expectations of all stakeholders concerning issues such as criteria, size, meaning of various aspects of the purpose and process should be discussed and stated in writing.

- The implementing agency and USAID must agree up front on all funding and procurement processes to avoid misunderstandings and delays midstream. The change in stakeholders, priorities, and procedures over the LOP led to a sense of unfilled promises among Center and Branch leaders, which negatively affected SWAY's credibility.
- A transparent decision making process for supporting grants and income generating activities must be established and followed at all levels.
- Business expertise is needed full-time for businesses that are larger than simple one person or one family ventures.
- The project and Center leaders need to ensure widespread community support for the business run by the Center -- *before* it is launched.
- Not even small business ventures are immune to the influence of complex social and political factors.

3.4 Communications, Coordination, and Government Relations

The level of coordination and communications between SWAY stakeholders and other groups varied as the players and their needs changed. Initially, SWAY was charged with the lead role in creating a WID donor coordinating group. At another point, USAID instructed SWAY to negotiate directly with the Ministry of Planning and Development to establish a country agreement with the Yemeni government as a registered, foreign NGO. This was successfully accomplished in a relatively brief period.

SWAY also created three local advisory groups in Sanaa, Taiz, and Ibb to help guide its activities, which were tapped by USAID for input on various WID issues. Other successful SWAY coordination included: an increase in the number of WID activities and an increase in awareness of the WID agenda, as a result of frequent meetings; collaboration on a first-aid training program with the Peace Corps; coordination with UNICEF in obtaining educational materials on health and early childhood learning for the Ibb kindergarten; and coordination with the Dutch development program for skills training and technical assistance in specific areas such as literacy, handicrafts, and early childhood education.

Among the key observations and lessons for the future are that:

- Any project being implemented in outlying areas requires a presence and representation in the capital, Sanaa, to ensure clear lines of communication between the program, the donor, and interested ministries. The lack of a WEI/SWAY liaison office in Sanaa created problems by signaling to local project staff a low priority on central level relations. USAID declared its own Project Officer responsible for liaison with government ministries in Sanaa, and SWAY was to deal only with MILSA's provincial offices. Initially, the USAID Project Officer gave little information to MILSA's main office and SWAY concluded that there should be little or no MILSA involvement in the project. This was a mistake. A foreign funded activity, operated by a US PVO, without full-time presence in Sanaa, needs clear and open lines of communication with ministries.
- The donor (USAID) and the doer (WEI) should clearly define roles and responsibilities as regards communication and coordination with outside groups and appropriate ministries. Each time SWAY or USAID personnel changed, these roles and responsibilities should have been reviewed and redefined, as necessary.
- There needs to be a concerted effort to differentiate between the donor and the implementing agency in the eyes of the local community: In Taiz and Ibb individuals and local groups had difficulty in separating WEI and USAID. In some cases the confusion was real. In others, it may have been a confusion of convenience used as part of a bargaining strategy to get as much as possible from the SWAY.
- More consistent and constructive visits from USAID personnel to the project's field offices and to the Centers would benefit all stakeholders.

3.5 Commodities

Under SWAY, the supply of commodities to YWA Centers was closely linked to sub-grants and income-generating activities (as discussed in Sections 3.3 and 3.6). It was planned that the physical needs of the Centers would be identified through the initial PA workshop series, incorporated into Centers' action plans, and then provided mostly by SWAY.

The problems that arose were not so much with the concept but with its interpretation and implementation in the Yemeni context. Most Yemenis define development as "things" -- such as concrete, pipes, roads, or buildings -- and SWAY's focus on training and institutional development did not exactly mesh with this view. This created some conflicts and immediately built tension into SWAY's local relations .

The lessons to be learned from this include the following:

- Recognizing and reconciling the difference between the Yemeni view of development and donor/implementers' capacity-building emphasis: SWAY leadership generally gave higher priority to the capacity-building components of the project than to the commodity supply aspect. This was in direct contrast to the Yemeni view and their previous experience with the Dutch, who built and equipped a \$2 million building for the Taiz YWA Branch. There was a clear need for the project to acknowledge the importance of basic commodities for the local groups which had hitherto lacked any such support. Recognition of this and a sympathetic response would have increased SWAY's credibility.
- Familiarizing/training project staff with USAID procurement policies and requirements, and factoring in sufficient lag times for the requisite approvals.
- The need for the USAID mission to establish guidelines for consistent interpretation of policies and procedures, especially in periods of personnel change.
- Budgeting sufficient staff resources into the project plan from the outset, since the procurement process is both time and labor intensive.
- Identifying links with and potential impact of other project activities on the process -- in this case the planned but never implemented credit component and the problems with the income generating activities.

3.6 Subgrants

A subgrant program for supporting Center activities was part of SWAY's original design. While a consultant designed the grants process and system in February 1992, interest in a credit program developed, which complicated an already sensitive issue. Nevertheless, subgrant applications criteria were established and selection committee members were identified. Among the problematic or unresolved issues were:

- Agreeing on the definition and expected outcome or results of a feasibility study.
- The lack of clear parameters for activities such as size, type, complexity, responsibilities, and local inputs.
- Lack of documentation of the grants review process, which muddied the issue of transparency and did not provide reliable records when applicants did not attend the review committee meetings and later challenged decisions when staff had changed.
- Lack of clarity about parties' roles *after* the grants were made: SWAY management defined its role as minor once the grant was made, expecting the women to manage their own activities, rather than creating dependency on SWAY. Given the complexity of some of these activities and the women's lack of experience, this approach was not realistic.
- No clear linkages between the subgrants input and the expected income-generating output -- which caused confusion and overlap. It appears that the two became synonymous to the point where the only activities that were considered for subgrants were income-generating projects.

3.7 Management and Administration

WEI's management philosophy and approach is to delegate as much decision-making responsibility as possible to field offices, as the latter are more attuned to on-ground realities and positioned to respond rapidly to changing needs. However, in the case of Yemen, WEI learned the hard way that there can be disadvantages to this approach when field staff lack the skills and experience to effectively manage the activity.

SWAY's design, and WEI's organizational philosophy of having minimal expatriate staff tied WEI's hand in many ways -- given the extreme difficulties of finding enough local qualified Yemeni women. In 1993, a local "expediter" position was added to take on the full-time task of procurement and routine bureaucratic and administrative procedures. The May 1993 mid-term evaluation recommended the immediate addition of an expatriate Program and Training Manager -- for which USAID approval was not received until April 1994. The effect of scant staff resources was compounded as activities expanded and diversified. WEI's response was to make more use of short-term consultants. Too much was expected of the original Project Director whose management skills would have been stretched even if time had allowed. The civil war and the director's subsequent sudden departure left many thorny issues unsettled.

Personnel management became increasingly important as personality differences, the lack of detailed job descriptions and procedures, and supervision took up more and more staff energy. The tightening up of procedures and policies and the expiration of some staff contracts began to have some positive effects in 1994.

WEI backstopping was initially problematic as the Boston based Program Officer had no Yemen experience, limited development experience, and could not travel to Yemen due to US visa restrictions. WEI began to resolve many issues when a Senior Program Officer in Boston and a new Project Director with management skills were hired in 1994. Both had extensive Yemen experience, which helped unravel the knotty issues that had accumulated. Unfortunately, there was not enough time left in the contract to make all the necessary changes, nor to reap the benefit of those that were made.

A financial system was set-up in the fall of 1991 by a Boston-based staff person. In January 1994 a home office staff member reviewed financial policies and practices and made written recommendations to improve systems implementation. In April 1994, USAID contracted a local accounting firm to conduct an audit when a disgruntled employee suggested that the proper procedures were not always followed. The audit raised a number of questions to which WEI responded in writing. As of this report, USAID had not responded to the explanations and verifications provided by WEI in December 1994.

3.8 Training materials and documentation

Throughout SWAY, training materials were developed and reports written for the numerous workshops and activities. By the end of the contract, all documents had been produced in Arabic and English for public dissemination. Over 35 manuals and reports were distributed to all stakeholders including the Women's Union Executive Committee, YWA Branches and Centers; MOPD and MILSA; and USAID Yemen, the USAID Regional Contracts Officer, and USAID Acquisitions Office in Washington.¹¹

3.9 The role of advisory groups

The formation and use of local Advisory Groups requires careful thought and management -- or else they create rather than solve problems, thus adding to administrative burdens. In SWAY's case three Advisory Groups were set up, one each in Sanaa, Ibb, and Taiz -- which was probably two too many.

¹¹. Please see Annex 4 for a complete list of these materials.

Staff shortages and long travel distances made it difficult for SWAY management to provide sufficient oversight and input to all three groups, so some members ended up feeling ignored or used. For instance, members of the Sanaa Advisory Group mentioned to evaluators that they felt they had been used by USAID on a few occasions outside their role as SWAY advisors and were not comfortable in this position.

It is clear that expectations needed to be discussed up-front, at which time clarity of purpose, roles, and responsibilities should have been established in writing. Not surprisingly, one of the thorny issues was whether members would be paid an honorarium or would serve as volunteers.

3.10 Reporting

All required reports were submitted to USAID by WEI. The preparation of the semi-annual narrative reports was inefficient given the limited written English language skills of the SWAY team. These reports were drafted in Yemen and sent to Boston for major editing. Although this helped the Boston staff stay abreast of SWAY activities, there were less time-consuming ways of achieving this end. In addition to the reports required under the contract, WEI required the Project Director to submit brief monthly reports to the home office as a management tool. The format of these reports and their purpose should have been spelled out more clearly, so that relevant and candid information could be obtained. Financial reporting was carried out with effectiveness and efficiency.

3.11 Database

The original project design specified establishment of a database on the YWA Centers as a specific contract task. The purpose of having a database was to provide descriptive information about the centers and to create a statistical baseline which could then be monitored as the performance and status of the Centers changed over the LOP.

Initial information on the Centers was collected by SWAY staff and a Directory of the Taiz and Ibb YWA Centers was produced in Arabic and English. This was distributed to all the Centers, Branches, the Ministries and other interested groups. It was updated and redistributed as a contract completion activity in 1995.

A major constraint encountered in collecting and creating this data base was cultural -- namely, the generally suspicious nature of Yemen society and the local tradition of using information as a weapon against an enemy. SWAY's collection of initial baseline information proved counterproductive to establishing trusting working relations with

Branches and Centers. Frequently, individuals tried to discredit each other by gathering information on purported wrongdoing or mismanagement of public or group funds. This problem continued all through the project, as SWAY requested reports from the Centers to monitor and update the data.

A second major problem was the development of a *customized* computerized data base which could be used to sort, compare, and analyze the Centers' information. SWAY hired a local computer "expert" to develop customized software when an off-the-shelf data base program would have been much more practical. The expert was not capable of doing the job satisfactorily and when SWAY returned to have the system debugged, he had disappeared. Compounding this problem was the management's decision to invest even more money in another (eventually unsuccessful) consultant to repair the software, rather than writing off the original investment and starting afresh with one of the commonly available software packages.

Section 4

Recommendations for Future Activities

Only in recent years have Yemeni women become the specific focus of major international donor programs. For the women to participate proactively in spheres of activity that are so beyond their traditional roles is a considerable challenge, in terms of experience, education, and expectations. WID program implementers, in turn, confront difficulties in the form of the prevailing cultural and economic situation, political uncertainty and maneuvering, and the expectations of donors. World Education believes that, with sufficient time, most of these obstacles are surmountable through careful assessment and planning; a willingness to listen, adapt, and experiment; and an unwavering commitment to local development and empowerment. It is in this spirit that we offer the following recommendations:

4.1 Capacity Building and Empowerment

- Determine specific development activities and tasks according to the nature and needs of the partners or beneficiaries: In other words, ensure that the kind of activity to be undertaken is in consonance with the values and group dynamics that prevail within the target population. For example, while organizations or groups are better able to sustain and replicate institutional development activities, they may not be the best suited to successful micro-enterprise or income-generation. In such cases, adapt the activity and/or the specific target.
- Developing the capacity of a centralized body generally has an inverse impact on the level of participation by local groups or individuals. If an objective is to establish an activity that will be ongoing at the local level, building centralized capacity should be avoided.
- If a project chooses to work with women without any previous development experience, it should build in extensive time and resources for cultivating their understanding and capacities.
- To succeed, projects should be able to identify inherent risks in various approaches -- and, at times, be prepared to take them. This does not obviate the need for proper research, good design, caution, and community relationship-building when considering innovative activities.

4.2 Integration, Coordination, and Communications

- Identify partners' needs and expectations from the outset, and ensure that any differences between those and specified project objectives are immediately clarified. Develop a system to document such differences and their resolution.
- Identify and establish support links and systems with the broader community and, in the case of a women's project, with the local male power structure. Identify and engage those with resources to participate in the process. Establish vertical and horizontal links at local, regional, and national levels.
- USAID and the implementing agency must discuss, define, and document each other's roles and responsibilities from the outset, especially in relation to the Government of Yemen. It is a mistake to assume that USAID can or should handle all such relations. In fact, all projects that have or require connections with central level agencies should have a Sanaa liaison office to establish cooperative relations with central ministries.
- Advisory Groups are suggested when local ownership and insight is an important element of the project, but they should not be formed without a clear concept of their roles and expected outcomes.

4.3 Design

- Consider linkages with other major areas of concern to women to extend impact and relevance. Health and education are obvious areas where the improved status of women leads to broader improvements in the family and society. Agriculture is another area which pays multiple dividends, as rural women have major responsibilities in agriculture and spend significant time in its pursuit.
- Keep it simple, uncomplicated, and straightforward.
- Avoid centralized activities that reduce local participation and control.
- Design around the following key variables:
 - Leadership skills and abilities
 - The experience, exposure, education and skills of key players
 - General attitudes and community support for women's role in development
 - Women's marital status and freedom of movement before and after marriage

- Networks, personality, and political affiliations
- Women and political conflict
- The Centers' perceptions and general acceptance of their role as welfare associations rather than enablers of development
- The impact of staff turnover at the implementing agency and at USAID
- YWAs' limited hours of Center operations and long distances from each other
- Lack of resources for the Centers
- Centralized hierarchal system, in which favoritism is a guiding principle

4.4 Management

- Establish project administrative, financial, personnel and other policies in writing and monitor their implementation regularly during home office staff visits to the field. Tailor home office backstopping to the field's management needs, and ensure prompt input and feedback when the field office makes mistakes.
- Future institutional development projects that require field support for activities should clearly identify expected outcomes (i.e. use quantifiable indicators), have sufficient resources to carrying out the activity (staff, vehicles, etc.), identify the role of the staff, and ensure sufficient supervision.
- Establish a clear written policy for procurement approvals agreed upon by all parties during the initial stages of the activity.
- Document all public decisions that affect participants and beneficiaries.
- Documentation should be an ongoing regular part of each workshop or activity, and not be delayed until the end of the contract, which increases the chances of material being lost or misplaced and reduces the drain on the remaining limited time and resources.
- Take advantage of new opportunities but not to the extent that they detract from the original objectives and scope of work. It is very easy to lose sight of the originally contracted activities when the funder encourages expansion and directs the contractor to expend significant energies toward expansion from the outset. All parties should be aware of this seduction and resist the temptation to lose sight of basic contract activities.

4.5 Training

- Be wary of series training designs that call for participant involvement over extended periods of time. Scheduling is critical to ensuring continuity -- although external factors may place this outside the implementers control.
- Link all training and TOTs directly to Centers' existing training activities to reduce the chances of misunderstanding and misinterpretation.
- Training designs should take into account the drastic differences in participants' training levels and seek to avoid and limit them.
- Budget enough time for the training design to be prepared in the local area while taking into consideration the general lack of local human resources.
- Any training-intensive activity should have a full-time, in-country trainer position.
- To increase the impact of domestic or international study tours, clearly define the purpose and select participants according to criteria relevant to each study tour.

4.6 Income-generating (IG) subgrants and local contributions

- Define the parameters for funding activities such as size, type, complexity, and the roles of all parties during design, approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Income generating activities should not be funded as "give-aways," but should require a local contribution to ensure commitment and ownership.
- The implementing agency's post-funding role in monitoring the I-G activities should be discussed and defined by stakeholders. Expectations and an explanation of all terms and procedures, such as feasibility studies, subgrants, income-generation, should be established at the outset.

In conclusion, despite the frustrations and challenges inherent in the SWAY Project, World Education remains hopeful about the potential for WID activities in Yemen. We view SWAY as having achieved modest successes, and believe that the project has indeed had a transformative impact on the lives of those women who participated in the participatory training activities. While we would have liked the opportunity to further the sustainability of this positive change -- through additional time and resources -- we believe that a foundation for future WID activities has been laid in Yemen.

That there is a critical need for more and sustained WID programs in Yemen is indisputable. Whether or not that need is adequately addressed, however, depends on the long-term commitment of all parties, as well as on their adaptability to local circumstances, ability to build on the WEI/SWAY experience, and readiness to adopt the recommendations made in this report.

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SWAY PROJECT
Final Report

List of Annexes

- Annex 1 - Original Objectives and Tasks
- Annex 2 - Amended Objectives and Tasks
- Annex 3 - SWAY Activities over LOP
- Annex 4 - Bibliography or Training Manuals & Other Documents

Annex 1

SWAY Original Objectives and Tasks

The Objectives

1. To provide organizational training to the leadership of the Yemeni Women's Association primarily but not exclusively to the Ibb and non-urban branches of Taiz through provision of technical assistance in the planning, management, and implementation of projects for the associations and their members.
2. To assist the YWAs in the implementation and improvement of the quality of their priority projects in the fields of productivity, income generation, employment, and education (formal and non-formal).
3. To develop a framework for improving the productive activities of the respective associations and realize an increase in income for associations and their members. Working at the two levels, the project expected to increase the financial viability of the respective associations while also attending to the income-generation goals of individual member producers.
4. To increase appropriate new opportunities for women in education, vocational training, and employment.
5. To move the YWAs toward financial sustainability and constructive linkages with key government entities (especially the local councils, governors, and MILSA), other USAID programs and development projects funded by other donors.

The Tasks

1. Develop the individual associations' management, financial, planning and implementation capabilities.
2. Improve the quality and marketability of products produced by the women's associations and demonstrate increased income for individual producers and for the associations.

3. Improve and increase the associations' capability to earn income through the provision of quality kindergarten programs.
4. Assist the associations in improving their secretarial training and in promotion of employment for graduates.
5. Increase selected associations' capability to meet income-generating needs of rural membership through productivity projects employing saving groups and new business start-ups.
6. Develop and implement a training approach to adult education both formal and non-formal and employ appropriate materials.
7. Assist the associations in procuring equipment and supplies for their centers and branches and train their leadership in fund raising for necessities.
8. Assist the associations to implement a management information system for their respective activities and beneficiary groups and provide necessary training.
9. Assist associations with the development of a plan to attract volunteers and increase volunteer participation.
10. To enhance the YWAs' capacity to provide training and technical assistance to their membership and other YWAs.
11. To coordinate project activities with other WID projects.
- 12 and 13 -- were project management tasks

Annex 2

SWAY Amended Objectives and Tasks

Overall **goals** remained the same:

- * To strengthen the Yemeni Women's Associations as independent and sustainable non-governmental organizations that provide quality services to their women members, and
- * To increase economic opportunities for women, by enhancing productivity and incomes for both the associations and their women members.

Objective 1

To build the management and planning capabilities of YWA branches and chapters, so that they can provide more effective training and services to their members.

- Task 1** Assist 17 YWA's with implementation of their action plans.
- Task 2** Provide ongoing support to YWA leaders in applying the planning and management tools learned during previous SWAY activities.
- Task 3** Purchase commodities and equipment under grants for nine, second year YWAs (center kit).
- Task 4** To upgrade and develop a Management Information System.
- Task 5** Develop, within the YWA, a better understanding of the Women's Union Constitution and internal regulations with the YWAs in collaboration with the Women's Union.
- Task 6** Develop and upgrade skills in NGO management.

OUTPUTS:

- Revise, print, and distribute the Arabic translation of PA I, II AND III training manuals.
- YWA's using organizational assessment procedures in the field.
- Schedule of follow-up field activities used by YWA's & SWAY staff to manage organizational activities.

- Feasibility studies are completed by YWA's and reviewed in the field by SWAY staff.
- Assistance provided in weak areas of income generating activities.
- Action plans used by YWA leaders.
- Basic management systems in use (reporting, accounting, filing).
- Meeting every three months held with YWA's leaders in SWAY office, with SWAY staff to discuss the main problems.
- Monthly YWA's report delivered to SWAY and the results from the reports used by SWAY and YWA's to make change in their both planning activities.
- Written policies and procedures in use at YWA are not in conflict with Women's Union Constitution or Regulations.

Indicators:

- * The number of centers participating in SWAY training programs.
- * The number of centers developing and using action plans.
- * Membership of participating YWA's.
- * The number of services and programs offered by participating YWA's.
- * The number of participants.

Objective 2

To develop skills that enable YWA chapters and their members to plan and run profitable income generating activities.

Task 1 Assist YWAs to develop sound feasibility studies within the management, technical, and financial capacity of SWAY.

Task 2 To assist YWAs in implementing at least 2 approved business plans.

Task 3 Provide additional training in small business skills.

OUTPUTS:

- Feasibility studies from YWA's reviewed by SWAY staff and approval committee.

- Small enterprises financed.
- Monthly reports on YWA's small enterprise activities prepared by YWA.
- Adapt Faida (small business manual) translated, printed, and distributed.

Indicators:

- * The number of satisfactory feasibility studies developed.
- * The number of small businesses in operation.
- * The number of women trained in small business skills.
- * The number of women participating in income generating activities.

Objective 3

To enhance YWA training capabilities through Training of Trainers (TOT).

Task 1 Build skills of a core group of at least 10 YWA trainers so they can provide services to other YWAs on an ongoing basis.

OUTPUTS:

- Translate, print and distribute TOT manual.
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- Core group of YWA trainers.
- TOT workshops.

Objective 4

To ensure effective management of the SWAY Project.

Task 1 Provide leadership and effective management for staff of all components of the SWAY Project.

Task 2 Provide training for staff to improve their job effectiveness (in-country & out of country).

Task 3 Evaluate and upgrade SWAY MIS.

OUTPUTS:

- Staff hired and trained.
- New personnel policy developed and in use.
- Financial reports sent to Boston and AID.
- Narrative Reports submitted.
- New Project Director Hired.

Objective 5

To broaden the YWA's resource base and strengthen their communications channels to other development and donor groups.

Task 1 Coordinate SWAY activities with other donor groups.

Task 2 Network with other development programs.

Task 3 Conduct Advisory Group (AG) activities.

OUTPUTS:

- Resource List of other WID related programs.
- Meetings of Advisory Group.

Indicators:

- * The number of meetings with the SWAY Advisory Group.
- * The number of meetings with the Women in Development donors.

Annex 3

SWAY Activities Life of Project

April 1991 - August 1991 (4 months)

- Project Director arrives in Yemen and establishes communications with donors, ministries, other development agencies in Sanaa, and the Taiz and Ibb YWA Centers and Branches.
- Housing and office space are rented, and equipment and furnishings purchased in Taiz.
- Vehicles are obtained and registered. Logistical and financial systems are formulated.
- Eight local staff are interviewed and hired with USAID approval.
- First annual work plan is prepared.
- First training workshop is designed and consultant trainer recruited. Criteria are established for participation of YWA Center participants.
- Introductory/opening conferences are held in Sanaa, Taiz , and Ibb.

September 1991 - April 1992 (8 months)

- Three Advisory Groups are established (Sanaa, Ibb, and Taiz).
- Staff training and team building is begun and continued.
- The first series of three residential training workshops (Planning Activities - PA) is conducted in Taiz. SWAY staff support Centers in carrying out assigned tasks between each workshop.
 - i. PA I - Needs Assessment; 35 participants from 6 Centers, for five days in September

52

- ii. PA II - Business skills and preparing proposals; 34 participants from 8 Centers for five days in November
- iii. PA III - Developing annual work plans; 39 participants 3 days in February
- Three Training of Trainers (TOT) activities conducted for the SWAY Coordinator, Program Officers and Training Officer in participatory training techniques prior to each PA workshop.
- Continuing set-up of administrative, logistical and liaison activities in Sanaa, Taiz, and Ibb.
- World Education/Boston staff in Yemen establish financial control and reporting systems.
- Grant/ income generating review process is designed and committee established with outside consultant help. Credit idea is proposed. Commodity needs of first YWA are identified and USAID procurement process begun.
- Annual workplan is prepared and submitted to USAID.
- Expansion to Aden and Hadramout discussed with USAID; first needs assessment trip taken to Aden and Mukhalla where meetings held with Governor, MILSA, and Women's Union representatives.
- Assessments conducted on tasks outlined in contract documents (volunteerism, training kits, kindergarten programs, employment and secretarial training, TOT).
- Contracted with local computer specialist for staff computer training and the development of an information data base system for the YWA Centers.

May 1992 - April 1993

- Grant commodities procurement process is completed according to USAID regulations. Commodities are distributed to eight Centers and Branches that participated in the first series of PA workshops, including for:
 - The computer training center at the Taiz branch.
 - Two income-generating activities (Ibb kindergarten & Qubaita bakery)

- An in-country study tour focussed on kindergartens and pre-schools is conducted to Sanaa for four participants in preparation for developing preschool programs in May 1992. Local resource people in early childhood education are identified in June 1992.
- SWAY coverage is expanded. The second series of three residential training workshops (Planning Activities - PA) is conducted in Ibb. SWAY staff support Centers in conducting assigned tasks between each workshop.
 - PA I - Needs Assessment, 39 participants from 9 Centers for 5 days in July.
 - PA II - Business skills and preparing proposals, 42 participants from 9 Centers for 9 days in August.
 - PA III - Developing annual work plans, 45 participants 5 days in September.
- SWAY plans, organizes, and conducts a 10-day study tour to Egypt and Jordan for eight participants, two SWAY staff, and two USAID/Yemen representatives. It is primarily focussed on women's small business activities.
- Credit program is designed by a team of consultants in consultation with all stakeholders in July and August 1992.
- An expansion proposal is researched, prepared, and eventually submitted to: expand activities to Aden and Hadramout; add a credit component; and to add a non-formal education component to the activities (May - September 1992).
- Business Management and Marketing Workshop is designed and conducted by Community Development Services, for 32 participants from the Centers that participated in the first series of PA workshops (six days in February).
- Three TOT activities are conducted for the SWAY Coordinator, Program Officers and Training Officer in participatory training techniques prior to each workshop.
- Two three-day workshops in volunteerism (one in Ibb, one in Taiz) are conducted for a total of 28 participants from 16 Branches and Centers in November. Peace Corps volunteers also collaborate in this effort.
- Research on adult education for women in Yemen is conducted.
- Staff begin process of registering World Education as a local PVO with the

Ministry of Planning and Development.

- Administrative, logistical and liaison activities in Sanaa, Taiz, and Ibb continue.
- Coordination and cooperation: SWAY arranges for 5 participants to attend a Dutch-sponsored early childhood training program in May 1992; collaborates on a survey on secretarial employment opportunities.
- SWAY organizes, facilitates, and co-sponsors a First Aid Training Course developed by Peace Corps Volunteers in Haifa and Taiz.
- Arabic/English YWA Directory is completed and distributed in October 1992.

May 1993 - April 1994

- Mid-term evaluation carried out in May 1993.
- Ongoing field trips follow-up on work plan implementation, report writing, record keeping and filing; a repeat of PA III is held for two Centers due to staff changes.
- Center commodity grant needs are identified, approved by the approval committee, and submitted to USAID in November 1993. USAID approval is received in April 1994 and procurement begins immediately.
- Staff complete the process of registering WEI as a local PVO with the Ministry of Planning and Development.
- Program and Training Officers attend a two-week TOT workshop conducted by CDS in Egypt June/July 1993.
- A survey is conducted in Hadramout and an apartment rented in Aden for expansion with USAID approval in August 1993.
- TOT I is designed and conducted by WEI/Boston trainer for 15 participants from original five Taiz Centers and Branches for four days in September 1993.
- SWAY Coordinator attends Women in Management Seminar at the University of Pittsburgh, USA, in August and September 1993.
- SWAY Program Officer attends WEI-led Proposal Writing workshop and visits

local women's business and NGOs in Nairobi, Kenya, in December 1993.

- A Women's Union Constitution Workshop is designed and conducted in cooperation with Executive Committee members for 32 participants from 14 Centers and Branches in Taiz in February 1994.
- SWAY designs and conducts TOT II workshop in training needs assessment, which is attended by 16 participants from the original Centers and Branches in Taiz for four days in February 1994.
- Three staff TOTs are conducted.
- Ten participants, including two SWAY Program Officers, travel to Tunisia to learn about women's activities, volunteers, NGOs, and businesses in April 1994.
- YWA Taiz and Ibb Center Directory is updated and distributed in April.
- A consultant is hired to troubleshoot database software problems.
- Centers submit 33 proposals to fund income generating activities. The Review Committee initially rejects eight, provisionally approves nine, and returns 16 for further work.
- Three income-generating activities are funded by the end of the year.
- Two new staff positions are approved by USAID and new staff are hired to fill existing positions. Staff receive computer training to upgrade their skills
- Annual work plan and expansion proposal based on evaluation recommendations are prepared and submitted; returned by USAID for modification to exclude expansion activities.
- More than 31 meetings are held with other donors to obtain support for current and planned expansion activities. UNICEF agrees to support the Ibb kindergarten with learning materials through the Ministry of Education.
- Advisory Groups meet seven times in support of SWAY activities and USAID concerns.
- SWAY office and activity closed on April 25, 1994, due to Civil War.

- Contract Amendment is signed extending contract from April 15 to August 14, 1994.
- Local auditor conducts two-week field audit of SWAY in Taiz.
- Two local staff contracts are not renewed in April. One, the cashier, refuses to return the cash and financial records under her control. Only through legal counsel is SWAY's property eventually returned in August 1994.
- Numerous field visits are carried out for support and problem-solving.

May 1994 - June 1995

- A consultant begins work on redesign of credit program at the end of April. This is interrupted and later canceled due to the war.
- On May 3, the Project Director is ordered to evacuate, and the office is closed for safety reasons. US government lifts evacuation order on August 8, 1994. WEI/ Boston Senior Program Officer returns to restart activities in August.
- Two staff receive data-base computer training in Sanaa in July.
- A fourth contract amendment is signed in August extending the contract until June 30, 1995. It incorporates new objectives, activities, and tasks; increases the contract amount by approximately \$900,000; and adds two expatriate positions (Program/Training Manager and Credit/Administrative Officer).
- Three work plans are prepared to keep up with changing conditions; the final close-out plan is approved in November 1994.
- Procurement and delivery of the commodity list developed in June 1993, and approved by USAID in April 1994, is completed in May 1995.
- Seven participants, including a SWAY Program Officer and four members of the Women's Union Executive Committee, travel to Jordan for regional NGO forum in preparation for the Beijing UN Women's Conference and visit local women's organizations and activities in November 1994. Participants report back make presentations to USAID, the government, and on television in December.
- Three expatriate staff decline positions citing personal and safety concerns in the

wake of the war. Boston-based Senior Program Officer serves as Acting Director, until a new Director takes up her post in December.

- The local USAID-hired auditor submits a report in August for the work done in April. WEI provides two lengthy written responses in September and December. A Yemeni Government auditing firm requests permission to perform an audit, which WEI refuses at the direction of USAID/Yemen.
- USAID transfers a third vehicle to SWAY in September. The Sanaa apartment lease ends in October; a Director's house is leased in Taiz saving money.
- Annual and final equipment inventories are conducted and USAID approval is received for the final disposition of all SWAY property.
- A consultant conducts Institutional Assessments in December and January, and USAID approves most of the recommendations in March.
- In November, the project begins recruiting for a local hire Program Manager who comes on board in March 1995.
- WEI/Boston trainer designs and leads TOT III for 30 women in Taiz in January.
- SWAY implements TOT III field support follow-up February - March
- A Business Assessment of income generating activities is conducted in January and February. USAID approves some of the recommendations in March.
- The Qubaita bakery oven is demolished, redesigned, and reconstructed between March and June, 1995. The bakery is in production by June.
- On-the-job financial training and record keeping training are conducted with 12 Centers by a consultant in March.
- WEI/Boston trainer and six participants design TOT IV for 29 participants from 15 Centers, and conduct the workshop once in Taiz and once in Ibb during April.
- Local trainer conducts sewing TOT conducted for Azaiz Center in May.
- Faida business manual is printed, shipped to Yemen, and distributed in May.
- SWAY conducts a survey of donor activities in Yemen and produce and distribute a report to all Centers and Branches in May.

- All training material and reports are translated, produced, and distributed in May and June.

Annex 4

SWAY A Bibliography of Training Manuals and Other Documents

I. Semi-Annual Progress Reports

- A. May 1994 - October 1994
- B. November 1993 - April 1994
- C. May 1993 - October 1993
- D. November 1992 - April 1993 (Semi-Annual Progress Report & Mid-Term Evaluation)
- E. May 1992 - October 1992
- F. December 1991 - April 1992
- G. April 1991 - November 1991

II. Work plans

- A. Work plan - Phase I. May 1991 - April 1992
- B. Work plan for Year II. May 1992 - April 1993
- C. Work plan for Year III. May 1993 - April 1994
- D. Extension Work plan. April 1994 - August 1994
- E. Close-out Work plan. September 1994 - June 1995
 - I. Close-out Work plan for September 1994 - June 1995
 - II. Revised Close-out Work plan for September 1994 - June 1995

III. Trip Reports

- A. Women's Union NGO Conference Report, Amman Jordan - November 1994
- B. World Ed. NGO Conference Report, Amman Jordan - November 1994
- C. Proposal Writing Workshop, Kenya - December 1993
- D. Women in Management Report: University of Pittsburgh - August/September 1993
- E. Tunisia Women's Union Trip Report - April 1994

IV. Training Materials

- A. Planning Activity (PA) I Institutional Assessment Training Manual - September 1991
- B. Planning Activity (PA) II Small Enterprise Training Manual - November 1991
- C. Planning Activity (PA) III Action Planning Training Manual - March 1992
- D. Volunteer Workshop Manual and Report - November 1992
- E. Training of Trainers I - September 1993
- F. Training of Trainers II - December 1993
- G. Training of Trainers III - January 7 - 17, 1995
- H. Training of Trainers IV - April 1995
- I. Constitution Workshop - February 1994
- J. Financial Management & Bookkeeping Training - March 1995
- K. Participatory Workshop in Business Management and Marketing - February 1993
- L. FAIDA! Business Training for Women's Groups (Arabic) - 1994

V. General Reports & Assessments

- A. Assessment of Seven Income Generating Activities - March 1995
 - 1. Supplemental Report - Qabita Bakery - February 1995
- B. Institutional Development Assessment Report - December 1994 - February 1995
- C. Non-Formal Education Research - November 29, 1992.
- D. Credit Program Design and Concept Paper - August 1992
- E. Assessment of Yemeni Women's Credit Needs - May/June 1994
- F. Yemen Women's Association (Taiz and Ibb) Directory