WOMEN AS FOOD PRODUCERS In Developing Countries

Edited by

Jamie Monson

and

Marion Kalb

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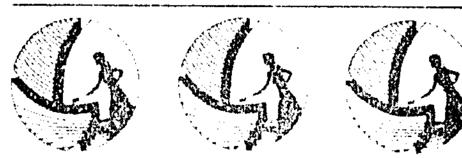

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Preface

In recent years, the topic of "Women in Development" has become increasingly prominent in the literature on rural development, and the phrase "women's component" has become a popular catchword among policy makers. As increasing attention is paid to world poverty, food shortages and overpopulation, the important role of women can no longer be ignored. Researchers and practitioners are discovering that not only do women make up a large proportion of the world's poor, they are frequently the main providers of food and basic necessities for their families.

These discoveries have had major implications in the realms of academic research and policy making. Yet all too often, the positive contributions made by women to their communities, as well as to their national economies, have been undervalued. In many instances, women have been viewed as a drain on scarce resources rather than an asset in economic development.

By organizing a conference on the role of women as producers and providers, we focused attention on the fact that women are not just helpless victims of hunger and poverty, but are actively working throughout the world to sustain their families. We hoped to illuminate the very real contributions women have made to the development process, and to recognize the tremendous potential of women as food producers.

The idea of creating a joint conference on this topic, co-sponsored by the UCLA African Studies Center and OEF International, was sparked during the summer of 1983. By the following spring, a unique event had been created that included not only the 2 sponsoring organizations but a myriad of local grass-roots organizations, academic institutions, churches, and concerned individuals. The joint sponsorship offered an unprecedented opportunity to combine academic interests with the community focus of a non-profit development organization: the community groups which participated in the conference were able to benefit from the resources and information available through the university; in turn, the African Studies Center gained new insights into the problems faced by women in our own city as well as overseas.

In many ways, the linkage of these 2 groups was extremely complimentary. For many years, one of the major interests of the African Studies Center has been the study of issues relating to food production and distribution, and possible methods of alleviating poverty and hunger. OEF International shares this concern and carries out several projects in developing nations which assist women in improving their economic status and well-being.

The conference centered around 4 basic goals: 1) to learn more about the important role played by women throughout the world as food providers; 2) to gain an understanding of the barriers women face as they struggle to feed their families; 3) to find out how these barriers can be overcome, through the efforts of the women themselves as well as through the intervention of governments and agencies; and 4) to investigate ways that we as a community can become involved to help.

In achieving these goals, the process of planning and producing the conference was considered to be equally as important as the final product. The involvement of a wide variety of community members was a key to the success of the planning process. These people met regularly from September through March to discuss and evaluate the conference program. The eventual outcome was a two-day workshop on March 2 and 3, 1984 which addressed the needs and interests of a broad cross-section of groups and individuals.

The papers which make up this volume are largely the product of the first day's proceedings. One of the exceptions is the play, "A Woman Has a Voice," by Nkeonye Nwankwo, which was included because it provides a fresh approach to this question, normally considered in an academic light.

The conference itself, and the exceptional combination of community, academic and professional support we were able to generate, could not have come about without the commitment and vision of many people. The constant enthusiasm and support of Michael Lofchie, director of the UCLA African Studies Center; and Anita Mermel, director of the Los Angeles office of OEF International, helped to create the unique working relationship between university and community on which the project was based. It is impossible to name all of the persons who contributed to the success of the conference, but we extend our thanks especially to Larry Hixon of Church World Service/CROP, who provided us with guidance based on his wealth of experience; Nkeonye Nwankwo who was a part of the project from the beginning; and Mari Riddle, Mercedes Veiga and Maria Miralles for their tireless attention to detail. Deborah Wilkes, publications director for the African Studies Center, has assisted in coordinating this volume. And a very special thanks is extended to Marianne

Joensen and the Center's office staff for their unfailing support and endless patience in making the necessary, yet tedious, arrangements for the conference and the variety of activities which have followed.

The conference and the publication of this volume were funded jointly by the African Studies Center out of its grant from the U.S. Department of Education, and by OEF International through the Development Education Project of the U.S. Agency for International Development, and by the African Studies Center Development Institute, which is funded by the Episcopal Church of the United States.

JAMIE MONSON
MARION KALB

Women, Population, and Food: An Overview of the Issues

JANE JAQUETTE
Occidental College

With the recent publication of *The Resourceful Earth*,[1] Julian Simon and Herman Kahn's optimistic assessment of the prospects for keeping food production and population growth in line with each other and a direct response to the pessimistic warnings that appeared in *Global 2000*,[2] published in 1980 by the Carter Administration, the debate on world hunger seems to have taken a new turn. Add to that James Buckley's presentation at the world population conference in Mexico City of the Reagan Administration's opposition to U.S. participation in international family planning efforts that fund abortions—even when U.S. funds are specifically not used for that purpose within programs that promote a wide variety of contraceptives—and the change in the way food and population issues are viewed in Washington can no longer be characterized as a "shift" but must be seen as a departure, perhaps a totally new course.

The optimism of Simon and Kahn would seem to signal a change in policy regarding U.S. foreign assistance: if food production is keeping up with population, then there is no crisis on the horizon and we can relax our efforts in agriculture. On the population side, a slight lowering of birth rates and an observed decrease in infant mortality seem to have undermined a broad national consensus that has existed for nearly two decades in support of family planning programs.

In the debate that is beginning to emerge over the degree to which these new perspectives will change the consensus that has existed among planners and in the broader community attentive to the hunger issue, it is frustrating to note that, as usual, women are not seen as producers of food, but only as producers of children. And in that role, it is the politics of the abortion issue in the U.S. that dominates the debate, not the interests of women themselves.

It would be much more difficult for the U.S. to reduce its support for

family planning if a global food crisis were seen to be just around the corner. But the reverse is also true. If it now becomes questionable whether we should continue to devote a majority of our aid resources to enhancing food production, the growing awareness of the role women play in food production—not only in "traditional" systems involving women as unpaid labor within the family but also in agricultural systems undergoing rapid technological transformation—may be lost of become moot.

Since the early 1970s the fact that women play an important role in food production has become widely recognized and the demand that women be given access to resources to enhance that production, and the income they derive from that production, has made it possible to begin to include women in programs to provide credit, technology, and access to markets for small farmers. But the gap between the work women actually do in agriculture, food processing and storage, and their "visibility" to policy makers working to increase world wide agricultural productivity, worsens the prospects for food production while insuring that women and children will increasingly be "the poorest of the poor."

Women are the majority of the world's food producers. They make up 60 to 80 percent of agricultural workers in Africa and Asia and more than 40 percent in Latin America. Evidence gathered from various countries shows that women work longer hours then men, yet they must expect less. Marilee Karl cites the not atypical case of landless women in a Punjabi village of India:

> We are up at daybreak and we don't get to see our beds until late in the night. We are on our feet all day . . . We have not only to harvest the crop but also tie it into bundles. If a bundle gets scattered or you take an extra minute over it, the men shower you with filthy abuses . . . Cooking the food, tending the cattle, fetching firewood on the way home from the fields, cooking again at night and managing the whole house, the children— it's all on our shoulders— and it's twice as much work as a man does. The pace of work is almost bewildering—there's not a moment's respite all day.
>
> In spite of these long hours, women have very little control, very little say in decisions about food production. They produce the world's food, cook it and serve it, yet they are malnourished. Food is distributed unequally, not only among countries and social classes, but within the family. Men eat first; women and children get the leftovers in many places. Women's nutritional needs are greatest because of their work, child-bearing and breastfeeding, but they get less food, fewer calories, less of the best available than men.[3]

Thus the case can be made, on the grounds of both equity and productivity, that women should be included in efforts to increase agricultural production.

Making women full partners in development is consistent not only with oft-stated concerns for equity but with the tenets of economics as well. Underutilization or underemployment of half the potential labor force does not make economic sense, especially when increasing human productivity is a major objective of development efforts In many parts of the world, women's responsibilities include growing, processing and storing the family food supply; building and/or repairing the shelter; providing clothing, rudimentary health care and the children's first education. Yet women's resource bases may shrink while their obligations grow—particularly in those regions where heavy out-migration of men leaves women, seasonally or sometimes for longer periods, as *de facto* heads of households. Their access to land, agricultural inputs and opportunities to participate in financially remunerative tasks (even if only to market their small surplus in the nearest town) often are further eroded as programs of mechanization, commercialization, and institutional and social change are designed and implemented.[4]

Yet women's worth is often ignored in agricultural labor force statistics. As Ruth Dixon has written,

Women tend to be self-employed rather than wage earners, to work seasonally rather than year-round, to be underemployed rather than formally unemployed, and to engage in a fluid or sporadic pattern of diverse and shifting economic activities. Moreover, the boundary between domestic production for the household's own consumption and economic activity for sale or exchange is less clearly drawn in developing countries, especially in rural areas, and especially among women.

These difficulties are compounded in the agricultural sector, where subsistence farmers may sell very little of their produce, where unpaid labor on their own land alternates with wage or exchange labor on another's, where children may regularly tend animals and women grow foodstuffs in their kitchen gardens or process crops in their compounds but not work in the fields, and where trade of small crafts are added to agricultural work in a seasonal mix of household activities. Indeed, the conceptual distinctions between persons who are economically active and inactive, and between agricultural and non-agricultural occupations, can become hopelessly blurred, particularly in the case of women (and children). Efforts to sharpen the distinctions by enforcing a strict (i.e., more Western) definition of labor force participation inevitably result in a poor description of economic activity in the agricultural sector.[5]

Futher, there is evidence that, as "modernization" reorganizes agricultural production and marketing, women are increasingly marginalized. They continue to work in production—indeed, their labor may increase—but they lose access to the new resources that are increasing productivity—and profitability— in food production. A classic example of this is "cash

cropping": as agricultural production in Third World countries was increasingly devoted to the production of goods for the international market—tea, coffee, cotton, bananas, soybeans, and more recently citrus and other fruits—women were left to provide for family food consumption on the least productive land, while men specialized in production of these new crops for cash sale.

The process of introducing modern techniques, whether in agricultural inputs, planting and harvesting technology, or storage and marketing, has not been gender-neutral. Agricultural extension services worked with male farmers; credit could only be extended to individuals with land titles and other collateral—namely, male heads of households. Even marketing, in many countries a social as well as an economic transaction, with women selling or bartering at village market centers, became more sophisticated as motorized transport linked villages to cities and ports. Here, too, the new technology demanded greater financial resources and wider geographical linkages than women could muster. "Traditional"—and less profitable—local marketing stayed within the woman's province, as men moved into the new trade opportunities created by modernization.

Data from a number of international sources indicate the extent of the problem.

> In Upper Volta, where development agencies have been promoting animal traction, weeding, hoeing, and harvesting is still done by hand. Whereas previously a family would cultivate an average of 1.5 hectares, with animal traction it may cultivate at least three times as much. It follows that women's work in the fields has increased very considerably, and it goes without saying that it is men who use the plough . . . In a country where there are no agricultural labourers, the natural consequences of such a scheme are to maintain or increase polygamy and large families so that they can help with the agricultural work . . . Agricultural schemes have imposed other burdens on women. It is they who have to carry larger quantities of produce from the fields to the village or market, and to process the crop by hand when no manual or power operated machinery exists in the area.[6]

In Tanzania,

> Access to relevant new technologies also tends to be a problem for women. Although Tanzania has a vigorous food crop research program, the majority of agricultural research is directed toward cash crops, which are controlled by men. Some of the cash crop technologies could be utilized by women on their subsistence crops. The ultra-low-volume (ULV) sprayer, for example, developed for use on cotton, could as easily be used on maize. However, most cash crop inputs, including sprayers, are distributed through the cash crop authorities to their growers; hence women tend to be excluded.

> In general, credit and input supply programs seem not to reach women producers. Only 8 percent of the participants in the National Maize Program in a sample of 27 villages were women (60 percent of these being female heads of households). In two villages there were no women participants at all, reportedly because the men refused to allow them to buy inputs. It is not altogether clear why women did not participate. It is, however, clear that the answer is *not* that they are inferior farmers. Women who participated in the program were as progressive as the males, while male nonparticipants were as traditional as female nonparticipants.[7]

The introduction of sugar cane production in Belize led to (1) the decline of food production, (2) the loss of women's resource base, and (3) no improvement in the generally poor prevailing level of child nutrition.

> The rise in sugar cane production, controlled by men, generated quite a bit of income locally, which accrued *to* the men. However, money flowed out of the system as fast as it came in, spent on drink, trucks, travel, and purchased female companionship. By and large, it did not benefit the women at home tending the children and animals. In contrast, there is some indication that an increase in income generated by and controlled by women will be used for more immediate family welfare concerns.[8]

In Java, the Green Revolution brought new varieties of rice and the mechanical rice huller. The new rice:

> has a heavier stalk, making it difficult to harvest with the traditional bamboo knife used by generations of women. It is more efficiently cut with steel scythes, too heavy for women to use easily. Almost overnight, much of the harvesting has been turned over to crews of scythe-wielding *males* brought in by the middlemen who buy the crop. This devastating blow to landless and near-landless women was followed by the introduction of the mechanical rice huller. Previously, the in-kind shares earned through rice-pounding supplied an important source of subsistence to poor women, as did transporting small amounts of rice to local markets. But the mechanical rice huller, a much less labor-intensive operation using *male* workers, is rapidly displacing women. Poor women are losing a direct food source. With the new harvesting methods, rice began to be bulked into large sacks, too heavy for women to carry, right in the fields.[9]

The result was loss of jobs for hundreds of thousands of women in Java. The benefit of cheaper rice went principally to urban consumers, and no effort was made to find new jobs for the women who were displaced by "progress."

Defining the problem—the growing differentiation between men and women in their access to productive resources—may prove considerably easier than devising solutions. One approach would be to reverse or alter

the modernization process itself. This is the approach of "food self reliance" projects which may use modern technology but which try to cut the linkages between local and international markets and credit systems. If implemented—and even socialist countries committed to self reliance as a goal have had difficulty in doing so—such projects would very likely benefit women. Local production for local consumption is what women currently specialize in. Local decisions about resource allocation are more easily influenced by women who are on the spot and who can often mobilize community support.

Yet there are few examples of permanent commitment to local food self reliance. Indeed, the move toward a market economy in China indicates at least a partial failure of the model and illustrates how the goal of increased consumption of both agricultural and industrial goods may come into direct conflict with the goal of self reliance.

If, on the other hand, they accept a model that favors modernization, market and state-controlled economies face similar problems in overcoming barriers to increasing women's access to resources. Unless special efforts are made, land (in agrarian reform programs, for example), credit, and technological training will not reach women for a variety of reasons, including women's schedules (a result of family responsibilities) and the fact that in many cultures men cannot teach women directly as such male/female contact violates social norms.

Programs attempting to reach women must adjust training schedules, expand to include female personnel in training roles, reverse the tendency to favor cash crop production over food crop production, and seek technology that women can use, including stoves, pumps, and food processing innovations of all kinds. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, among others, has noted the potential here:

> In agriculture and livestock keeping, the low-cost production of ox-drawn ploughs and harrows which women could use, hand-operated inter-row cultivators, planters and winnowers, seed-cleaning sieves, chicken feeders and waterers, are among many innovations which would help women. Locally made sun-dryers, smoking drums for fish and meat and improved farm food stores proof against insects, rodents, and damp are being developed and used in some areas. The extension of these would ensure that they lose less of their hard-earned food supplies. Solar water heaters, improved stoves, maize-shellers, cassava grinders, and simple homemade things like clotheslines and cupboards are a few of the household items which save time and energy and make women's work more efficient for the effort expended. Community mills save hours of pounding and grinding.
>
> The work of collection and carrying firewood could be much reduced by planting fast-growing trees near villages and by the introduction of a small village

> portable mechanical saw. Since carrying loads is one of the greatest drains on time and energy of women, well-balanced wheelbarrows, bicycle or tricycle carts would help and have been accepted by women in some places. Donkey or ox-carts could be built locally. Water catchment tanks already used in some rural areas could save much water-carrying if more widely adopted.[10]

In addition, aspects of food production that have received little attention because they are small in scale, such as food processing and storage, must be explored. For example, "street foods"—foods that are cooked, usually in the home, and sold in the streets—offer possibilities for productive investment.

Finally, we cannot expect "cookie cutter" models of technology or access to resources to work. Policies and project designs sensitive to women have to know the particular roles women currently play. It is important to survey the ways in which women are already responding to changed technology and new market forces, as the myth of women as "traditional" or culturally barred from taking advantage of changes is the most common excuse for excluding women from the planning and implementation of projects.

The remaining articles in this book illustrate the importance and usefulness of more detailed, area-specific studies of women's roles in agriculture. Kathleen Cloud's paper examines new trends in measuring the labor and productivity of family farm-firms in the United States and their potential for use in Third World contexts, reviewing the literature that currently exists on male and female productivity in farming. Ruth Dixon's paper exposes some of the very wide discrepancies in official statistics which account for women's work. Using examples from several countries, she demonstrates that the way in which surveys are conducted can have a direct impact on the kinds of results that are obtained, and offers methodological models for the collection of more accurate data on women's participation in the labor force. Sylvia White and Susanna Hecht both examine women's productive roles in specific sectors. White's paper analyzes data she collected in Ghana on women *garri*-makers (*garri* is a processed form of manioc) to illustrate the technology, costs, profits and labor employment in this small-scale, female-dominated business. Hecht's study of women's roles in livestock production in the Amazon region of Brazil places household production within the broader context of livestock raising as a significant sector of Latin American agriculture. Key issues raised in this study include the issue of whether large-scale livestock production represents a "modern" form of production or the adaptation of an "archaic" form to new conditions and the role of the state in setting pricing policies and direct and indirect subsidies. Kathleen Staudt's paper examines the politics of women's access to resources in Kenya, looking

at the conflict between national level institutions and images of government *versus* the local orientations and power of women's organizations; the role of ideology in women's consciousness; and the effect of the existing pattern of (male-biased) resource distribution on the prospects for change; illustrating the interplay between gender and class in maintaining women at the bottom of the economic scale.

Finally, the play "A Woman Has a Voice," by Nkeonye Nwankwo, is a moving and unusual approach to the whole topic of women and food production. Theater is used here as a medium of expression for education and understanding of the complexity of change facing rural agricultural communities in Africa today.

The importance of such studies is that they not only provide the appropriate basis for planning—a purpose that assumes that equity and increased productivity for women are accepted goals and we merely lack information on how to proceed—but that they also provide the basis for making political demands when equity for women is not a generally agreed-upon goal or when efforts to implement that goal are faltering. Yet all of these papers begin with a set of assumptions—that agricultural development is a major thrust of our foreign aid program, and that food and population issues are of the highest priority—that may no longer hold true. Until now, women and development issues have been fought out within the bounds of that consensus and projects and policies have been designed to be grafted onto existing priorities in our foreign assistance program. Information from studies such as these adds to our knowledge and the specificity of out claims; we may also need to anticipate shifts in foreign assistance priorities in order not to lose the ground that has already been gained.

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Women's Productivity in Agricultural Households: How can we think about it? What do we know?

KATHLEEN CLOUD
Women and Food Information Network

> "Look at me! Look at my arm! . . . I have plowed, and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me—and ain't I a woman? I could work as much as any man . . . and ain't I a woman?"
>
> Sojourner Truth: Freedwomen, Akron, Ohio, 1852

In October of 1981 two of us from the Harvard/MIT Women and Development group were asked by the Agricultural Development Council to survey the literature on women's productivity in agricultural systems and prepare a paper for the International Agricultural Economics Conference to be held in Jakarta the following August (Cloud and Overholt 1982). Although we were free to bring insights from other disciplines, we were asked to use economic concepts and models in our analysis. Since both of us had a grounding in economics, and substantial interest in the topic, we accepted the assignment, little realizing how large a task we were undertaking.

Rural women play multiple roles in the world's agricultural systems. They may be mothers, housekeepers, wage laborers, agricultural processors, market women, and entrepreneurs as well as agricultural producers. Most rural women make constant tradeoffs in allocating labor time and productive resources among their roles and obligations. In most farming systems gender agricultural responsibilities are mixed, combining crop production for which one sex is primarily responsible with crops where responsibility is shared.

Women are often responsible for the livestock, vegetables and tree crops located near their dwellings. They are more likely to be involved in cereal

production in hoe cultures and irrigated rice systems than in extensive plow cultures (Boserup 1970). Although in low technology systems poor women are likely to do more field work than are prosperous women, in highly mechanized systems such as Japan, Eastern and Western Europe and North America, women in many well-to-do farm households do substantial amounts of field work.

At present there is very little in the literature which directly addresses the issue of women's productivity in agricultural systems, and the work that has been done is analytically fragmented. Social scientists and women-in-development scholars have expanded the knowledge of women's roles in rural societies and have generated theories to account for systematic shifts in men's and women's productive activities as agricultural technology has changed. However, their work has focused on documenting and analyzing women's *roles and participation* rather than women's *productivity*.

In economic analysis, *productivity* is a ratio of outputs to inputs. Traditionally, farm productivity has been expressed as: productivity per acre (number of bushels produced/number of acres cultivated); labor productivity (number of bushels produced/number of labor hours); or productivity per unit of capital investment (number of bushels produced/cost of capital inputs [fertilizer, seeds, machinery, etc.]). The product is the numerator, some unit of input is the denominator.

These productivity ratios are often different for the same farms. For example, systems can have high productivity per acre and low productivity per hour, if the farms are small and intensively cultivated without much machinery. Investments in machinery could make labor more productive per hour, but the cost would also affect productivity per unit of capital input. American farms substitute machines for labor and become bigger. Poor Asian farmers with small farms substitute labor for machines. Our first problem was to decide what we would define as farm output for the numerator and what we would use as the unit of input in the denominator.

Economics is the study of the allocation of scarce resources. In recent years a number of relevant literatures have been developed that study the allocation of time as a major resource. Men and women do not always have equal access to land and capital but they do have equal amounts of time at their disposal. Therefore we chose to use time as our denominator, to think in terms of productivity per hour.

The definition of the numerator, women's output, proved conceptually simple, but methodologically much more complicated. To the question "what do women produce in agricultural systems?" the answer we gave was "all the products of their labor time." Therefore we expanded the definition of the products of the farm household to include *all* the goods

and services produced within the agricultural household. Combining several of the recent agricultural household production models, we predicated five basic categories of production which taken together embrace the output of the farm household:

non-wage agricultural production refers to output of crop and livestock intended for home consumption or market sale;
household production encompasses goods and services produced within the household for home consumption or market sale;
human capital production refers to childbearing, child care and the transmission of skills and knowledge;
self-employment in the informal market sector includes off-farm production activities such as marketing and personal services;
wage labor refers to paid employment.

Agricultural Household Production Models

Few people live alone in rural societies. Agricultural production is intrinsically a collaborative endeavor, with the agricultural household as the most common unit of production and consumption. Because of this, we suggest that project analysis of women's productive work be undertaken within the household context, accounting for the activities and demands of household members of all ages. The *agricultural household*, as the term is used here, is a kinship based group engaged in both production and consumption with corporate ownership of some resources and a degree of joint decision-making among members. Its boundaries are assumed to be permeable and to change over time, as well as under different macroeconomic conditions. Such a definition can include monogamous, polygamous, and women-headed households as well as compounds or extended families.

Recent economic models of the agricultural household have made women's productive work more visible, both because they have enlarged the definition of farm production and because they have viewed women's labor time as a rationally allocated productive resource. As it becomes increasingly clear that the home and the fields compete for allocations of capital resources and family labor, the definition of the "products" of the farm enterprise has expanded. Without a definition of output that includes all the productive uses of household time, it is impossible to understand correctly the opportunity costs of each member's time, and the underlying rationality of the tradeoffs they make in allocating their time and other productive resources among activities. Fortunately, this research is increasingly convergent in its definition of the output of the family farm firm.

Studies in Nepal, Java, the Philippines, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Kenya, Romania, and the United States have used somewhat different categories for classifying the goods and services produced by the agricultural household, but taken together they include the categories we have outlined (Cain 1979, Evenson 1980, Moock 1976, Huffman and Lange 1980, Kusnic and Da Varizo 1980).

New work on economic theory of the family farm-firm (Barnum and Squire 1979) when combined with the current work on human capital development (Quizon and Evenson 1980, Evenson 1980) and household economics seems to hold considerable potential as a useful framework. Such economists are devoting increasing attention to the household as a decision-making unit and to the extent to which rational choice among alternatives explains household behavior. Their models integrate the production and consumption decisions and specifically take into account the value of human time. The use of such farm household analysis places women's productivity squarely within the household decision-making context. It allows comparison of the time allocation pattern for all household members, and consideration of the opportunity costs of time as well as the relative productivity of time in distinct uses.

However, the use of the household context presents a departure from much feminist analysis. That literature has insisted on viewing women as separate decision-making units. Yet within agricultural households more than in any other production system, women are linked into household production and consumption systems through implicit bargaining arrangements. Therefore it seems useful to analyze women's productivity within the household context, if the definition of production is expanded to include all that women produce within it.

In placing women within the household context, we must emphasize that although individuals in households have *shared interests*, they also have *separate interests*, and may sometimes have *opposing interests*. The economic convention of assuming a household utility function in which a household "acts in its own best interests" obscures the fact that what may be in the best interests of the household may not be in the best interest of particular members. It also ignores the question of how decisions are made, and how resources are allocated within households. In some agricultural systems, household resource allocation may be done relatively equitably, in other systems the strong may exploit the weak. If a continuum is posited from absolute equity within households on the one end to absolute exploitation on the other, most systems could be located impressionistically at some point along it. Empirical work in this area, though increasing, is still limited (Cain 1979, Jones 1982). Therefore our analysis assumes that the household acts in a more or less rational and equitable

manner to maximize benefits to its members. Yet we also note the existence of separate and conflicting interests.

Using a household framework, what does the literature say about women's relative productivity within agricultural systems? The literature is partial and fragmentary, and there are numerous methodological problems in fairly valuing women's products in unpaid household and human capital production. In gender segmented labor markets women's lower wages are often justified by the assumption that they are less productive than men per hour of work (Binswanger and Doherty 1982).

Women's relatively smaller size and strength are often cited as the basis for assuming their lower productivity in farm labor and off-farm employment. In the analysis of farming systems there is a tradition of weighting a woman's productivity at .75 or .8 of a man's (Norman 1980). Empirical analysis of input-output data in Africa (Moock 1976, Staudt 1978) and Sri Lanka (Uphoff 1983) does not support these weights. In Bangladesh, (Chen 1982) by contrast, women's productivity was lower than men's when carrying earth and rocks for road building. Productivity differences based on size and strength vary by task, and may be greatest for tasks that demand most body mass and strength in the upper torso (Deere 1977). Although it is difficult to measure work by different family members, more rigorous data collection and analysis is recommended to establish the realistic weight ranges for tasks necessary for accurate economic analysis (Norman 1980).

Structural or institutional factors may contribute to gender differences in productivity as agricultural systems are modernized. Boserup (1970) made the classic feminist argument linking resources to productivity. Although differences in productivity between the sexes might be expected to fall as agriculture becomes less dependent on human muscular power, she observed that men monopolize the use of new equipment and modern methods. Therefore, men's labor productivity tends to rise while women's remains static. She concluded that the tendency toward a widening productivity gap is often exacerbated by cash crop cultivation among men, while women produce food crops for the family without cash income for investment in farming techniques.

Boserup drew heavily on African experience, and her arguments did not explicitly extend to modernized agricultural systems. In the last decade, numerous studies have been carried out attempting to confirm or reject her arguments. Some results demonstrate that women with responsibility for particular crops or with management responsibilities for entire household production systems often lack access to modern inputs through exclusion from farmers associations or cooperatives, and through lack of access to capital, credit or government extension services (Staudt 1978). Moock

(1976) however, found women farm managers in Kenya equally productive per hectare when compared with male managers, though less productive per hour. The women had less capital and used fewer purchased inputs. Instead they substituted increased labor for other inputs.

Women's unique ability to produce new human capital through childbearing is usually ignored in agricultural household models, although other household production models devote considerable attention to determinants of fertility. After childbirth, women continue to carry out much of their productive work while simultaneously attending to the needs of their children. This stream of joint productive work is characteristic for many women in farm households, particularly when they are pregnant and nursing. Joint productivity is not easily handled by standard economic procedures but methodological work on the value of children is establishing inroads in this area. DaVanzo and Lee (1978) provide useful insights on the compatibility of child care with other productive work and on the opportunity costs of household members' time. While infants and young children demand a great deal of time, older children can substitute for a mother in a number of tasks, and they also expand the family labor force, thus increasing household production. The presence of other adult women in the household within polygamous or extended family structures also influences the pattern of women's productive activities, and thus their productivity.

A final factor influencing women's productivity is the extent to which they have access to education and training. There is general agreement that education increases productivity and a substantial literature exists on the positive effects of women's education on human capital development (World Bank 1980), household production (Evenson 1980), paid labor force participation (Huffman and Lange 1980, Lloyd 1975) and agricultural production (Moock 1976). One recent Indian study found that formal education of farm wives increases the productivity of *all* farm inputs, including husbands' time on farm production (Rosenzweig 1980). Yet according to UNESCO, women compose less than 1/3 of primary school students in the low income nations of every region except Latin America.

It is clear that all over the world, women are productive members of farm households. Their ability to command technology and training is often constrained by forces over which they have little control. Yet they continue to do the best they can with what they have. Hopefully, clearer, more accurate analysis of their reality will lead to programs that serve them better.

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Seeing the Invisible Women Farmers in Africa: Improving Research and Data Collection Methods

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Woman as the invisible farmer: the theme is a dramatic one. Consider Saleha, a landless Bangladeshi woman driven by destitution to labor for small wages or a share of the crop. Because of acute social criticism of women who work, "immodestly," in the open, Saleha at first was embarassed:

> I worked in the fields at night, by moonlight, or at times when there was the least likelihood of being seen. I did any kind of work I could find--resurfacing houses with mud and dung, planting *khejur* (date palm) and other fruit trees, paddy husking, harvesting (Chen and Ghuznavi 1977:20).

The story has a happy ending. As a member of the Pachbarol Women's Cooperative that leased two acres of land, Saleha learned to cultivate potatoes, sugar cane, papaya, and vegetables. In the mornings she and the other women worked at odd jobs and rice processing. In the afternoons, states Saleha proudly,

> We worked until dusk in our fields. We built small boundary walls around our fields. We sowed and weeded and harvested. We employed two men to do the plough work. . . .
>
> Our crop of sugar cane is doing well (*surosh*: literally, full of juice). We are also growing papaya and vegetables—brinjal, pumpkins, squash. We bought 500 chili seedlings to plant alongside our vegetables. . . . And we bought a calf for Tk. 475 which we hope to sell for Tk. 1,500 or 2,000 next year, when it is fully grown (*ibid.*: 21).

When we talk of the invisibility of women farmers, we do not usually mean it so literally: the image of Saleha working in the darkness is too exotic for our purposes. But we do want to know whether her work in full

sunlight is visible to those around her—to her family, to her neighbors, and to those who come to the village to inquire about such things. We want to know whether she herself, and those close to her, value her work. And we want to know whether planners and policy makers consider her labor when they count the members of the labor force or design projects or programs to increase agricultural productivity and raise the incomes of rural households.

Counting the labor force: issues and discrepancies

That women's work has been undercounted and undervalued in official demographic and economic statistics has long been known and commented upon (e.g., Benería 1982, Boserup 1975, Boulding *et al.* 1976, Recchini de Lattes and Wainerman 1982, Standing 1978, Youssef 1983). Critics of traditional data collection methods have addressed two problems in particular: first, how to incorporate the value of women's domestic worth into national accounts statistics (e.g., Goldschmidt-Clermont 1982, Rogers 1980), and second, how to revise the definitions of economic activity and labor force participation to include more of the work that women do both within and outside the home (e.g., Anker 1983a, Fong 1980). The problem of undercounting women's labor has been especially acute in the agricultural sector. If women work for wages, they are likely to be enumerated. But if they do unpaid work on the family holdings, there is a high probability that their labor will be statistically "invisible."

Evidence of the undercounting of women arises not only when we compare our own observations in rural Third World settings with published statistics on labor force participation, but also when we compare different sources of statistical information, or contrast the findings of one source at different points in time.

Consider, for example, the outcomes of population censuses taken within the same country from ten to twenty years apart. Table 1 includes examples of discrepancies deriving from changes in the definition of "economic activity" or in the way questions are asked. The 1954 census of Algeria counted 981 thousand women in the agricultural labor force, constituting 37 percent of all economically active persons in agriculture. But in 1966, when unpaid family workers in agriculture were excluded, the census counted only 23 thousand women, a mere 2 percent of the total. Women farmers in Bolivia also disappeared between the 1950 and 1976 censuses, whereas Iraqi women did the opposite. The 1977 population census of Iraq counted 353 thousand women in the agricultural labor force—37 percent of the total—compared with only 15 thousand 20 years earlier, or 2 percent of all farm workers.

Table 1
Comparisons of Population Censuses and Agricultural Censuses: Size of the Agricultural Labor Force and Percentage Female

Country and year	Type of census	Agricultural labor force		Percentage female
		Total (000s)	Female (000s)	
Algeria				
1954	Population	2,631	981	37%
1966	Population	1,276	23	2
Bolivia				
1950	Population	672	397	59
1976	Population	697	89	13
Iraq				
1957	Population	859	15	2
1977	Population	949	353	37
1971	Agriculture	2,111	856	41
Egypt				
1960	Population	3,671	129	4
1960-61	Agriculture	6,608	1,353	20
Brazil				
1970	Population	13,039	1,257	10
1970	Agriculture	17,582	5,653	32

Source: Calculated from International Labour Office, *Yearbook of Labour Statistics*, various years, and Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, *Report on the 1960 World Census of Agriculture* (Rome: FAO 1971) and *Report on the 1970 World Census of Agriculture* (Rome: FAO 1977).

Comparisons of population censuses with agricultural censuses conducted under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) also reveal marked disparities that can be traced to differences in definition and procedure. In Iraq, the agricultural census of 1971 identified more than twice as many women farm workers as even the liberal population census of 1977, finding a labor force that was 41 percent female (male workers were twice as numerous as well). Egypt's agricultural census of 1960-61 counted ten times the number of women farmers as did the population census in the same year (and twice the number of men), raising the proportion female from 4 to 20 percent of the agricultural labor force. And in Brazil, the agricultural survey of 1970 reported that 32 percent of all workers were female, compared with 10 percent (over four million fewer) in the 1970 census of population.

Why such large discrepancies? The examples above are among the most glaring, but a general pattern emerges from comparisons of different sources. Females are likely to be counted in larger numbers, becoming a larger proportion of the total labor force when:

1) respondents are asked about their work in a long rather than short reference period, that is, what they did during the past month, year, or "cropping season" rather than the past week;

2) the survey is conducted during the busy farm season when women are more likely to be doing field work rather than during the slack season when some women (and children) will have temporarily withdrawn;

3) unpaid family workers are specifically included; that is, there is no requirement in the definition of economic activity that a person must work for pay or profit or that goods produced must be sold rather than consumed by the household;

4) there is no requirement of minimum hours of work per day for those who do not earn wages (e.g., "one-third of the normal working day," a frequent criterion);

5) respondents asked about their "main" or "usual" activity are not offered "housework" as the first alternative, but rather, are presented with options defined as economic activity;

6) interviewers use the word "work" rather than "job," which respondents may interpret as meaning wage employment only;

7) interviewers offer specific examples of "work" such as "planting or harvesting the crops, taking products to market, caring for livestock;"

8) the definition of economic activity includes tasks such as processing and storing crops, tending kitchen gardens, carrying water to the fields, collecting fuel, and other female specialties;

9) women are interviewed by women; and

10) women are interviewed directly, rather than having their activities reported by a male household head or some other person.

Agricultural censuses usually find more women workers (and often more men) than do population censuses for several of these reasons. They are more likely to be conducted in the busy season when interviewers can inquire about areas under cultivation and crop yields. Questions ask how many people did *any* farm work on the holding during the past week or cropping season, regardless of hours, classified by age, sex, and whether household or hired labor. The definition of farm work is a broad one including activities such as kitchen gardening, feeding poultry, supervising farm workers, and carrying products to market, with no specification that goods must be sold rather than consumed. The additional male workers which appear in the farm surveys, often seasonal workers, may well be classified in population censuses under a different occupation, their

"usual" activity. The additional female workers are most often those excluded from the latter source, however. They are usually unpaid family workers whose normal round of activities or working hours either does not qualify for technical inclusion under existing labor force definitions, or whose economic activities are simply passed over on the assumption that what they do is "housework."

Adjusting the undercount: new estimates of women's work

If we take the farm censuses as indicative of how many women are counted under more liberal labor force definitions and procedures, and compare their results with those using the more restrictive definitions incorporated in most population censuses, we can derive some basis for estimating the amount of undercount in the female labor force based on population censuses. Because these censuses often differ from year to year in their methods and definitions, the International Labour Office (ILO) has produced estimates of the size of the agricultural labor force for all countries that attempts to standardize definitions for more comparability across countries and over time (ILO 1977). Taking these ILO estimates as the basis of comparison in 31 developing countries for which farm censuses are available, we find that on average the ILO reports 22 percent female within the agricultural labor force, compared with 36 percent in the agricultural censuses (Table 2). Contrasts between the two sources are sharpest for the five comparison countries in North Africa and the Middle East, where the ILO estimates only 4 percent female, and least for the 11 comparison countries in SubSaharan Africa, where the ILO estimates an already high 39 percent female.

If the proportions female reported in the farm surveys for each of the 31 comparison countries are regressed statistically on the proportions female estimated by the ILO, we can establish a systematic relationship between the two that forms the basis for revised estimates of the proportions female for 101 developing countries for which ILO estimates are available, most of which lack comparable farm censuses. Two regression equations are derived: one for 21 countries outside Latin America ($Y = 24.2 + .59X$) and one for the 8 Latin American countries ($Y = 13.3 + .99X$). (For further discussion see Dixon 1982). When the equations are applied to the 1970 ILO estimates for all 101 countries, we create revised estimates of the proportions female in the agricultural labor force for each country that are summarized on the right side of Table 2. On average, 38 rather than 26 percent of the labor force is female, ranging from 46 percent in SubSaharan Africa and 45 percent in South and

Table 2
Females as Percentage of the Agricultural Labor Force According to International Labour Office Estimates, Agricultural Censuses, and Revised Estimates Adjusted for Undercounting, 1970.

Region	Comparison countries (31)			All countries (101)		
	Number of countries	ILO est.	Agric. census	Number of countries	ILO est.	Revised estimate
Subsaharan Africa	(11)	39%	47%	(40)	37%	46%
North Africa, Middle East	(5)	4	27	(16)	11	31
South, Southeast Asia	(5)	26	40	(19)	36	45
Central, South America	(8)	6	19	(19)	5	18
Caribbean	—	—	—	(7)	26	40
Total	(31)	22%	36%	(101)	26%	38%

Source: Dixon (1982).

Southeast Asia to 18 percent in Central and South America. Although there is undoubtedly considerable measurement error both in the ILO estimates and in the censuses of farm holdings, the revised estimates elicit a clearer image of women's contribution to agricultural production. In many cases the new estimates are confirmed by other sources not included in these calculations, e.g., by earlier or later population censuses or farm surveys.

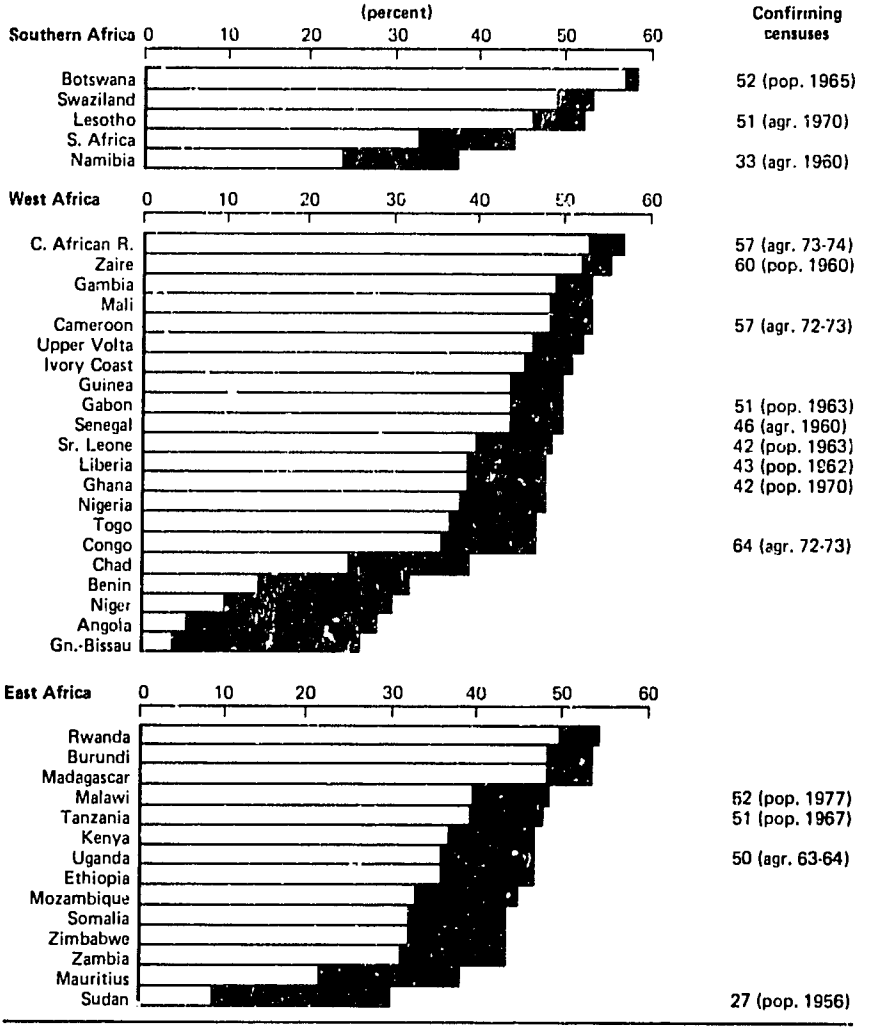
Women farmers in Africa: undercounted, or just ignored?

We have noted that women farmers in SubSaharan Africa appear to be undercounted far less than those in other parts of the world. Nevertheless, there are a few cases in which the ILO estimates for 1970 are significantly lower than those obtained from population or agriculture censuses.

Figure 1 presents estimates of the "femaleness" of the agricultural labor force in 1970 for 40 African countries derived from the ILO figures and

FIGURE 1

FEMALES AS PERCENTAGE OF THE AGRICULTURAL LABOR FORCE: ILO ESTIMATES AND REVISED ESTIMATES ADJUSTED FOR UNDERCOUNTING, SUBSAHARAN AFRICA, 1970.



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from the revised estimates described in the preceding section, which are adjusted for undercounting. The dark area in the figure represents the degree of undercounting; countries are ranked within their regions from high to low according to the ILO estimates of the femaleness of their agricultural force. The largest disparities appear among those countries at the lower end of each regional group, particularly Benin, Niger, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and the Sudan.

The higher revised estimates are substantiated in a number of cases by other sources. In East Africa, for example, the revised figures of approximately 50 percent female for Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda are supported by the population and farm survey figures listed under "confirming censuses" on the right. The considerably higher figures for the Sudan, and for Namibia in Southern Africa, are also provided some support. In general, however, the adjustment for undercounting in most of the Sub-Saharan African countries is well below that of other regions of the world, hovering between about 3 and 10 points in the percentages female.

An additional comparison confirms the impression that most African women workers are quite visible—at least statistically—to their enumerators. Table 3 compares the percentages female in the agricultural labor force derived from the ILO estimates, with a quite different type of information drawn from time-use surveys. Unlike the former, the latter tend to be localized in nature, drawing on detailed observations of household time use taken over an entire cropping cycle in village or district locations. Based on direct observation or reporting, these surveys are less likely to undercount women's farm labor because they measure male and female activities along the same dimensions rather than applying implicitly (or explicitly) different criteria to their inclusion. The number of hours worked on farm related tasks by each person is tallied regardless of whether the produce is sold or consumed at home.

Although the definitions of what constitutes "farm work" differ from study to study, and although the surveys are specific to certain locales, it is remarkable to note in Table 3 how close the correspondence is between the female percentage of the *labor force* in the ILO estimates, and the percentage female of total *labor time* in agriculture (average male plus female hours) identified in the smaller surveys. The ILO estimates are slightly higher than the time-use surveys in four of the eight comparisons; in the rest, the time-use surveys show higher female participation. Only one is clearly out of line: Galletti's Nigerian study shows unusually low female labor contributions in a cocoa-producing Yoruba region with a high proportion of hired male laborers.

These SubSaharan comparisons can be put in perspective when we contrast them to other regions, particularly North Africa and the Middle East.

Table 3
Comparison of ILO Estimates of Females as Percentage of the Agricultural Labor Force, and Local Time-Use Surveys on Female Labor Hours as Percentage of Agricultural Labor Hours, Selected African Countries, Around 1970.

Country	Source	Female Labor	Total Labor	Percent Female
Cameroon	ILO (1977)[a]	1,176,000	2,439,000	48
	Boserup (1970)[b]	13 hrs/wk	29 hrs/wk	45
Central African Republic	ILO (1977)[a]	434,000	821,000	53
	Guet (1965)[c]	15 hrs/wk	29 hrs/wk	50
Gambia	ILO (1970)[a]	96,000	197,000	49
	Georges (1961)[c]	20 hrs/wk	29 hrs/wk	69
Nigeria	ILO (1977)[a]	5,319,000	13,825,000	38
	Galletti (1956)[d]	162 hrs/yr	1,274 hrs/yr	13
	Upton (1967)[d]	4,625 hrs/yr	14,090 hrs/yr	33
Sierra Leone	ILO (1977)[a]	303,000	755,000	40
	Spencer (1976)	112 hrs/mo	244 hrs/mo	46
Senegal	ILO (1977)[a]	609,000	1,385,000	44
	Boserup (1970)[b]	8 hrs/wk	23 hrs/wk	35
Tanzania	ILO (1977)[a]	1,949,000	4,960,000	39
	Kamuzora (1980)	4.9 hrs/day	9.8 hrs/day	50
Uganda	ILO (1977)[a]	1,310,000	3,663,000	36
	Boserup[b]	17 hrs/wk	29 hrs/wk	59
	Pudsey (1967)[e]	1,122 hrs/yr	2,220 hrs/yr	51
	Oloya (1967)[e]	727 hrs/yr	1,662 hrs/yr	44

[a]ILO labor force estimates for 1970 calculated from ILO (1977), Vols. I–IV.
[b]Boserup (1970:21); original source not cited.
[c]Cited in Boserup (1970:21).
[d]Cited in Cleave (1974:32). Galletti's data are from 4 districts in a Yoruba cocoa-producing region with hired male labor; Upton's from 6 districts in the Southwest region.
[e]Cited in Cleave (1974:32). Pudsey's data are from three districts in the Western region; Oloya's from three districts in the North.

Consider the Egyptian case. Although the ILO counts only 4 percent of the agricultural labor force in 1970 as female (a figure consistent with population censuses in 1960 and subsequently), a detailed rural time-use survey based on a national sample found that about one-quarter of all non-domestic productive work in farm households (as measured in labor time) was done by women (ILO 1969:27). And in a sample of eight villages in the Nile Delta, where women are more active in farm work, females performed 44 percent of adult family farm labor and 27 percent of the work of hired hands (calculated from Richards and Martin 1981: Tables 2,17).

Why are the women farmers of SubSaharan Africa less likely to be undercounted than their sisters in many other parts of the world? One reason may be that the long tradition of independent female cultivation of land moves women out of the category of unpaid worker on their husbands' or fathers' holdings into the category of self-employed cultivator, a type more visible to data collectors. African women more often sell their produce, which labels them as "working for pay or profit." Where money is involved, interviewers take notice. Because of the temporary or long-term absence of working-age men from some regions, male interviewers probably talk more directly to women than when men are around. And because there is no tradition of female seclusion except in the Muslim north, nor is there any shame associated with women's work in the fields on the part of male household members or the women themselves (quite the opposite), men and women alike must freely report women's farm work to the census taker. Indeed, in a cultural context where women take pride in their economic capabilities and where most *expect* to support themselves and their children, at least in part, male census takers may also be more attuned to these expectations and see women for what they are: hard workers. The contrast with Saleha tilling the fields at night, afraid that others might see her and call her immodest, could not be more compelling.

Improving research and data collection methods

The fullest accounting of women's work appears in time-use surveys where hours of labor per day or week are tallied according to type of activity. When housework and child care are added to hours spent in directly productive work, most surveys find that rural females of all ages spend on average more time working and less time at leisure than males do (e.g., Cleave 1974, De Tray 1983, Minge-Klavana 1980, Nag, Peet, and White 1978). And when time spent on economically "borderline" activities such as water collection, fuel gathering, walking to the fields and back, or processing and storing crops is added to the "directly productive" category,

females often spend more time than males at this as well. Yet in only a few SubSaharan African countries, and in North Korea, China, and Thailand, do women appear—at least by ILO estimates—as half or more of the farm labor force. This is because the definition of economic activity excludes much of the work that women do.

Could time-use surveys be adapted to enumeration of the labor force? A more flexible system of categorizing *types* of labor force participation would be preferable to the rigid dichotomy currently imposed, but detailed time-use data are expensive to collect and complicated to analyze. They require repeated interviews throughout the cropping cycle and careful estimates of minutes or hours spent each day on each activity, based on short-term recall or direct observation. As a consequence, most surveys of household time allocation have been restricted to subnational samples, or even to a handful of households in a single village. A simpler format would be required for large-scale censuses or surveys.

The possibility of modifying time-use questionnaires for use in labor force surveys has been suggested by several writers (e.g. Anker 1983a, 1983b, Hoffman 1981). Anker, for example, has designed a questionnaire with 12 categories of activities (excluding housework and child care) that does not require repeated observations or interviews. Intended as a one-time survey, the questionnaire asks each household member whether she or he performed a given activity in the past 12 months, how much of the day it typically took, whether it was seasonal or year-round, and whether it produced income in wages, payments in kind, or sales. The questionnaire is summarized in Figure 2.

Four categories of labor force participation can be derived from these responses:

1) the *paid labor force* including persons working for others for pay in cash or kind (i.e., "employees");

2) the *market-oriented labor force*, including also the self-employed (i.e., employers, own-account workers, unpaid family workers, and members of producer cooperatives) who produce on family holdings for the market, with no minimum time specified;

3) the *standard labor force*, including persons who process crops or tend livestock or poultry for home consumption, or prepare meals for hired laborers;

4) the *extended labor force*, including persons engaged in borderline activities such as gathering fuel or water, making clothes for the family, and other home-produced substitutes for what might otherwise be purchased (assuming the economic means to do so).

The distinction among four types of labor force participation is analytically useful. In some cases we may be most interested in identifying numbers or proportions female among those who work directly for

Figure 2
Modified Time-Use Survey for Differentiating Types and Degrees of Labor Force Participation

	Done by person in past 12 months? (Yes or No)	Time per day when done[a] (5 time categories)	Time per year (all/most/ seasonal/ rarely)	Income	
				Paid in cash or kind? (Yes or No)	Product sold? (All/most/ some/none)
1. Agricultural work for others					
2. Agricultural work for self/family					
3. Cooking for hired laborers					
4. Caring for live-stock, poultry					
5. Processing food for storage					
6. Weaving, sewing, handicrafts					
7. Family business or petty trading					
8. Nonagricultural wage/salary work					
9. Other cash earnings					
10. Gathering food, fruit (fish?)					
11. Gathering fuel (water?)					
12. Home construction or improvement for self/family					

Source: Anker 1983b:27.
[a]Small amount, less than half the day, about half, more than half, all day.

cash wages; for other purposes, identifying those in the market-oriented or extended labor force. Much depends on the specific needs of program or policy design and evaluation. The extended labor force will include the highest numbers of women and the highest proportions female, the paid labor force the lowest. Participation can also be categorized from the modified time-use questionnaire by average hours per day (e.g., more than four hours, from two to four, or less than two) as an additional indicator of labor force attachment.

The categorical distinctions will be sharpest in settings or among subgroups where women do not typically sell their labor or even cultivate their fields, but where they process and store crops, feed livestock or poultry, collect fuel and water. Consider, for example, the differences between high-caste and low-caste married women found in Anker's study in Baroda, India (Anker 1983a:30). Table 4 shows that low-caste women were more than seven times as likely as high-caste women to be in the paid labor force (the most restrictive definition) and four times as likely to be in the market-oriented labor force. But differences in participation rates between the two groups disappear in the extended labor force when water collection is included. At this point, virtually all women are "workers" in a statistical sense—in addition, of course, to their other work in the home.

In the SubSaharan African setting, the categorical distinctions will be less pronounced. Although few rural women work as wage laborers (fewer than 5 percent of women in the agricultural labor force are employees in 9 of 10 countries for which data are available), the majority would be counted in the market-oriented labor force and most of the remainder in the category that includes farm production for home consumption. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the invisibility of women farmers derives not so much from their exclusion from labor force statistics, but from some other source. What is that source?

That Africa's female farmers have remained largely invisible in at least one sense is apparent from the findings of researchers interested in the delivery of agricultural services to farm households. The work of Kathleen Staudt, for example, who is represented in this volume, attests to the degree to which female-headed farm households in two districts of Western Kenya—where 40 percent of all farm households are managed on a day-to-day basis by women—have been bypassed by extension agents offering farm visits, demonstration plots, training programs, and agricultural loans (Staudt 1978, see also Moock 1976). Numerous authors have pointed to the relative disadvantages African women experience in their access to land, to livestock, to transport and markets, to capital equipment, to credit, to information and training (e.g., Brain 1976, Cheater 1981, Fortmann 1981, Hafkin and Bay 1976, Hanger and Morris 1973, Kossoudji

Table 4
Labor Force Participation Rates of Married Women in Baroda, India, Classified by Four Categories of Activity, 1981

Labor force category	Barias (Middle/low caste)	Patidars (High caste)
1. Paid labor force (work for others for pay)	52%	7%
2. Market-oriented labor force (production for sale on family holding or business)	60%	15%
3. Standard labor force (crop and livestock production and processing for home consumption)	75%	53%
4. Extended labor force (production of household goods and clothing; fuel collection)	91%	69%
(including water collection)	93%	93%

Source: Anker 1983a:30.

and Mueller 1981, Muntemba 1982). It is the blindness to these inequities more than the blindness of invisibility that stands in women's way.

The blindness has an institutional and political base. One cannot help concluding that the real issue is who controls the resources distributed to, and deriving from, agricultural households. The reluctance to "see" women farmers comes not from their invisibility, but from a reluctance to share scarce resources with them. Land, labor, livestock, capital, technology, information, training—all are valued goods that imbue those who own or control them with power and prestige. Why should these resources be shared? Why should institutions be restructured, power bases challenged?

Combined with this grass-roots resistance to change, one frequently finds policy makers and planners targeting men in their agricultural projects on the assumption that women—so visible in the African fields and markets—will share equally in the benefits of such interventions. This assumption has been effectively challenged by Guyer (1980), among others, who points to the highly gender-differentiated economies of the African farm household. Nevertheless, planners tend to resist targeting women as

direct beneficiaries on the grounds that this upsets the "natural order of things," even though they may be keenly interested in improving the productivity of female labor.

Including women in labor force statistics in proportion to the amount of work they actually do is an essential first step in making female farmers visible to planners and policy makers. But it is *only* a first step, necessary but not sufficient. The challenge of the future is to see that women as food producers receive their fair share of recognition not only in the full panoply of economic and demographic statistics intended to count workers and value their labor, but in the institutional/political systems that provide access to resources that will raise agricultural productivity and the returns of women's work.

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*African Women As Small-Scale Entrepreneurs: Their Impact on Employment Creation**

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Introduction

Unemployment, in both urban and rural areas, continues to be one of the most perplexing problems facing African nations. A survey of 41 recent African national development plans revealed that 30 of them regard the creation of employment opportunities as one of the top priorities of development policy.[1] As a result of employment studies conducted during the last decade,[2] many governments have come to appreciate the important contribution of small scale business and industrial firms to employment generation,[3] and some development plans have incorporated specific policies and programs to aid these firms.[4] Unfortunately, women who are small scale business and industrial entrepreneurs seldom benefit from these program initiatives.

The growing body of literature on women's roles in developing nations reveals that there are complex reasons for the exclusion of women from the benefits of development programs (Rogers 1980; Dauber & Cain 1981). Nevertheless, two reasons appear to be significant in explaining the neglect of womens' small scale entrepreneurial activities. First, official employment and occupational statistics misrepresent women's economic position (Singer & Jolly 1973, Dixon 1981). Thousands of African women invest money, employ workers, operate machinery, and assume the risk for the production of processed foods, fiber goods, household implements and

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fuels that are sold to consumers. They are entrepreneurs in the strictest sense of the definition, yet official statistics in many countries categorize them as "homemakers" (Ghana 1970), as "traders" or as "unpaid family workers."[6] As homemakers, women are not considered economically active, and therefore, are not credited with earning money; as unpaid family labor their contribution to family subsistence and to their own incomes through the manufacture and sale of goods is not counted as part of the monetary economy (Tinker 1979, Rogers 1980). Only as "traders" are they considered self-employed. That classification counts them only in retail and wholesale trade occupations, but completely overlooks their participation in the small scale industrial sector, in construction, and in service categories. Men who perform similar tasks are generally classed as self-employed owners and proprietors of business and industrial firms. The consequence of this misclassification is that the employment generating effects of women's entrepreneurial activities are "invisible": development planners, who rely on this faulty statistical base, do not design programs to aid those whom they cannot see.

Second, research into women's income generating activities in developing nations has not focused attention on women as entrepreneurs and it has not traced the direct and indirect employment effects of their activities. The importance of this type of detailed research is discussed elsewhere (White 1981), and suggestions are given regarding some of the more important questions that must be answered in order to provide information for program design. Dixon (1981) has also called for much more detailed research to identify and to quantify the results of women's economic activities.

The result of statistical misrepresentation and research neglect in the short run, is that women are excluded from access to credit, training, and other programs designed to benefit the owner-operators of small scale firms. In the long run, the exclusion of women deprives them of the means of generating an independent income. This is an important social and cultural expectation among thousands of West African women (Guluma 1981). Ultimately, women are marginalized economically and pushed further into an artificial, domestic ghetto where they are credited only with their homemaking role, despite the fact that they make a substantial contribution to the local and national gross product (Rogers 1980). Most important, women's skills, business acumen, initiative and economic contribution to the local and national economy are lost to the development process.

This article provides a case study that documents the employment generating effects of the activities of women making *garri* (cereal made from dried cassava) in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. The intent is

to encourage the conduct of similar case studies that trace the economic contribution of women's business and industrial activities in rural and urban areas. Without such research, it will be difficult to convince governments and development planners that the interests of women entrepreneurs must be included in the design of development programs.

Small Scale Firms and Employment Generation: Some Theoretical Considerations

Many economists have attempted to explain the determinants of employment and they have proposed numerous different economic models.[7] In recent years, however, attention has turned to models that explain the creation of employment and unemployment in developing nations by exploring the economic linkages between the agricultural and nonagricultural sectors of the economy (Oshima 1970, Byerlee & Eicher 1972, ILO 1972). The difference between these theories and others that came earlier is that they specifically recognize and describe the existence and operation of an "informal sector" consisting mainly of small-scale firms located in urban and rural areas.[8]

According to these theories, small-scale activities share several employment inducing characteristics, but chief among them is their general tendency to relate closely to local supplies of raw materials and to local demands for consumer goods. Oshima (Op.Cit.), for example, describes the way rural, non-farm enterprises draw directly on local supplies of raw materials (which they may or may not combine with imported products) to manufacture foods, tools, clothes, and cooking implements that are used by local agriculturalists. A rise in farm income generates an increased demand for the products of the small scale sector and induces more employment in the firms. In turn, increased demand for products generates increased demand for local raw materials and induces more employment in the agricultural sector. Both sectors, then, employ one another and form an interdependent, though not a closed, system. This interrelationship has been described and confirmed by several studies in the African rural context (Liedholm 1973, Chuta & Liedholm 1976, Mwima-Mudeenya 1978, White 1983).

An analogous relationship has been described in urban areas where small scale firms provide employment for migrants and itinerants by utilizing cast-offs from large industries in conjunction with local products to produce cheap consumer items for the urban poor (Hart 1973, Child 1977, Sethuraman 1981). Increases in income and demand lead to more direct employment in the small scale firms, and to indirect employment among

the providers of raw and intermediate materials. The establishment of backward and forward links among themselves and with other sectors enables small scale firms to increase the number of direct and indirect employment opportunities.

Small scale activities generally share other characteristics that have a positive impact on employment generation. For example, many (though not all) use labor intensive techniques, some of which are adapted from modern production methods (White 1978). It is also relatively easy to start a small scale enterprise; initial capital investment can be quite low and management skills need not be great (ILO 1972). Among many small firms the ratio of capital investment to labor employed is far lower than for larger businesses and industries considered to be more "modern" in character (ILO 1972, Mwima-Mudeenya 1973, Steel 1977). Studies have also shown that small scale enterprises provide employment for part-time and seasonal workers as well as for full-time laborers, and that skills of these laborers may vary widely (Dixon 1981, Hart 1973, ILO 1972, Child 1977, White 1983).

Entrepreneurs of small scale firms exhibit a tendency to save and reinvest in their firm or in other local employment producing activities (Child 1977, White 1983). For example, one study found that small scale entrepreneurs invested their profits in new construction (White Ibid). Reinvestment in the firm's productive activities by expanding production, or by integrating production of raw material supplies or product sales into the firm's activities are not uncommon (White 1978). Thus, small scale firms evolve in stages into larger firms that may generate more employment.[9]

It is important to note that there are negative aspects to the operation and employment conditions in small scale firms. They have been criticized on a number of counts. For one thing, the firms are quite exploitative; wages are generally well below the country's minimum standard. Many firms make use of children and of unpaid family labor in various combinations with paid labor (Rogers 1980). Working conditions are poor; work is hard; long hours are involved; sanitary facilities are lacking and the health of workers is of little concern to the entrepreneur. Last, fears have been expressed that these firms encourage the use of a petty capitalism that enriches a few while leaving many impoverished (Leys 1973, Werlin 1974). The case study that follows reveals many of the characteristics discussed above.

Methodology

The research was divided into three phases. The first involved interviews with the owner-operators of the garri-making (cereal made from processed cassava) enterprises and with their employees using a structured questionnaire. The objective was to obtain basic demographic information data on job classifications, work histories, and daily expenditures connected with work. The second phase focused on the details of the garri-making process, and included an investigation of the sources of initial capital for the venture, the costs of all inputs (labor, equipment, raw materials), the destination of the final product, and the amount and sources of income from the product and by-products. This information was gathered mainly from the owner-operators, but was supplemented by information from the District Agricultural Officer, a U.N. small industries consultant, and others well versed in the operation of the local garri firms. The third phase included repeated visits and unstructured interviews in the households of two owner-operators and four employees. The objective was to develop information about the savings, investment, and expenditure patterns of wage earners and owner-operators involved in the garri-making firms.

The Context

The town of Wenchi is located in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. In 1970 it was home to approximately 13,800 people (Census of Ghana, 1970).[11] Its main claim to fame is that it is the hometown of the former Prime Minister of Ghana, Dr. K. A. Busia. During the late 1960's, at the time of Dr. Busia's regime, the town experienced a spurt of growth. The government improved the main roads connecting it with large cities such as Kumasi and ultimately the capital of Accra; it located a government owned cannery there; improved the schools and the hospital; and added street lights. After the overthrow of the Busia government, the previous attention given to the town decreased, growth slowed, and at the time of this study it was a slow moving, fairly neglected market town.

The town's location is the key to its function. Wenchi is located at the boundary of the forest zone and the northern savannah zone, and it is a main point for the transshipment and exchange of the different types of commodities grown in each zone. The market is at the main intersection of two roads, one which connects Ghana to the Ivory Coast, and the other which links the southern areas of the country with the towns of the northwest. It is a stopping point for northern cattle shipments on their way south and for kola on its way north. Cassava, from which garri is made,

is a principle crop in the area, but tomatoes, tobacco, and cacao are also major crops. Every Tuesday and Thursday, all these commodities and a host of consumer goods are exchanged at Wenchi's main market. On these days the town is colorful, lively, and noisy.

As stated earlier, census data is known to be faulty in its assessment of women in the labor force. Nevertheless, it provides some idea of the types of economic activity in which women were counted as participants in 1970 in Wenchi. Of some 5500 persons who were "economically active" in the labor force of the town in 1970,[12] 46% were women. Slightly more than 2500 women were actively engaged in the labor force. Of this number about 29% worked in agriculture, 49% were involved in retail and wholesale sales, and 18% were engaged in the manufacture of consumer items, mainly related to food and clothing. The garri-makers, who are the focus of this study, are part of this last category.

Women Garri-makers in Wenchi

The process of making garri is quite simple but it has many steps, and as we shall see, each step generates direct and indirect employment opportunities. Cassava tubers are harvested, peeled, cut into large chunks, and grated either by hand or by machine. The pulp is packed into jute bags and dipped in water. The cassava must be rinsed this way several times to extract harmful toxins which are a natural part of the tuber. When the repeated washing and draining procedure is finished, the bags are hung up to dry until most of the moisture has evaporated. Then the grated cassava is spread out on large fibre mats or wooden boards to dry. Finally, the pulp is processed by heating small amounts in a wide metal pan. The grated pulp is stirred and turned constantly until it is thoroughly dried. It is granular and off-white in color when it is finished. The cereal is then packed into 220 pound bags and sold at the market by the bag, or it is sold in small quantities by market traders who display it in large, conical mounds on their tables on market day. Some producers sell to wholesalers who transport the stocks of garri to other towns and markets. It is an extremely popular food all over southern Ghana. To eat garri, one simply adds boiling water to create the desired consistency. It is Africa's answer to "instant cereal".

The Wenchi study included 15 women who produced garri in small scale enterprises. Each woman invested her money in raw cassava and oversaw the process described from beginning to end. Along the way, these women employed people on a regular basis to carry out the steps in the process When the final product was sold, each woman reaped the profits or took

responsibility for the losses. The general characteristics of the women and their firms are discussed in the next section. Following that there is a detailed examination of the way these entrepreneurs generate employment and incomes for themselves and, as we shall see, for quite a few others.

General Characteristics of the Garri-makers and their Firms

The fifteen firms studied were all "household" establishments. That is, the women used their homes and the compound area as the main site for their activities. None of the women rented or owned additional space for the processing, though more successful garri-makers acquired land for growing cassava to supply their establishments. All the enterprises were located within a six mile radius of Wenchi Town. Four were in the town, and four were on the town's periphery. The remaining seven firms were located in more rural areas around the town.

Each firm was very small. For analysis, the firms were divided into three classes based upon the number directly employed on the premises. The largest, a Class A firm, consisted of its owner-operator and three regular employees. There were nine class B firms with 2 employees each, and there were five Class C firms, each with one employee. All the firms were operated by a single person. There were no partnerships or other ownership arrangements.

The majority of the women who ran the enterprises were not from the local area. Nine came from the Volta Region where garri-making is a popular occupation. Most of these women came to Wenchi during the early 1960s when they and their families were displaced by the flooding of the lake created by the Volta Dam. One woman came from the Upper Region and another was from the Ivory Coast. Four were from the Brong Ahafo Region.

The women were generally middle-aged and were not well educated. Thirteen of the women were from 30 to 44 years old. Of these, nine had never attended school and four had completed various levels of primary education. Two women were in their twenties. One had completed middle school and the other had completed primary school. Nine of the women were married, two were widowed, and four said they were married but their husbands did not live at home.

All the garri-makers used inexpensive, low technology equipment in their operations. The average investment in fixed capital was about $23 and included the purchase of large, shallow metal pans and wooden paddles.[13] The only mechanized process needed for production was the grating of the cassava. For this the women depended on the local mill in

town. Working capital consisted of the raw cassava, charcoal, jute bags, inventories of finished product, and cash on hand or debts. Average working capital was estimated at about $78.[14] The investment in fixed capital, then, was a relatively small proportion of the manufacturing process, whereas the commitment necessary for the purchase of inputs was larger and required continuous investment and management of capital. It was in the maintenance of working capital flows that most of these women entrepreneurs needed assistance.

This is not to say that they did not need assistance in simply starting their firms. Most of the women obtained their initial capital from three sources: six had loans from their husbands: four obtained loans from uncles or other family members: and five used money they had saved from employment as wage laborers or in petty trade. The absence of loans from formal credit institutions was striking. All the women said they had not applied to banks for credit; all said they would probably be turned down if they did. Most believed that banks would not loan money to women. They cited the fact that even the more powerful cloth merchants in the district obtained loans from family rather than from banks. A few said they did not have enough collateral in the form of land, inventories, or other possessions.

About half the women said they saved some of their profits in the local bank. Their savings helped them weather bad economic times when necessary. The savings also enabled them to reinvest in their businesses, in other income generating activities, and in the education of their relatives. One woman said she used her savings to put her son and a nephew through secondary school. Another set up her daughter in the cloth trade, and yet another used her money to acquire land on which to grow more cassava.

In a broader sense, the propensity to save is an important aspect of the development process. Money saved in many small accounts in banks can be loaned out in large amounts to entrepreneurs for productive investment. The savings of the garri-makers accrue not only to the local, but to the national economy as well.

The Employment Generating Effects of the Garri-makers.

Once a woman obtained money to cover the cost of buying basic equipment and raw materials, the employment generating effects of her activities began. Agnes' story is quite typical of the way garri-makers operated.

Agnes moved to Wenchi from the Volta Region with her husband in 1962. They settled on a small piece of farmland where they grew plantain, groundnuts, and cocoa. Agnes grew vegetables and cassava in her own

garden. She began her garri-making business with a loan of $75 from her husband to buy equipment and to add to her stock of cassava from her garden. She trained two "sisters" to do the "cooking" process which dries the grated cassava.

Agnes' small crop was quickly used up. She contracted with a nearby farm family to supply her with one *pole*, or about 1/3 acre of cassava. She employed the family to plant, weed, and harvest the crop for the full time equivalent of 40 days labor for one person.[15] The cost for this was $40. This supplied her with approximately 1500 tubers, each weighing 1 1/2 to 2 pounds. As cassava can be stored in the ground, Agnes could take delivery on as much of the crop as she could process in a week, about 300 tubers. The 1/3 acre was enough to keep her supplied for about five weeks.

Each week the cassava was harvested Agnes paid $1.50 for a truck with a driver and helper to load the tubers, take them to the local mill, and unload them.[16] This provided about one hour of work for each worker. Next, the tubers were peeled and cut into chunks. This task was performed by several women who work in the front yard of the mill amidst piles of slippery cassava peels and stacks of raw, pinkish tubers. These women are not mill employees. Each is an independent worker who contracts with the various garri-makers to do this work. Agnes hired two women for two full days at a cost of $1 per day. This pay level was half the daily minimum wage declared by the government. She paid the miller .50 per basket to grind the chopped tubers. This amounted to about 20 baskets, or $10. After the grinding, the peelers wash the grated material and pack it into sacks. What began at 650 pounds of cassava, emerges from the two-day process as 500 pounds of material packed into six or seven jute bags. Agnes again employed a truck, a driver and helper to deliver the bags to her compound at a cost of $1. Another half-hour each of work was provided for the driver and his helper.

At her compound, Agnes employed two women five days a week for four to six hours each day to "cook" the garri and bag it. She paid them .80 a day or $4 a week. Agnes also helped to dry the cassava. It took the three of them two full weeks to produce 8 one-hundred pound bags of garri. Every other week a wholesaler visited the compound and bought the finished product for $17 a bag, or a total of $136.

Agnes had weekly expenses as follows: assorted workers ($24.50); charcoal ($7.20); and jute bags ($12). There was a .20 tax on each bag sold which amounted to .80 on a weekly basis. The $40 invested in the cassava crop amounted to $8 per week. Therefore, the total weekly production cost was $52.30, or $104.60 every two weeks. As she was paid $136 for the product, her bi-weekly profit was $31.40. On a monthly basis Agnes' small business earned $62.80. Her annual income was $753.60.

Not every garri-maker in Wenchi was as successful. Akose earned barely

$100 a year employing one full-time "cooker" at her compound. Sutifi employed two "cookers" and said some years she made as much as $300 and in others less than $100. Mrs. Oku, who owned the largest firm, averaged over $1000 annually.

Despite variations in amounts produced and income earned, the production process followed by Agnes was typical and so were her basic costs. Because she and other garri-makers created partial employment for some workers, it is necessary to combine the labor demands of several firms to derive an estimate of the employment created in Wenchi by their activity.

Using Agnes' firm as a model, the total employment created might be estimated as follows: three garri-makers employed two peelers full time, 5 1/2 days a week; 15 garri-makers employed ten peelers on a full time basis; and six garri-makers employed one miller full time. In fact there were two mills in town, but as one had broken down, all the cassava was processed at one mill that worked virtually around the clock. Three millers were employed there on six hour shifts; the mill shut down between midnight and 6 am. Four garri-makers employed a driver and a helper full time. Not every firm owner rented trucks, some used cart pullers for short trips. Nevertheless, a conservative estimate is that the 15 garri-makers together employed four people associated with transport. They also employed a total of 23 "cookers" at their respective compounds.

Finally, the garri-makers' demands for cassava created employment for approximately twelve farmers full time. The basis for this estimate is that cassava is grown during two seasons on a year-round basis. Agnes made ten purchases during the year, with each purchase generating 40 days of on-farm work for one farmer, or 400 days of employment. Put another way, she employed 1 1/3 persons each year to cultivate and harvest enough cassava to meet her needs. The estimate of twelve farmers fully employed by the garri-makers is meant to be conservative as the demands of some were undoubtedly less than Agnes' firm.

There was also indirect employment generated from the women's purchase of charcoal and jute bags, and from the transport associated with the sale of garri to the wholesaler. It must also be noted that the women contributed taxes to the local economy.

To put the employment generated by the garri-makers in perspective, it is helpful to compare it to the amount of employment created by another government development scheme. A multi-million dollar tomato cannery was built in Wenchi with the intent of employing 80 people in the industry and encouraging employment among local farmers who were to produce the tomatoes. The cannery operated at barely 20% capacity for five months of the year. The capital/labor ratio of the garri-makers is a tiny fraction of that of the tomato cannery. *Yet they managed to employ 52*

workers full time the year around. Clearly, the garri-makers would have been a much better investment for the government in terms of employment generation.

Programs that aid the small scale sector will continue to ignore women until the true nature of women's entrepreneurial activities and their real contribution to the development process are fully appreciated. Currently, there are no studies that examine the magnitude of investment made by women or that discuss the value of their products to the economy. No studies present women's endeavors in terms of the benefits that flow from linkages established to other economic sectors and no studies emphasize the employment and income generated by women's enterprises. Rigorous, micro-level studies of production processes that women entrepreneurs follow are almost nonexistent.[18] Without such research it will be difficult to convince program designers and policy makers that women make an important contribution to the achievement of economic development objectives.

Notes

1. The survey was conducted in 1982 by obtaining copies of the most recent available national development plans for forty-one African nations. The plans were surveyed for a specific commitment of employment creation as a priority aim of development policy. Most plans were dated from the mid-1970s and extended to the end of the decade. A few extended into the 1980s. For thirty nations the commitment to job creation was found in the early part of the plans, generally in a discussion of urgent problems requiring priority attention. Eleven nations mentioned the need to create employment as a pressing problem or discussed programs already being implemented.
2. See Edgar O. Edwards (ed.) *Employment in Developing Nations*, New York, 1974; I.L.O. "Employment, Incomes and Equality. A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya", Geneva, 1972; Michael P. Todaro, "Income Expectations, Rural Urban Migration and Employment in Africa" *International Labor Review* November, 1971. Among the more important studies of small-scale firms and the "informal sector" not conducted in Africa but influencing African government policies are: T.G. McGee, "Peasants in Cities: A Paradox, a Paradox, a Most Ingenious Paradox", *Human Organization* 1973; H.T. Oshima (1971). And finally there were two studies conducted in Ghana of small-scale activities that are important: K. Hart (1973) and K. Hart, "Small Scale Entrepreneurs in Ghana and Development Planning" *Journal of Development Studies* 1970.
3. There is no universally accepted definition of "small-scale". The term usually refers to a cluster of characteristics that describe the industry according to the number of employees, level of output, amount of capital invested, amount of energy consumed, and the use of machinery. What constitutes small-scale in one country might be medium or large in another. In Uganda, small scale means anything employing fewer than fifty; in Ghana, it is anything employing fewer than ten.

4. See, for example, Republic of Kenya, *National Development Plan of Kenya, 1970-1974*; and *National Development Plan of Kenya, 1974-78*. Also see Ghana, *Five year Development Plan, 1975/76-1979/80*; and Tanzania, *Second Five Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, 1969-1974*; and *Third Five Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, 1974-1978*.
5. Tinker (1976; 1979) and Carr (1978) illustrate several ways in which the programs to transfer technology in the form of food processing machinery have almost invariably been put into the hands of men, regardless of women's dominance in these activities. Rogers (1981), UNRISD (1975) and Dixon (1979) provide illustrations of the inaccessibility of credit to women operating small-scale ventures in rural and urban areas. The series of articles in Dauber and Cain (1981) also point out the way in which development programs have harmed women's position.
6. "Unpaid family worker" is the most elusive category for it includes apprentices, family members working in agriculture, or those who seemingly do not earn monetary income, and those who work for a specific minimum time in an economic enterprise (Dixon 1979). This last definition applies to many who work a few hours a day in a small "sweatshop" or in sales. Sethuraman (1981) takes a different view of small-scale activities in urban settings, and disputes the idea that these people are "entrepreneurs". Rather, he says, they are only interested in limited, immediate employment and income for themselves, p. 189.
7. See for example the theories of J.M. Keynes; R.S. Eckaus (1955); A. Lewis (1954); J.C.H. Fei and G. Ranis (1964); S. Wellisz (1968); Harris and M.P. Todaro (1970) and J. Mellor and U. Lele (1972).
8. The term "informal sector" has gained wide currency, but its meaning has acquired various shadings according to researchers and their objectives (Sethuraman 1981). The Kenya Employment Mission (ILO, 1972) described the formal and informal sector in contrasting terms. Hart (1973) describes a variety of activities that contrast with formal, contractual wage labor, and McGee (1973) equates it with the bazaar economy. Bromley and Gerry (1979) use the term "casual work" to emphasize an unequal, exploitative relationship between workers and employers.
9. An owner-operator may decide to substitute capital for labor in the form of an investment in more machinery.
10. The data for this study were collected as part of a broader investigation of the contribution of Ghana's agro-based industries to the attainment of rural development objectives (White, 1983). The study was sponsored by a grant from the Social Science Research Council, and the field work was conducted between 1974-1976.
11. As of 1982 the new Ghana Census had not been released. Unfortunately, more recent figures are not available from any source thus far.
12. The description draws on data from the *1970 Census of Population, Special Report A, Statistics for Large Towns*. Whether a person is economically active or not is assessed in terms of monetary values for labor performed.
13. Values were computed in New Cedis. In 1975 one NC equaled about .80 in U.S. currency. As land and buildings were also the homes of the garri-makers, it was difficult to assess their value as part of the fixed capital in the operation.
14. Working capital had to be estimated as only two of the owner operators kept crude accounts. All were reluctant to discuss cash on hand. Material products could be counted and their value estimated according to market value.

15. The labor estimate is from D.S. Thornton (1973) "Estimated Labour Use for Cassava in Man Days per Acre: Mafi, Kumasi Survey Records" *Summary Report of Agriculture in South East Ghana*, p. 174. Reading, U.K.: University of Reading.
16. Transport fees seemed excessive, but petrol cost almost $4 per gallon in 1975.
17. Full time employment is defined as six hours per day, five and a half days per week, and twenty-two days per month.
18. See Mahir Saul (1981).

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Women and the Latin American Livestock Sector

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The amount of attention devoted to livestock questions by social scientists concerned with development in Latin America is curiously sparse when compared with the voluminous literatures on peasantries and migration questions. This lack of analysis is perplexing given the extraordinary importance of animal activities in terms of land area, investment, the central positions of livestock in Latin American rural development programs, and the integral relation of the expansion of livestock with peasant marginalization and migration in much of Latin America (Hecht 1982, Wasserstrom 1983, Pompermeyer 1983, Aragon 1979).

One reason for this neglect may be that livestock is a fairly invisible land use at all scales of production, either because the production is an extensive land use, or because it is relegated to the household whose activities are often not apparent to many researchers. Livestock production is compelling for both large and small-scale producers. For large landowners, livestock and extensive land areas are a rational means for confronting a variety of macro-economic conditions (inflation, lack of other income opportunities) as well as for household income diversification and consumption strategies. Further, as I will show, livestock is a useful "window" for understanding the structural conditions and migration patterns that prevail in many rural areas, particularly lowland frontiers, and their social consequences.

Extensive livestock operations, with luxurious green pastures filled with glossy animals, have a rather benign aspect. There are few people anywhere in the large scale livestock landscape, since it absorbs very little labor, so the social consequences of this land use, impoverishment and consequent out-migration from rural areas, are often spatially displaced into boom towns and the larger provincial and national capitals. The human costs of such large scale production have been ignored. Instead, studies have focused on the issues of the human domination of nature, or

technical analysis of how to augment animal production. These literatures tend to be framed by biologists concerned with the ecological effects of ranching expansion (Goodland 1980, Hecht 1982, Fearnside 1980, Parsons 1976, Denevan 1983, Myers 1983) or by economists and pasture and animals scientists involved in microeconomic and production concerns (Lattimore and Schuh 1979, Jarvis 1972, Alarcon et al 1980, Sanchez and Tergas 1979).

At the other end of the scale, most small scale production tends to be dispersed, and because much of the care and handling of stock is done by women and children, it is perceived as primarily devoted to household production. Female participation in the livestock sector as a whole is reduced to widely repeated phrases in the livestock literature like "women produce a few chickens for home or market" or "women may sell their animals to itinerant stock buyers". Thus, as I shall show, an entire economy and social structure is dismissed in a sentence or two. Such oversights can produce serious empirical distortions in the evaluation of women's economic contribution in this sector, analagous perhaps to the myth of women's limited participation in agriculture, and can lead to policies that are very disadvantageous to women.

This article examines the role of women in the Latin American livestock sector. There are several reasons why an analysis of women's participation in livestock rearing is of interest for development studies. Women's contribution to livestock production is far more widespread and more economically significant than government statistics and general impressions might suggest. This is due in part to the dominance of what Strickland (1975) and others have called the Luso-Hispanic ranching complex (large scale extensive ranching based on wage labor) whose most potent cultural image is that of the Marlboro man. This image has tended to obscure the fairly ubiquitous participation in this sector by women. This social ideology has serious effects on the material conditions of women stock producers not only because their contributions are underrepresented, but also because the major funding for the sector is skewed away from them for reasons of gender and class. Of the estimated 24 billion dollars that will probably be applied to stock rearing in Latin America by the year 2000 (Hrabovsky 1981), almost none of it will find its way to female participants in animal production.

The paper is divided into three sections. Section 1 provides a review of the biological and economic dimensions of animal production. Section 2 discusses the widespread participation of women in this sector and points to stock production as an important income source for peasant families. The third section analyses the "modernized" livestock sector, particularly in frontier areas, and its implications for women, both as semi-rural producers and ultimately as urban migrants.

1. An Overview of Livestock in Latin America

The term livestock refers to any domesticated animals which are eventually killed and eaten under normal conditions, such as buffalo, cattle, goats, llamas, alpacas, sheep, pigs, various fowl, rabbits, pigs and guinea pigs. An obvious and fundamental characteristic of stock is that they have high use value as well as exchange value and can be diverted from household to market and vice versa. Another central characteristic of most livestock, but one that is often overlooked by economists and planners, is that animals provide an array of important ancillary products like fuel, fertilizer, wool, leather, fur, down, traction, transport, eggs and cheese in addition to meat or offspring. Finally, livestock have substantial social and cultural significance in Latin America. Some of the major characteristics of stock that make them appealing both to large and small holders are outlined in the following section, although various attributes are emphasized to different degrees in different cultures and at different historical moments. Animals have great biological flexibility and can be inserted into macro and household economies in complex ways to satisfy a variety of economic needs.

1.1 Biological Flexibility

Livestock can be used to harvest terrains that are difficult or impossible for agricultural use, or in areas where private property relations are weak. Steep slopes, marshlands, floodplains, roadsides, fallows, village streets and some forests can thus effectively contribute to a person's or group's productive resources. Furthermore, throughout much of Latin America, there has been a long history of use of communal grazing lands for indigenous stock production (Orlove 1978, Flores-Uchoa 1974, Bourque and Warren 1981). This includes lowland *caboclo* (peasant) communities in Brazil (Tendler 1981, Bunker 1981) as well as semi-feudal ranching elites (Riviere 1976, Hecht 1982b), demonstrating that access to grazing land has not, until recently, been particularly restricted. Although animals are capable of foraging in areas inappropriate for agriculture, animals are not found exclusively on second rate land. Latin American livestock operations occupy substantial areas of excellent agricultural land.

Livestock can tolerate drastic fluctuations in environmental conditions, in forage quality and availability. Animal scientists have focused on ruminants in their analysis of this variability. But small stock (the village scavengers) also tolerate fluctuations in food quality and availability with the annual rise and fall of the household or village fortunes. Yet, a consequence of such oscillations in food supply is that the animals are small and are often characterized by an erratic growth pattern when there is no

supplemental feeding, even in fairly capitalized stock operations (OAS 1977, FAO 1973, Mueller 1974). Without food supplements, the production of ancillaries like eggs and milk is low since more energy of the animal must go to its own maintenance.

Livestock are a means of storing certain kinds of agricultural surplus. Although this aspect of livestock production has been more thoroughly developed for African pastoral and U.S. feedlot systems, it also operates to a lesser extent in Latin America, where animals can consume crop residues like sugar cane bagasse (residue from pressing sugarcane), corn stocks, rice bran, fibrous sweet manioc, and vegetable residues. While the direct consumption of human food by animals is a startling idea in Latin America because of widespread malnutrition and starvation, it is being promoted as a means of animal fattening, as is the diversion of irrigated lands from food to forage production (Hravobsky 1982).

1.2 Macro-economic Features

Due to the high quality of animal protein, as well as the cultural values associated with eating meat, livestock has a much higher value per unit weight than subsistence crops and many export crops. Not only are the terms of trade for livestock products generally better than for most agricultural commodities but the rate of increase in their prices has continuously improved over the last decade (Feder 1979, FAO 1980).

While animal prices are not immune to fluctuations, the magnitude of the oscillations is usually less dramatic over the year than those associated with grains, whose prices tend to be notoriously high just prior to harvest, and then plummet right afterward. The rise and fall of the market prices of large animals tend to be linked to product cycles (viz the cattle cycle)[1], but unlike most commodities, the animals do not need to be "harvested" at a particular time, and can be held off the market until prices improve, or in the case of small producers, shunted to household consumption. In general, peasant or small scale producers are more likely to sell animals in response to household exigencies than to market signals.[2]

Livestock are extremely important in inflationary economies. Many observers have described livestock as bank accounts or "stores of wealth", although conceivably, various goods could (and do) serve this function in stable economies. The high use and exchange values of animals, high national and international demand, the policy emphasis, and the ease with which they move between household and market permit them to hold their value in inflationary economies. In much of Latin America, where inflation rates of over 100% per year are not uncommon, these "hedges" become an important feature of investment decisions for both large and small producers.

This is especially true if animals can be purchased with subsidized credit. Raising livestock is often a means of acquiring subsidized rural credit. A large amount of credit is earmarked directly for or eventually ends up in livestock investment, particularly in frontier[3], but also in semi-arid, or grassland areas. Financing acquired in this manner can then be redirected into other activities. There are several problems with livestock credit. First, most of it is directed toward the purchase of cattle, and this limits its utility to peasant households. Second, most animal credit is granted to *latifundista* (large-scale landowner) holdings. In Brazil, for example, 40% of the agricultural credit flows to the top 1% of the agricultural establishments (Pinto 1980), and similar patterns have been described for Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, and most of the Central American countries. Third, in order to acquire credit, one must usually show documents indicating proof of actual land ownership. In areas where traditional land relations prevail, or where titles are in flux, small scale producers are denied access to credit resources, and the landless have no hope of ever acquiring it.

Animals purchased with credit are particularly valued, because one buys an animal whose value is at least keeping abreast of inflation, while the value of the currency for debt obligation is rapidly eroding. This method of accumulation of wealth is greatly appreciated by both large and small stock producers, although, as mentioned, the latter have far more limited access.

Livestock, especially cattle, are often a means of asserting land claims. Historically, livestock have been central to the process of incorporating state or unclaimed lands into the private domain. During the colonial period, such expansion, at the expense of indigenous groups, was carried out with state sanctions and continues in the contemporary setting via credit subsidies and incentives.

While large scale *hacendados* (ranch owners) and rural elites are the usual groups that use stock to consolidate land claims, they are not unique in employing this tool. For example, the lowland Runa Indians of Ecuador adopted cattle in order to secure tribal lands threatened by state confiscation and the competing claims of squatters and oil companies. The Runa do not like cattle either as food or activity, but this is one of the very few means of land control available to them which is recognized by the state (McDonald 1981). Peasants and small scale land speculators also use cattle as a means of confirming land claims in areas where overlapping titles are common, such as in frontier areas. Large scale industrial capitalists in Brazil have also entered into livestock activities, although their entrance was based on the 12 year tax holidays[4] on their industrial holdings, the desire for portfolio diversification and land for speculation in the face of rising inflation rates (Hecht 1982b). Initially, land occupation via cattle

was argued on the basis of its low labor requirements (Pompermeyer 1983, Hecht 1982). Today, it is the economic, ecological and geopolitical aptness (all open to question) that underlie the policies promoting livestock activity.[5]

The ensemble of the biological characteristics of stock and the usefulness of animals in confronting the macro-economic situations that prevail in Latin America also make them particularly useful to small scale producers and semi-rural households.

1.3 Small Scale and Household Production

One of the main reasons that small scale producers own animals is that stock are both a biological and economic means of evening out risk in agriculture. The disaster of low yields due to climatic, pest or cultivar problems, or through the collapse of commodity prices, can, in some cases, be partially offset through the sale of stock or its ancillaries. This buffer effect is crucial when the pressures for internal differentiation of peasantries is severe, as in newly opened frontier zones, or where kinship (both fictive and real) access is substantially weakened through the transformation in social relations.

Livestock can be integrated into many agricultural production systems, as a source of energy and nutrients. Both of these may be critical for continuing agricultural production (cf. Bourque and Warren 1981, Deere 1978, Winterholder et al 1974). The role of livestock as consumers of agricultural wastes and unused land has already been noted.

Livestock have fairly constant labor demands throughout the year, with a few peaks during reproduction of large stock. While Deere (1978) has shown that livestock activities occupy more than thirty hours a week in peasant households, this labor complements other activities in compounds (meal preparation, household tasks) or other agricultural activities. Animals can be fed agricultural weeds or can graze fallow lands while agricultural tasks are carried out. The ability to tend to animals while simultaneously engaging in other household or farm activities helps explain why small scale stock production is such an overwhelmingly female occupation.

The sale of secondary animal products and animal energy can be a significant source of cash income for peasant households. Table 1 shows the relative importance of animal production as a source of income relative to other activities by class strata in Cajamarca, Peru. This table demonstrates the central position of livestock activities in household production. Except for the dairy farms of rich peasants, the stock production is largely under the control of women and children. The sale of ancillaries

generates from 46 to 100% of the income from animal activities, with an overall average of 71%.

As the number and value of these animal products increase, or the sales become more systematic, the control of these increasingly shifts away from women to men. The rental of oxen is usually controlled by men, but in this study, as elsewhere in the Andes, access to oxen is critical for plowing for grain production (Bourque and Warren 1981). If the landless and the petit bourgeois are excluded, most peasants' households derive about 16% of the income from animal and agricultural production from animal rentals. De Janvry (1983) suggests that in India the ownership of rental animals has become a central income generating activity of landless peasants, although in Latin America, the process does not seem to have occurred. Oxen ownership is concentrated among middle and rich peasants.

In sum, livestock are an important means of wealth accumulation and income generation for small holders. They form one of the few means, other than fielding more wage labor, available for buffering agricultural and household risk.

2. Women in the Latin American Livestock Sector

In Latin America, there are basically two livestock economies. One is small scale and based on the labor of, and largely controlled by, women. Production takes place on relatively little land and is carried out in conjunction with a variety of household and agricultural activities. The other is large scale, capital intensive and land extensive, primarily based on male wage labor and controlled by corporate or elite groups. While both are oriented to markets, each fulfills a variety of portfolio (or household) purposes. The product of small scale producers is minor compared to large scale operations, and their market and political power are correspondingly weak.

Women play a particularly important role in small scale livestock production, although their economic contributions to this sector are almost completely unknown, except for Deere's work (see Table 1). Andean cultures in Latin America are the only ones in which large scale stock rearing and animal rearing in general was well developed by indigenous groups. Much of the ethnographic literature on Andean groups points to the developed female participation in livestock activities, including direct ownership of the most basic and prestigious resources in the societies (cf. West 1983). Because of the long history of animal husbandry in Andean communities, a complex cultural role for women in these areas in this sector is not surprising. This must stand in contrast to the role of peasant

Table 1
Sources of Income: Composition of Net Income
By Relative Importance of Source and Land-Size Strata

Land Size Strata	Agricultural Production	Agricultural Processing	Animal Production	Animal Rental	Wages	Other
Landless	1.0%	0.1%	18.8%	0.4%	55.5%	25.7%
Small Holder	10.0%	0.2%	10.0%	3.4%	48.6%	27.4%
Middle Peasant	19.6%	0.1%	27.0%	8.7%	23.5%	21.1%
Rich Peasant	42.0%	0.2%	24.4%	15.4%	11.4%	6.6%
Petit Bourgeois	26.1%	0.1%	62.1%	1.3%	5.7%	5.3%

After Deere (1978)

women in the Luso-Hispanic context, where control of large stock is almost exclusively a male purvey.

These two livestock economies are not necessarily disarticulated from each other. In many milk producing areas, such as southern Brazil, Cajamarca etc., peasant production can often go to the same purchaser as large scale production. In the two areas just mentioned for example, Nestle is the buyer. The small livestock sector can supply labor to the large scale sector in the form of "milk maids", or other kinds of handlers. Small scale production has also historically provided young and fattening animals to larger holders. The separation is much more complete, however, between these economies when large scale beef production and commercialization must focus on subsistence markets. Wage opportunities in the large scale sector are mainly for men, with the exception of service activities. The two case studies that follow will illustrate the dynamics of women's participation in the two livestock economies. Before that, however, a few more general comments are in order.

In the last decade, increasing attention has been focused on the role of women in agriculture, both as non-remunerated family workers and as wage labor. These studies emphasize the political economy of the sexual division of labor, the role of women in the subsistence economy and the means by which the household peasant economy interacts with the larger capitalist economy. The studies repeatedly point out the important—and hitherto ignored—contribution of women in the production of commodities for use and exchange (cf. Bourque and Warren 1981, Deere 1978, Leon de Leal 1983). As the relations of production change, so does the sexual division of labor, including the increased participation of women in wage labor (Young 1976, Deere 1978, Deere and Leon de Leal 1983). This increased participation in the "male" domain, however, is often

characterized by its extremely casual nature and the low level of remuneration. Women are often paid only slightly more than children. Yet household tasks must continue to be performed, so wage activities, coupled with domestic tasks, still result in extremely large labor demands on women's time (Beneria 1983, Rubbo 1975). The role of women has been critical in marketing, making an essential contribution to household incomes, but this role is also being eroded (Deere 1978, Bourque and Warren 1981). At the level of the larger economy, women's agricultural and household labor provides a subsistence subsidy that permits both urban and rural capitalists to pay less than a living wage, no benefits, and to make the household bear the cost of workers' unemployment (de Janvry 1981). Agricultural activities and women's role in them must, therefore, be understood in relation to the agrarian structures, prevailing sources of wage labor opportunities and how these are inserted into the larger economy.

2.1 Women and Small Scale Animal Production

There are very few studies of the role of women in livestock production. Women's involvement in stock rearing has generally been studied within the framework of women in agriculture. The most complete data that deals with this issue is contained in Deere's (1978) study of Cajamarca. Along with the data on women's participation, she points out that women from smaller holdings and landless households were almost completely in control of the household livestock sector, an important source of income.

Access to the means of production (land) is central in determining the kinds of income-generating activities in which households will engage. Table 2 shows the widespread involvement in stock rearing among all income strata in Cajamarca, the hours per week engaged in stock rearing compared with participation in wage labor, and its contribution to incomes. On the average, between marketing and stock rearing, women generate about one-third of the money income produced by the household. Deere also points out that livestock rearing, in spite of its crucial position in the formation of household income, is also the most poorly remunerated activity on a hourly basis.

In addition to women's important role in livestock production within the household and for the market, they can also be employed by the dairies as wage workers (milkmaids), which occupies them for five hours a day, and leaves them with time to carry out the other usual activities.

Deere and Leon de Leal (1983) examined the role of women in agriculture across modes of production, comparing Cajamarca with a peasant

Table 2
Percentage of Households Where
at Least One Woman Engages in Agricultural Activities

Activity	Peasant Garcia Rovira	Mixed Cajamarca	Capitalists El Espinal
Agricultural Field Work	18	83	25
Agricultural Processing	53	100	33
Agricultural Services (cooking)	95	51	33
Animal Care	88	95	45
Marketing	24	88	40

Source: Deere and Leon de Leal, 1983.

community, and one where capitalist relations of production predominated. This study showed that the sexual division of labor varied tremendously and was both materially and culturally determined. Table 2 shows the kinds of activities in which women are occupied as social relations of production change.

The first thing that emerges from the table is that the women at Cajamarca are more "evenly" engaged in a wide variety of tasks and to a greater degree than the women of the Colombia study sites. These differences appear to be mainly cultural. The next main pattern is that animal production activities—feeding, grazing, vetting, collecting and processing of secondary products are clearly "women's work" across the board. In the peasant situation, only agricultural services, such as cooking for labor exchanges, involved more households than stock raising activities. In Cajamarca, it is also the second most important kind of farm work, involving 95% of the households. In El Espinal, where capitalist relations of production prevail, and about 25% of the households are landless, more households utilized women's labor in livestock production than any other agricultural activity.

Other than these studies, there is little quantitative data that focuses on women's participation in stock production. This is due, I believe, to its vernacular nature, which makes livestock production by women "disappear". Animals play a central role in Latin American peasant economies as products for use and sale, and the dynamics of small scale women's production is an important research area both for informing policy, and for determining how these women's activities are modified through changing relations of production.

3. Large Scale Livestock and Women

The expansion of the large scale livestock sector, which has been an important policy emphasis in the last decade, has substantial implications for rural women that extend beyond questions of relations of production. The effects of large scale stock raising, its associated land concentration, and labor market characteristics have been detrimental to rural women.

In much of Latin America, the "modernization" of agricultural land uses means the expansion of large scale livestock production. Crouch, de Janvry (1980) and Feder (1979) have argued that agricultural systems which are most amenable to domination by local capitalists are the ones that expand the fastest. In many Latin American lowland tropical areas, particularly in the Brazilian Amazon, the conjuncture of generous credit, various state subsidies, infrastructure development and a speculative land situation in an inflationary economy favors capital accumulation through land monopolization.

Yet, for Latin America in general, large scale beef production would be difficult to describe as a "modernized" sector. If this implies wage relations and improved technologies, it is worth noting that Luso-American ranching (extensive, low productivity meat production) has been characterized by wage labor since the 16th century (Bishko 1952, Stricton 1966), and that the technology of large scale production is not very advanced. The major advances in the sector as a whole include fencing, aftosa vaccine, the occasional use of improved grass and legume species, and better breeding stock. The expansion of ranching is less related to technical issues than it is to the "reinvention" of the *hacienda*. "Archaic" structures can be redeveloped when they satisfy certain issues related to production costs, or in this case, as a response to the uncertainties of the larger economies (cf. Berger and Piore, 1981). The contemporary *hacienda* or *fazenda* (ranch) is not for the most part, a feudal remnant, but a complex response to constraints in investment outlets and availability of state subsidies (Hecht 1983).

It could be argued that the function of livestock production is merely that of land incorporation prior to more "developed" intensive uses. Two aspects of the contemporary expansion suggest that this is not very ikely: 1) cattle areas increasingly occupy the humid tropical areas where soil fertility changes and compaction may preclude, except at great cost, later agriculture; 2) *Pecuarizacao*—the process of converting lands in more intensive production (i.e. cotton, coffee) to pasture was quite widespread in Brazil during the 1970's (cf. d'Incao-Mello, Goodman 1979). Both these processes imply declining land use intensities, land availability and employment in the livestock or in the "peasant" sector.

My discussion will now center on large scale livestock development in Amazonia and its implications for women in the region. In the Brazilian Amazon, there are historically weak peasantries where female participation in wage labor, but particularly agricultural wage labor, is not well developed (cf. d'Incao-Mello 1974). Land ownership in the "cattle corridor" along the Belem-Brasilia Highway is extremely concentrated, with 70% of the farms on less than 6% of the land, while 85% of the land is controlled by 5% of the establishments (Hecht 1982). The region has been characterized by very intense land conflicts, and there is much tension with land titles. About 75% of the rural population of the area I discuss has no access to land (through rental, sharecropping or tenancy), and 82% is landless (Lisansky 1979). This situation is admittedly extreme, but it nonetheless can illuminate the implications other similar conditions hold:

1) the dominant land use has a very low capacity to absorb labor,
2) agricultural labor needs are highly pulsed; and
3) agricultural workers are almost completely proletarianized.

The expansion of livestock in Amazonia was a central feature of Amazonian development policy. Infrastructure development, large volumes of subsidized credit, and an inflationary economy set into motion an intense speculative land market, where the real value of land increased by 100% per year (Mahar 1979). Large scale investors moved in at the same time that *grilleros* (land grabbers), spontaneous migrants from Brazil's south, and from within the northern region, arrived. This created an incredibly volatile situation, since land shifted from being a factor of production to being a commodity in itself. Previous land rights had been essentially usufruct rentals, and titles had been allocated on a hereditary and casual basis. When land itself, rather than its products, became the focus of economic activity, these seldom surveyed 'titles' fueled the uproar. This situation was compounded by national and state agencies with discretion over the same pieces of land. Given the general confusion, claims and rights to land were subsequently established through a variety of innovative techniques including bribery, gunmen, and legal battles. In this process, the "moving frontier", where small farmers have access to land for a few years before relinquishing it by force or agreement to large holders, was undermined.

As a consequence of the violence and the virtual monopolization of land, disenfranchized peasants and migrants fled to existing towns, or developed boomtowns at the opening margins of the frontier in the hopes of acquiring a piece of land. These villages and towns began to serve as labor and supply depots for the surrounding *fazendas* and permitted the landless households to diversify their sources of subsistence through limited urban activities. The men are used as temporary wage labor since

the demands of ranch establishments are concentrated in the dry season for forest cutting and pasture cleaning. Permanent jobs on ranches are few. There is a technician level, including accountants, mechanics, heavy machinery operators, administrators, and a few cowboys (roughly one per every 500 hectares), a few permanent odd jobs, and then the vast temporary labor force, contracted as needed.

A study (Lisansky 1979) of one of these towns, Sta. Terezinha, illustrates some of the dynamics that prevail in such situations. The economy of Sta. Terezinha is based on servicing the enormous, surrounding ranches with men, materials, and prostitutes. Eighty-two percent of the population is landless, and during the year of the study, only 25% of the households did any planting. While there are a few peasant households, most of the people with INCRA (Colonization and Agrarian Reform Institute) land titles are the shop keepers and local elites who derive their incomes from commerce or livestock. The vast majority of the households must rely on wage labor and home production for their incomes. Men are often gone for substantial periods of time, so even though 15% of the households are technically headed by women, most are female-headed *de facto*.

For women to engage in agricultural wage labor is almost unheard of in Amazonia, although Lisansky (1979) does describe some single women involved in a labor exchange where they were allowed to keep a percentage of the rice they helped harvest, or the manioc they helped process. Their access to these activities was, however, mediated and supervised by kin.

There are very few jobs open to women in the region, and women who are married are discouraged from working by their husbands who feel humiliated, since this implies inadequate incomes, and perhaps a woman of questionable character. In spite of such strictures, 35% of the women in the town engaged in some form of wage activities on a steady basis. These were: 1) service jobs (maids, seamstresses, laundresses; 2) prostitutes; 3) commerce and clerks. Almost all these activities pay less than $100 per month, and the average wage was about $27 per month. Table 3 compares the wage rates between men and women. The only other source of income available to women is the sale of goods produced in the home.

Of necessity, livelihood activities are as diversified as possible, and as much labor as can be is committed to wage markets. In this economy, there are few interstitial spaces due to land monopoly, the nature of the commerce, as well as the class structure of Brazil's rural zones. Virtually all the women raised animals and sold them or their products for the town's local market. When eggs sell for $1.50 a dozen and a chicken goes for $3-5 dollars, given low income levels (about $60 per month), and the

Table 3
Cash Incomes for Males and Females in Wages

Money Equivalents	Females	Males
Nothing	68%	4%
$2.50-$25.00	11%	4%
$26.00-$90.00	11%	7%
$91.00-$100.00	5%	16%
$101.00-$150.00	5%	19%
$151.00-$250.00	0	9%
$250.00+	0	7%

Source: Lisansky, 1979

fact that most commodities that are purchased (and many must be) are sold at extremely expensive frontier prices, small stock production is important.

In this situation, the raising of small animals like chickens and pigs is one of the only means of production to which these extremely impoverished people have access. Small scale livestock rearing and home plot horticulture generate the basic household use values that are very difficult to substitute when wage rates are so depressed. Further, the contribution to household incomes of these animal products may be more significant than the small volume of traded products suggests. To these landless, small stock become, in a sense, a partial substitute for land, and along with wage labor, one of the few subsistence strategies available.

These various activities provide only barely adequate income, however, and for many families, migration becomes one of the main means of surviving. People move to the new frontiers: to Roraima and Rondonia, to the areas of public works like Tucurui Dam, or as many eventually do, to the larger cities. Even in the few areas where peasants received land, such as the Transamazon, the process of social differentiation of rural areas was quite acute, in part due to ecological factors, but also due to the extremely restrictive economic milieu that colonists faced (cf. Moran 1981, Smith 1981, Wood and Schmink 1979).

Thus, one arrives at an unusual paradox: in an area that has 60% of Brazil's national territory and a population of 10-12 million people, we see the highest rates of urbanization in Brazil and the most unequal distribution of assets. As Table 4 indicates, this increase was astounding. In the decade from 1970-1980, Amazonia added 10 new cities with populations between 20-50,000 and increased from 3 to 11 the number of cities

Table 4
Growth Rate 1970–1980
of Cattle Boom Towns in Eastern Amazonia

	1970	1980	Annual Rate
Conceiçao do Araguaia	27,372	129,442	15.70
Jacunda	7,225	15,178	20.93
Maraba	24,491	72,629	9.35
Paragominas	14,171	51,004	13.06
Sao Joao do Araguaia	15,341	10,588	8.84
Imperatriz	80,722	228,356	10.57
Barra do Garcas	16,223	44,895	10.41
Aripuana	1,911	14,813	22.02
Caceres	32,106	60,483	6.30
Sta. Terezinha	2,132	6,228	10.96

Source: IBGE, 1980. Census Data.

over 50,000. The capital city of Belem grew, according to official statistics, by more than 700,000 people.

In the urban sector, the 1970–1980 census registered domestic service as the main job activity, and the main growth sector for women. In the northern region labor participation rates for both men and women in all income producing activities were the lowest in all of Brazil (Mahar 1979), and the situation was especially acute for women. Thus, the modernization of the Amazonian landscape produced neither rural nor urban employment to any degree, leaving the bulk of the population in the informal sector.[6] While urban migration has generated low wage female industrial opportunities in some areas, such as the Mexican *maquiladores*, or the Singapore computer industries, Brazilian official underemployment of 43% suggests such a huge surplus labor reserve that there are virtually no places for women in these economies, except as servants and prostitutes.

Conclusion

While this is perhaps an extreme, and certainly grim picture, I believe the situation I have described has applicability to many expanding large-

scale beef producing regions, such as the Colombian llanos, southern Mexico, and livestock areas in Central America. Further, the expansion of the livestock sector is a central feature of much of Latin American development. This is due to the strength of beef in international markets (although this fluctuates) and because of the utility of livestock as an investment opportunity for national elites in the face of the contemporary macroeconomic milieu. The effect of this expansion will depend to a great degree on the strength of the local peasantries and their ability to maintain control of at least some land. If access to land can be preserved, agricultural modernization implies an exploited, but at least a continued, place for women in an admittedly declining sector. When land monopolization occurs, the focus of the solutions must either be serious land redistribution or an essentially urban development approach.

Notes

1. Cattle cycles are defined as the period from one low point in cattle numbers to the next low point. They are a result of a lagged response in production to a favorable or unfavorable profit situation. Producers, in response to low prices and attendant low profits or losses reduce their animal inventories or go out of business. Other ranchers end up liquidating their stocks. In these situations most cattle raisers cull cows heavily in order to eliminate breeding stock of low productivity. This further reduces prices. About two or three years after beef prices fall, there is a short supply of animals, and the price begins to rise. Cattlemen hold back their heifers, and this causes the prices to advance even further. Thus, price cycles are inversely related to inventories.
2. The question of whether peasants respond to market signals has been repeatedly carped about. In general, middle to rich peasants are more likely to respond to markets since they have more animals and assets in general with which to buffer price fluxes or household crises. Small farmers and the landless have less flexibility overall, and thus are more likely to sell out of necessity when catastrophe strikes.
3. Monopolization of rural credit by large-scale ranchers has been discussed in a variety of lending agency documents (World Bank, AID, InterAmerican Development Bank). Feder (1979), Hecht (1982b), Mahar (1979), Schmink and Wood (1983), and Barbira-Scazzochio (1981) include discussions on rural credit in various frontier areas.
4. Twelve-year tax holidays are part of the fiscal incentive package provided to investors as part of the Amazon Development policies. These industrialists or agro-industrial elites, if they invested in Amazonia, paid no income tax for twelve years.
5. The profitability of livestock operations in much of the tropics is open to question when subsidies are removed from the activity. In the Brazilian Amazon, the cost of producing an animal is over ten times its production value. However, the large amount of credit and gains from land speculation and the improved value of land through infrastructure development make it profitable for some. It is worth noting that 85% of the ranches in Paragominas, Para, an early and important stock rearing area, were in default. The ecological aptness of livestock is also open to question. I have argued elsewhere (Hecht 1982b, 1983a, 1983b) that livestock production tends to be ecologically inappropriate. For

contrary views, see Toledo and Serrao (1982). This issue breaks clearly along the lines of ecologists, who regard it as damaging, and agronomists, who feel that it is not, particularly if inputs can be supplied.

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Women's Political Consciousness in Africa: a Framework for Analysis

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In the numerous explanations put forth to understand women's disadvantage in the development process—ranging from inadequate data on female labor to male prejudice and maladministration—women's *political* disadvantage figures prominently. After all, it is in the political process where decisions are made about the allocation of values and resources.[1] Those who control the political processes have their own conceptions of who ought to get what and why. Moreover, these political actors make decisions within institutions which reflect the long-standing accumulation of preference for some groups and burdens for others, elsewhere termed the "mobilization of bias."[2] Given the overwhelming predominance of men as political actors who have long operated within and between political institutions, accumulation patterns within those institutions might be termed instead the mobilization of male bias. Such conditions do not bode well for the redistribution of resources or values between men and women.

Yet these seemingly universal political facts about gender do not adequately account for contextual factors that facilitate or constrain means to address women's disadvantage in the development process. Among these are three important factors: 1) the organizational principles upon which political structures are based; 2) the dominant ideology as it incorporates gender; and 3) the existing distributive patterns by class and gender, all of which affect women's consciousness. The degree, content, and redistributive direction of women's consciousness influence the composition of leadership which emerges among women and the organizational vehicles they choose to articulate their interests.

Subsaharan Africa provides a useful context for the study of the above three issues. First, the edifice of the liberal state was implanted upon turn-of-the-century Africa, along with notions of men (initially European men) in the "public" or political sphere and women in the "private" or

household sphere.[3] Africans gradually acquired low-level administrative posts, the franchise, and national independence in territorially-based administrative and parliamentary units. These administrative boundaries coincide with or include those of ethnic groups but inherently cut across gender. This political grid was oblivious to the women's authority structures which exist in some, but not all, parts of indigenous Africa, such as the *mikiri* and *Iyalode* in southern Nigeria, age grade sets in eastern Africa, secret societies in West Africa, and queens or queen mothers throughout non-Islamic, indigenous African states.

Reinforcing the grid was a dominant ideology which set forth women as domestic helpmates and economic appendages to their husbands, however much that varied with reality. Educational and missionary projects surfaced which later served as models for similarly ideologically charged governmental service programs for women in community development and home economics. Only select women, largely the well-off, had initial and sustained contact with domestically oriented programs which assume—even promote—European family models. While women's domestic activities in Africa are an important component of their lives, their farming and trading activities are equally important. The sexual division of labor in Africa, clearly different from that of Europe, was grounded firmly on semi-autonomous relations, obligations, and expenditures between or among spouses within households. Widespread male out-migration from rural areas necessarily augmented that autonomy for affected women.

The patterns of government-distributed opportunities, training, education, and other subsidies like credit, demonstrated clear preference for men more than women in colonial times and continue now in the contemporary era. Such biases do more than benefit men; they provide a strong economic stake for women to identify politically with the interests of their households, particularly in elite households favored in the distributive process. That identification, plus the absorption of domestic gender ideology, has important implications for the women leaders' political agenda for women, to the extent such leaders are drawn from an elite.

This paper uses the framework posed above to analyze first, women's consciousness in western Kenya, based on field research there, and next, women's leadership and organizational vehicles elsewhere in subsaharan Africa. The paper concludes with an assessment of the continuities and changes in political structure, dominant ideology, and distributive patterns brought about through national and international political change.

Western Kenya

Research was done in Shikulu and Shitoli sublocations, Idakho location, Kakamega District, from 1974–75 on the distribution of agricultural services and the reconstruction of women's recent political history in the context of community politics. Idakho, an administrative boundary drawn by the colonial government, joins neighboring Isukha in the Ikolomani parliamentary constituency. It is a small-scale maize and beans farming area, with farms in the research sample averaging 2 1/2 acres.[4] Since the 1930s, male out-migration has been a growing part of the male life cycle. Sizeable numbers of women are left behind; in this sample forty percent of the women were left to manage farms and act as household heads. Economic differentiation, based on timely access to opportunities, wage income, and land size, has become a standard facet of reality that affects the life chances and life styles of both men and women.

The Idakho subgroups of the Luyia people practise exogamy, whereby "stranger" women marry into their husband's clans. Once settled, women have much in common with other women, whatever their age or household economic status, in the agricultural tasks of planting, weeding, and harvesting crops for home consumption and for sale. Besides the work tasks that join them, virtually all women (ninety percent of the sample) belong to one or more local women's groups which share agricultural labor, provide members with mutual aid during times of need, and/or worship together in prayer. During election campaigns, these small-scale womens' groups are linked to the political process through women leaders. While Idakho was not a totally egalitarian society in earlier decades—most clearly evident in the absence of women from indigenous public meetings or political authority positions—disparities between men and women have widened due to the early and continuing preferential access of men to education, wage employment, and government agricultural services.

The three-factor framework for explaining women's consciousness is developed below, with illustrations from women's recent political history.[5] First, the political structure places profound constraints on women organizing in female-ethnic terms. In the late colonial period of the mid-1950s, Idakho Chief William's use of authoritarian power was at its height, supported by the colonial government. A number of women who married in from Bunyore Location decided to organize the Bunyore women's group. Bunyore is southwest of Idakho and considered to be more advanced, given the early establishment of missionary schools and subsequent wider educational opportunity. This group, members of which were well-off and in some cases earning stable wages of their own as

teachers, focused on fund raising, savings, and rotating credit for members.

The chief did not look kindly on organizations unless he sponsored them. When he became aware of the group's existence, he called the women to his office and berated them for organizing without his permission. He reportedly said, "You must remember you are women. I am a man and I am the chief." Idakho, a colonial administrative boundary built around a Luyia exogamous subgroup, favors the development of loyal internal groups. Bunyore women of the defunct women's group had defied those measures designed to enhance internal Idakho loyalty. A legacy of the chief's move would be for elite women like these to serve as brokers for emerging small-scale Idakho women's groups in the political process.

The dominant ideology is a second factor affecting women's consciousness. In contemporary rural Kenya, those with education and money have the wherewithal to establish contacts with political and administrative officials or candidates. Though not represented in the elite in the same proportions as men, some women have such resources and convert them into political influence. Their links with numerous small-scale women's organizations permit the promise of delivering votes during elections with a majority female electorate, given the high rates of male outmigration.

A candidate for parliament running for the 1972 elections received a delegation of elite women who asked him to remember the work women do once elected, but more specifically to establish a women's center. Government-sponsored women's centers in Kenya had been associated with domestic-oriented sewing clubs from the colonial era. Besides, such clubs are the only visible program for women and thus represent "cues" for governmental support for women and appropriate items on women's political agenda. Elite women were five times more likely to have used such clubs than ordinary women, according to the research samples.[6] Once elected, the M.P. delivered on his implicit obligation to women: a sewing and knitting club was established in the multipurpose cooperative society he brought to the area. Few women used this club, preoccupied as they were with their prime livelihood pursuit of farming. Neither did the club represent a realistic income-earning alternative, given the cost of material and the distance of markets. Although lots of caps were knitted before the machines broke down, the caps are used primarily for decoration in this warm climate. Elite women had absorbed a domestically-oriented dominant ideology rather than pressing for economic benefits.

The third factor, patterns of distribution, both by gender and by class, affects women's consciousness. When new resources derived from the political process are infused into communities, those who benefit realize where their stakes lie for effective political action. Once in the distributive

network, beneficiaries will not be predisposed to alter terms greatly, for fear of altering a balance that favors them. For groups heretofore excluded, however, excessive compromises may be made just in order to remain in the political game.

For example in Idakho, a women's group failed to succeed because its leadership was compromised by male authority. Only years before independence, Chief William decided to create a location-wide mobilization of women. This was done for two reasons: to assist in planting boundary hedges for the land consolidation efforts which were just beginning; and to expand his own power base, which was eroding due to years of corruption and abuse of authority. He authorized a "woman subchief" in Shikulu, a historical first. She attended weekly location and sublocation *barazas* (community meetings) and reported back to a complex women's organizational structure known as Umoja.[7] All women were obliged to participate in the hedge cultivation, and those who did not were fined. The Umoja organization soon developed new functions, such as group agricultural labor, in which members worked for cash contributed to the Umoja treasury, and mutual aid. Equally important, women's courts were established in which women elders judged marital disputes and female infractions. Their standards for judgment of "lazy" or "abusive" women were the same as or harsher than those of indigenous judicial authorities who preceded Umoja.

Male control of Umoja and of the selection of Umoja leaders under the authority of Chief William led to excessive compromises by women leaders due to their understandably dependent and tenuous position. Authority was redistributed toward women to a certain extent, but it was ultimately quite limited. Umoja collapsed after two years for many reasons, prominent among which was the withdrawal of Chief William's support when he failed to control the treasury.

The overwhelming pattern of distribution in this area favors men, particularly those who are well off. The most significant resources distributed in this area are for agricultural extension, training, and credit. When the research sample was divided into female managed and jointly managed farms (the latter, with a man present), women managers always had less access to each service, the gaps increasing markedly as the services became more valuable.[8] Lower-income female managers were worst off, while higher-income women managers received comparable services to lower-income joint managers. Higher-income jointly managed farms were best served. In a separate sample of elite farmers, women managers did as well as men.[9] These patterns have two important and distinct political consequences with favor the maintenance of existing distribution patterns in the organizational context described. Male preference, however differentiated

between the elite, lower and higher-income farmers, obscures bias to the elite and well off. For elite women, greater benefits result from their political identification with households than from identification with other women. A critical perspective would suggest that in resource-scarce, zero-sum contexts, the provision of more agricultural services for ordinary women would imply less for elite women. Meanwhile, the existence of widespread female-solidarity organizations with elite women as leaders and brokers obscures their class-based benefits. The prevailing vehicles for women's consciousness in western Kenya do not bode well for gender redistribution.

Women's Politics in Africa

Is western Kenya a microcosm representative of women's consciousness elsewhere? Caution must be exercised when applying generalizations to the rich complexity of Africa, both in its indigenous economic and organizational base for women and in its dominant political and ideological structure. Moreover, the passage of time itself pulls contexts like those analyzed above into different national and international structures and ideologies. Finally, people themselves change, based on transformations in their own consciousness and realities. Still, the three-factor framework is a useful one to apply to a synthesis of other studies.

Whether capitalist or socialist, democratic or authoritarian, and whatever the colonial background, African state structures are territorially based and overwhelmingly male-dominated. These territories—whether provinces, states, districts, locations, or parliamentary legislative constituencies—cut across gender. In political conflicts, residents tend to identify with their territory, particularly when territory coincides with ethnic identity; gender identification is necessarily diluted.

As the state edifice was erected, women's participation, their indigenous authority structures, and the politicization of women's concerns in the past became invisible. As Ashanti elders told historian R. Rattray, after his queries about women in the formal state hierarchy: "The white men never asked us this; you have dealings with and recognize only men, we supposed the Europeans considered women of no account and we know you do not recognize them as we have always done." Only during times of crisis did women's political connections with other women become visible, such as during the Igbo Women's War or the Anlu Rebellion in Cameroon.[10] The unexpected strength of this political emergence was disarming to colonial authorities. Meanwhile, African men were being groomed by colonial authorities for the transfer of political power. Men had the advantage of

early access to education and wage employment, and dominated the political mainstream after independence, hindering female latecomers. More importantly, those latecomers were drawn from the select few women with resources that convert to political power, for which there are implications in women's political agenda.

Women's belated entry permitted those in the political mainstream to define the terms by which women would be politically integrated. Their representation in many political parties as the separate women's wing subjected them to isolation, a focus on limited political issues, and vulnerability during regime change. Incorporated under the wing of the party, they had limited capability to bargain and thus few benefits to extract. Instead, existing studies show women's organizations have been coopted into mobilizing other women during elections, neutralizing opposition, and increasing party coffers in Ghana, Mali, and Sierra Leone.[11] It is the distinction between male and female organizational structures, in part built on the indigenous tradition of separate political spheres, which contributes to the vulnerability of women's wings, as studies from the Sudan and Zambia illustrate. If not officially recognized and included, their political ineffectiveness is painfully apparent, as described for Abidjan traders and Nairobi beer brewers.[12] Still, the very existence of political parties, open group competition, and elections create distinctly different contexts from those regimes without such political tools available for women or other groups.

The dominant ideology which relegates women to the private, domestic sphere and men to the public or political sphere, has a long history. Numerous program models based on this ideology are now embedded in the limited government outreach to women in community development and home economics. Such an ideology creates conditions for capitalist transformation by redefining women's labor as nonwork in ways that subsidize men and capital.[13] In this ideological vision, women work inside the home, articulate consumer demands, and depend on men for a livelihood. The ideologically coopted aspire to these standards; women's domesticity reflects "civilized" family behavior. Such a gender ideology assumes that no policy support for women—seemingly under male protection—is needed or justified, except to uplift their domestic role. When politics are redefined away from prestate women's comprehensive concerns, it is not surprising that the majority of women lack great interest in "official" politics.

Few women act politically in the mainstream, but those who do voice concerns compatible with the confines of the public-private boundaries defined in the introduction, above. Women's politics tend to have narrow goals, such as those relating to wage labor or legal reforms which affect

only select women. Not only do such politics rarely articulate gender redistributive issues, they perpetuate public-private dichotomies. National women's organizations have concentrated on equal pay for equal work and paid maternity leave,[14] with few effects on the vast majority of women who work in agriculture and trade for no wages. In Uganda, Ghana, and Kenya, marriage law reform has been a priority.[15]

Even in socialist Tanzania and Mozambique, creches, orphanages and maternal/child health programs have been women's prime concerns.[16] While maternal/child health is clearly a concern of all women, and child care is essential for women burdened by domestic labor in nuclear families, the issues themselves still remain confined to a private or domestic sphere. The fact that priorities of the select, active women have not widened to reflect the full scope of women's activities suggests one of the following: either the dominant ideology has been absorbed or the existing institutions and their reflection of public-private dichotomies virtually compel women to develop a family or welfare-oriented political agenda. Whatever the interpretation, women with the kinds of resources that potentially convert to political power are contained.

Yet this ideology has been implanted superficially on an indigenous foundation of substantial female economic contributions, female solidarity organizations, and in some cases, women's authority in separate structures which govern women and provide them with means to manage their own affairs.[17] The sex division of labor and social separation of men and women have maintained this rich tradition of female solidarity organizations, functioning in markets, agriculture, socialization, credit, and mutual aid. The very autonomy of these organizations suggests the state's limited ability to penetrate all people's reality, particularly women's, but women's continuing political autonomy can only mean enlarged gaps between them and groups in the mainstream.[18]

Everywhere, the distributive process has favored men in such diverse policies as education, land reform, and agriculture. Such policy preferences provide the kinds of skills and productive resources which lead to male advantage in wage employment and capital/property accumulation. Educational disparities have long existed between boys and girls, and they increase at each successively higher level of education.[19] Land reform efforts consolidate former female user rights into male rights embodied in title deeds. One post-reform study in Kenya found six percent of holdings to be in female names; an analyst of Ethiopian land reform concludes that women have been transformed from tenants of tenants into tenants of their husbands, lacking stake in or control over the property their work supports.[20] Female farm managers, according to studies from Botswana, Kenya, Zambia, and Ghana, always have less access to agricultural exten-

sion, training and credit, or as in Senegal belated access to new technology.[21] For those semi-autonomous women who plant their own crops, project managers rarely recognize this aspect of the farming system and the incentives and labor bottlenecks that agricultural changes imply. But what makes gender maldistribution more complex for women's politics, again, is the interaction of class with gender biases.

Even those countries with a socialist label rarely dent patterns of male preference in the distributive process. In Mozambique, for example, the policy to collectivize village agriculture burdens women by widening their agricultural responsibilities from family food crops to the collective fields. Only in the "politically correct" villages do women receive direct compensation for their labor.[22] In the "politically incorrect" villages, presumably, husbands appropriate the value of their wives' labor. To the extent that socialist societies have redistributive impacts, the distortions that result from well-off women's political identification with households rather than other women are likely to decrease.

Yet, curiously, gender maldistribution is hardly a political issue. Once the state edifice is established, along with the domestically oriented dominant ideology for women, which categorizes women's activities as nonwork not included in national statistics, gender in the distributive process is meaningless politically. And the bulk of women, acting autonomously and thereby compensating for their exclusion in part, do little to tap government resource flows.

Prospects for Change

A synthesis of existing research suggests that women's political consciousness has had little effect in reversing their disadvantage in the development process. Yet changes in the political structure, dominant ideology, and distributive patterns should have some impact on these patterns, as outlined below. Meanwhile, too, the research community—which bears partial responsibility with the colonial officials Ashanti elders referred to earlier, for women's political invisibility—is beginning to bring to light women's actions to transform their realities.[23]

As for political structures, they retain their territorial base, but most African countries have incorporated bureaucratic machinery which aims to cut across territory by function and to question, ultimately, the public-private conception that separates policy by gender. The United Nations has long promoted "women's machinery" in government, which takes the forms of women's bureaus, women's ministries, and national councils for women. Officials in these units question the impact of *all* policies on

women, not simply those related to children, domestic skills, and/or health. Still, these structures are constrained by their location, such as a women's bureau located in the social service ministry, or by their very separation and isolation, as in the case of a women's ministry. Equally important, these structures lack funds and staff for the comprehensive tasks which include not only monitoring but raising questions about the dominant ideology.[24]

Reinforcing these structures which implicitly question the kind of domestic gender ideology explained earlier is an international female solidarity movement. This has expanded women's political concerns to include a vast array of policy areas, such as water, forestry, work, and the collection of more comprehensive national statistics, among others. Not only has the United Nations-sponsored International Women's Year, later lengthened into the International Women's Decade, provided arenas in which to discuss and recommend policies for these broad concerns, but other United Nations, international and national conferences and organizations have done so as well. Still, though, these widened women's issues operate mainly within male-controlled institutions, which embody and perpetuate a deep public-private distinction that meshes with gender. Moreover, it is still a select few, if now expanded group of women who act politically in or with such institutions.

For reasons like those posed above, gender distributive patterns have barely been altered. Yet the autonomy and strength of indigenous women's organizations, unfettered by state structures and class bias, provide a means by which women's consciousness might repoliticize comprehensive women's concerns and thereby foster genuine gender redistribution.

Notes

1. See Norman Uphoff (1980) on this issue generally. Also see Staudt (1981).
2. E.E. Schattsneider uses this term in Chapter 2, Schattsneider (1960).
3. Jean Elshtain develops this distinction (Elshtain 1981). See this developed for the African context in Staudt, forthcoming, now circulating as a working paper (1984).
4. My primary research sample consisted of a cross-section of 212 farm households, the selection process for which is explained in Staudt (1982a).
5. This is drawn from Staudt (1982b).
6. A second, smaller sample of elite households, numbering forty, is explained in Staudt (1979). Elite women are defined as those who hold more power, prestige and privilege. The components of this definition are derived from stratification theorist Gerhard Lenslei, *Power and Privilege* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1966).

7. An extensive discussion is found in Staudt (1980). Umoja, which means 'unity' in Swahili, was locally translated as 'working together'.
8. See note 4, plus Staudt (1978).
9. See note 6.
10. Rattray is cited in Susan Rogers, "Woman's Place: A Critical Review of Anthropological Theory," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20.1:123-162. The Igbo Women's War is analyzed in Judith van Allen, "Sitting on a Man: Colonialism and the Lost Political Institutions of Igbo Women," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, special issue on African Women, Audrey Wipper, ed., 6.2: 165-182. Wipper analyzes the Anlu Rebellion in Wipper (1982).
11. Audrey Smock (1977); Leslie McNeil (1979); Filomina Chioma Steady (1975).
12. Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban (1977); Ilsa Schuster (1979), pp. 160-165; Barbara Lewis (1976); Nici Nelson (1978).
13. Staudt, forthcoming (1984).
14. Fluehr-Lobban (1977).
15. Kenneth Little (1973), p. 73; Barbara Callaway (1976), p. 197; Audrey Wipper, "Equal Rights for Women in Kenya?" *Journal of Modern African Studies* 9.3:429-442.
16. Susan G. Rogers (1983); Barbara Isaacman and June Stephen (1980), pp. 29-30.
17. See, for example, Nancy Leis (1974); Bolanle Awe (1977); Kamene Okonjo (1976); Annie M.D. Lebeuf (197[illegible] Patricia Stamp (1975-76).
18. Still, there is wide variation in the extent of women's economic contributions and their ability to control the fruits of their labor, profoundly affecting their political status, as examined in four eastern and southern African societies by Karen Sacks (1974). One cannot assume either that economic contribution implies power (Suellen Huntington, "Issues in Woman's Role in Economic Development: Critique and Alternatives" *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 37, 1975); limited economic contributions to household subsistence matches overwhelming contributions in its association with female powerlessness in twelve African societies (Peggy Sanday, "Female Status in the Public Domain." In *Woman, Culture and Society*. Michelle Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, eds. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974). As Christine Obbo remarks, "the need to control women has always been an important part of male success in African societies," (1980), p. 4.
19. Little (1973); David Kahler and Janis Droegkamp, "Characteristics and Needs of Out-of-School Youth", prepared for the U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of Education, April, 1980.
20. On Kenya, see Achola Pala (1980); on Ethiopia see Zen Tadesse (1979).
21. See note 4, plus Carol Bond (1974); Jette Bukh (1979); Louise Fortmann (1982); L.B. Venema (1978), pp. 112-113; Maud Shimwaayi Muntemba (1982); Marcia Wright (1983), pp. 71-85.
22. Isaacman and Stephen (1980), Chapter 5.
23. An example of an insightful contribution is found in Catharine Newbury, "Ebutumwa Bw'emiogo: The Tyranny of Cassava, A Women's Tax Revolt in Eastern Zaire" *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, forthcoming.
24. Oki Ombaka (1980).

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A Woman Has A Voice

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Preface: Theater for Education and Development in Africa

Drama and theatrical activities have thrived in many societies as a means of entertainment and enlightenment. As a synthesis of several art forms—drama, poetry, music and dance—and as a combination of craft and technology, the theater has a powerful visual and sensual appeal. If properly utilized, theater can serve as a vehicle for disseminating information, a weapon of criticism and an instrument of social, political and economic change. It can be used creatively to arouse consciousness or be manipulated for propaganda and indoctrination purposes. For over a century, Marxists have recognized the utilitarian function of drama and other art forms and have employed them extensively to advance the socialist ideology.

Today, the use of theater for education and community development is becoming very popular in developing countries. It is for this reason, among others, that the following play, "A Woman Has a Voice," was written as part of the conference on Women as Food Producers.

Theater for the People

It is the tradition in many African villages for families to gather together for an evening of folktale performances after dinner. Entertaining tales enhance family and group solidarity and are a pleasant relief after a hard day's work. In a society where formal educational institutions are rarely accessible, the folktale sessions are vital for the moral upbringing of children and act as a medium through which parents can transmit their inherited knowledge, wisdom and technology to their children.

Apart from folktales, other activities like religious ritual performances and festivals provide entertainment and diversion from the drudgery of farm work, but unlike the tales, which are performed daily, they are normally periodic events.

Between 1978 and 1979, I traveled to several Igbo areas of Bendel State,

Nigeria to collect tales for a research project. To my surprise, the practice was dying fast due to education and modern development. Radios have infiltrated the villages and the men are content to assemble together to drink and listen to music. The women remain at home tending to their children and finishing their household chores. The older children either retire to bed or walk the streets. The disappearance of the folktales has left a vacuum in the life of all peasants.

The poverty and suffering of peasants, and the condition of African women, have drawn the attention of several African writers and theater intellectuals. Plays, novels, and short stories have been written which reflect the conditions of the rural people. But these literatures, which are sometimes inspiring and revolutionary, are rarely accessible to the rural community. Today, several experiments are being conducted by universities in Africa, with varying success, with the aim of involving the villages in theater.

Theater and Women's Issues

Although I am not aware of any theater in Africa established for the purpose of advancing women's issues, several African writers have shown great concern for the plight of women, especially those living in rural areas. Some of the writers are males like Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, who are established in their writing careers. A few female writers, like Ama ta Aidoo and Rebecca Njau, address their plays to the plight of women.

In his earlier works, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o depicted women as helpless victims of the society. In later works, however, Ngugi portrayed the women as either powerful figures who contributed immensely to the history and the affairs of their countries, or as revolutionary characters determined to fight against oppression. In an interview in 1980, he explained:

> Because the women are the most exploited and oppressed section of the working class, I would create the picture of a strong, determined woman with a will to resist and to struggle against the conditions of her present being.[1]

Another revolutionary writer, Rebecca Njau, also hopes to educate women and raise their social and political consciousness through the theater. In one of her plays, "The Scar," a community worker in a rural village organized the women to revolt against certain traditional practices including circumcision:

> I want them to free themselves from slavery. I want them to respect their bodies and minds. I want them to break away their chains that have so long bound them.[2]

The revolution for the liberation of African women is a controversial issue. The village is a custodian of culture and tradition. Like the old women is Njau's play, many women young and old are antagonistic to feminist issues and regard their roles as part of the division of labor. To compound the problem, numerous educated women regard the women's movement as representative of Western ideals. A good number of men also oppose the new movement and threaten to "sack" their wives if they identify with the cause. Unfortunately, some African men and women have refused to question and reevaluate their beliefs and have become slaves to their culture.

Theater for Development

In a continent with a very high illiteracy rate, theater is a good instrument for arousing social and political consciousness and for education and development. These objectives can be achieved through plays that reflect the individual, group or community experience and existence, through visits by travelling theaters and by the establishment of community theaters.

In writing or organizing drama for education and development, attention should be paid to the reality of the African situation. As a third world region, Africa is still dependent on the more developed countries both economically and technologically. The theater can project towards the future by stimulating the people and harnessing their talent and energy for creative performances.

To be successful, the theater must aspire to improve and to change the life of the community it serves. For according to Bertolt Brecht,

> In an age whose science is able to change nature to an extent that makes the world appear almost habitable, man can no longer be described to man as a mere victim, the object of an unknown, but unalterable environment . . . . The world of today can be described to the human beings of today only as a world that can be changed.[3]

Notes

1. Ngugi wa Thiong'o "Index on Censorship," in *West Africa*, November 1983. P. 2630.
2. Njau, Rebecca, *The Scar*. Nairobi: Kibo Art Gallery, 1965. Pp. 13-14.
3. Esslin, Martin, *Brecht: The Man and His Work*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1971. P. 149.

A Woman Has A Voice

While men and women in the village quietly pursue their daily activities, debates are taking place in their national capital concerning their man occupation: farming. These debates are usually motivated by food shortages, the need for increasing food exports, or political gain, and they tend to focus on agricultural mechanisation. Government personnel rarely if ever consider the opinions of the farmers or seek their participation in these discussions. It is therefore not surprising that the outcome of the meetings is hardly beneficial to those involved in agricultural work. The suffering of the farmer—travelling several miles daily to the farm, mowing giant trees with cutlasses, and tilling the soil with only a hoe in the hot sun—is not of concern to the government.

The village farmer is aware of his predicament. He knows that he has been relegated to the background but must assert his manhood and dignity somewhere. That place is his home where he reigns over his wife or wives like a king. While he shares the farm work with the women, he expects them to attend to his domestic demands and take care of his children as well. Unfortunately, the woman does not question her subservient role.

Time is running out and the village woman must raise her voice and liberate herself from her traditional yoke. To transform herself, she must make demands that will improve the quality of her life and justify her existence. The man has a lot to gain if he listens to her. Both of them are oppressed by the society and should come together and seek a common goal.

CHARACTERS

TOWN CRIER
NNEKA (FEMALE)
OKAFOR (MALE)
OFUNNE (FEMALE)
OMEBE (FEMALE)
ABUA (MALE)
OBI (MALE)
ADAEZE (FEMALE)
TEACHER (FEMALE)
MRS. AKUNNE

SCENE ONE

(The village of Kiliki in Eastern Nigeria. The village is comprised of modern cement houses and mud huts interspersed with trees. It is midnight and the setting is hardly visible. Except for the sounds of birds and insects, everything is quiet.

A town crier in the form of a shadowy figure enters, carrying a large metal gong. He moves in long strides and then stops, beats the gong three times and makes an announcement)

CRIER: The community of Kiliki! (*Gong*) The community of Kiliki! (*Gong*) Our Okpara, the head of the lineage, invites you to work on his farm! (*Gong*) Our Okpara invites you to work on his farm! (*Gong*) Everybody is expected! (*Gong*) Men and Women! (*Gong*) Old and young! (*Gong*) Olie is the appointed day for the farm work! (*Gong*) Olie, the first day after Eke. Get up at the first cock-crow and assemble at the village square! (*Gong*) To be at the farm before the morning light greets the day! (*Gong*) Be sure you're there! (*Gong*) Anybody absent will be fined! (*Gong*) A goat, two chickens and two smoked fish is the fine! (*Gong! Gong! Gong!*)
(He walks briskly about, then goes off-stage and makes another announcement from the wings.)

The community of Kiliki!(*Gong*)
The community of Kiliki! (*Gong*)
Our Okpara, the . . .
(His voice fades out to silence.)

SCENE TWO

(Sound of cock's crow. It is 5:30 a.m. Shuffling sounds and voices are heard. Some Kiliki women and men appear from different directions and go off stage. Some exchange greetings on meeting each other.)

NNEKA: Ogbuefi.

OKAFOR: Who is greeting?

NNEKA: It's Nneka, wife of Obi.

OKAFOR: Nneka.

NNEKA: Sir.

OKAFOR: Akunne

NNEKA: O-o, ogbuefi.

OKAFOR: Did you wake up in good health?

NNEKE: Yes sir.

OKAFOR: How about the members of your family?

NNEKA: They are all fine. How about yours?

OKAFOR: Thank God, they're all well.

NNEKA: How about your wife Ofunne? Is she not coming?

OKAFOR: She should be on her way now. You know how you women spend so much time in preparations. How about your husband?

NNEKA: He's gone already.

OKAFOR: I trust him.
(They disappear. OFUNNE enters followed by ABUA.)

ABUA: Who am I following?

OFUNNE: And who is following me?
(OFUNNE waits for ABUA. She recognizes him and greets.)
Ogbuefi.

ABUA: It looks like I'm getting blind.

OMEBE: It's Ofunne, wife of Okafor.

ABUA: Oliaku.

OFUNNE: O-o, ogbuefi.

ABUA: Fine woman. Forgive me for failing to recognize you.

OFUNNE: It's not your fault. It's still dark.

ABUA: Did you wake up in good health?

OFUNNE: Yes sir.

ABUA: How about your husband?

OFUNNE: He's fine. He had left already.

ABUA: And your children?

OFUNNE: They're all fine.

ABUA: How about your old woman?

OFUNNE: My mother is getting stronger and stronger everyday.

ABUA: That means you take good care of her.

OFUNNE: O-o, yes, I wouldn't eat until I've made sure she's had her own fill. My brothers also contribute. They send her money from Enugu and Lagos every month.

ABUA: Lucky woman. May we all live as long as she and see our children serve us.

OFUNNE: Ise! ise! That's our prayer and our gods and ancestors will grant it. Do you remember where we're supposed to meet?

ABUA: At the village square. We better hurry up.
(They disappear)

SCENE THREE

(Vegetation of scattered trees and shrubs. It is dawn. Four Kiliki women and three men are on their way to the farm. Three of the women carry basins on their heads and hoes in their hands. One woman, a teacher carries a note book. The men are equipped with machetes and hoes. They sing joyfully as they march towards the farm.)

KILIKI PEOPLE: We're the proud community of Kiliki.
Beautiful people, great people.
We're the leaders of the world.
Kiliki of great warriors and heroes.
It is a prosperous community.
Rich in human and natural resources.
We're gathered today,
To answer the call of our elder.
By marching to his farm,
We fulfill the custom of our ancestors
Which says,
Live together, work together,
Preserve the beauty of your heritage,
And maintain the high values
Set down by your fore-fathers.
Enjoy peace and prosperity.
Keep the spirit of oneness
And be an inspiration to others.
If you remain together,
You will achieve greatness.
(They arrive at the farm.)

TEACHER: Let me take roll.
(She looks them over and writes in her notebook.)

OBI: Where are the rest of us? Don't tell me we've only seven in the community?

OKAFOR: I've already told my Okpara that my first wife would not be here. She's taking care of her sick mother.
(ADAEZE appears with a calabash of water on her head.)

TEACHER: You're late, Adaeze.

OKAFOR: Adaeze, you're late.

OBI: Why are you late, Adaeze?

ADAEZE: Forgive me, my dearest men and fellow wives. I didn't have a drop of water in the house. Knowing how tiring this work is going to be, I knew I'd not have the strength to climb the hills to fetch water at the end of the day. So, I decided to do it now.

TEACHER: You're not the only woman with no water in her house.

ABUA: If all the women go to the stream before coming to the farm, who'll be here in time to answer our Okpara's call to work?

ADAEZE: Please forgive me. I did not mean any harm.

OBI: Where are the other women?

OMEBE *(a female)*: Oliaku has asked to be excused. She's not feeling well and all her children are sick.

OKAFOR: Why didn't she let anybody know before now?

OMEBE: She couldn't leave the children alone and walk to my place.

ABUA: Is anybody helping them? I heard her husband is in Lagos.

OMEBE: Her husband's absence is part of her worries and ill health. He has promised to send them money when he gets a job but I heard that even though he's been in Lagos for over a year, he hasn't found any work. It's hard on Oliaku. She has to manage the farm and care for the children as well.

TEACHER: Her husband should come back.

OMEBE: She wrote him and made a similar suggestion, but he hasn't answered her.

TEACHER: When did she write?

OMEBE: Six months ago. She also sent messages but no reply.

OBI: Today is Saturday. I was hoping that since our boys and girls are not in school, they would be here with us.
(A BOY enters carrying a bow and an arrow.)
That's a good boy.

BOY: (To the men) Ogbuefi!
(To the women) Oliaku!
I greet you all.

ALL: O-o, my son. Did you wake up in good health?

BOY: In perfect health.

OKAFOR: How about your parents?

BOY: They are fine.

NNEKA: Are your brothers and sisters in good health?

BOY: They're in perfect health.

OKAFOR: Welcome to the farm, my boy. You're the only youth who has answered the call of our elder.

BOY: What?

OKAFOR: I say thank you for coming here to work with us.

BOY: I do not understand.

OBI: Where are your farming tools?

OKAFOR: That's no problem. I'll give him a hoe.
(Offers him a hoe.)
Are you comfortable with this?

BOY: I don't understand what you're saying. I was out hunting and when I heard your voices I decided to come and greet you.

OKAFOR: You mean, you didn't come to the farm to work with us?

BOY: Me? (*Laughs*) You expect me, a high school graduate intending to go to the University, to dirty my hands and soil my clothes with farm work. Not in this world!

ABUA: Your father was a great farmer when he was living.

BOY: He didn't go to school. Excuse me.
(He exits.)

OKAFOR: Is that what they're taught in school?

TEACHER: Don't blame the school. We teach and encourage them to help on the farms. We even make them work in the school garden. But what happens when they come back home? Just because they are males you spoil them and make them feel like princes.

OBI: I fear for these boys. They are not marching to the beat of time. My boys only went to primary school, but they didn't have any difficulty securing good jobs afterwards. It's not the same today. Those with high school education have problems finding jobs, yet they refuse to help us farm. We'll see how well they'll feed when we are all dead. (*To the women*) Where are your daughters, by the way?

ADAEZE: I've sent my big daughter who is in form five in high school

to Enugu. When she finishes, my brother in Lagos will send her to the University. I've worked on the farm all my life and I know there is nothing promising for her here.

OMEBE: I wanted to send my girls to school, but my husband said, "No." He wanted us to use whatever money we had to educate our sons instead. My daughters worked like mules—they combed every abandoned field with me looking for cassava to uproot. We peeled the cassava, grinding and frying them. You all know my daughters, don't you?

ABUA: Good daughters and well brought up.

OMEBE: My daughters didn't go to school, but they are clever and intelligent. Only two days ago I called them, gave them whatever money I had and said, "Go to Lagos and learn sewing. You're fully grown now and must have a profession. If you stay here, your only suitors will be farmers. Go to Lagos and you'll find city workers to marry you.

ABUA: If all of us go live in the city, who'll do the farm work?

OMEBE: The government shall answer that question. They tell us how to live.

ABUA: What do you mean?

OMEBE: If the government wants farming to be attractive to our youths, it should help farmers. We have many children because we regard them as wealth. But what insurance will I have for my old age if all my children remain farmers? Which mother here roasts hot stones and places them in the hands of their children? I've watched myself wither day after day, ploughing the soil under the hot sun. Headache, neck, back and waist pains are my daily troubles as I work myself like a mule. As a farmer's wife I know no worse fate. My children must not follow in my footsteps. God forbid that.

OFUNNE: I agree with you, Omebe. Whatever I do, in the next world I'll not be a farmer's wife, and my children will have nothing to do with farming.

TEACHER: What a shame you should feel this way. In many countries farmers are happy and are rich and proud of their profession.

OKAFOR: I don't believe you!

OBI: It's true. Mrs. Akunne, who works in the Ministry of Agriculture told me about farming in England and America. In those countries,

they use machines, fertilizers and hybrid seeds and produce food fast and in greater quantity.

OKAFOR: Those people are different. Let's get to work.

OMEBE: How about the men? Why are there only three of you?

OBI: It's not your place to question us.

OMEBE: I only want to know why all our men are not here.

TEACHER: Don't be so forward, Omebe.

OKAFOR: She wants to show us she has bad manners.

OMEBE: My question is simple. Where are the rest of the men? My husband is not here but he came to the square and begged to be excused.

OBI: You still insist, eh?

OMEBE: What's wrong with my question?
(They all stare at her.)
I apologize for asking. I withdraw my question.

OKAFOR: It's not the question that is wrong. It's the way you put it.
(Goes towards Omebe.)
If you're addressing us, you have to choose your words and arrange them properly. Don't question the men's lack of attendance in response to our concern about the women's absenteeism.

OMEBE: I've apologized.

OBI: Good. There are only three men who're here, but the rest were excused. We don't have many male farmers anymore. Some of them, as you all know, toiled so hard to plough the land that they died at an early age. They are resting with our ancestors, but their spirits are here with us today. Our younger men have either gone off to find work in the cities or joined the armed forces. The few men here cannot raise enough food for their families, and have to work part-time as farmers and part-time as laborers. These are the men who're not with us today. They've gone to look for jobs to feed you and are not idling away.

ADAEZE: To feed us?

OBI: Are you going to question that?

ADAEZE: Do you claim that we don't contribute as much to feeding the family as you men do?

OMEBE: We contribute more . . .

TEACHER: A-da-eze and Omebe!
Remember your manners.

ADAEZE: I'm sorry if I'm being offensive. I only want to draw the attention of the men to our contribution as wives and food producers.

TEACHER: This is not the proper place.

OMEBE: I only have myself to blame. Maybe if I'd gone to school I wouldn't be carrying this hoe!

TEACHER: Next time go to school.

OMEBE: My children are in school and I can be consoled by that.

ALL: O-me-be.

OBI: Let her rattle on. When I report her to her husband, she'll learn that a woman who fills her mouth with razor blades can only spit blood.

OKAFOR: You can send your daughters to Oxford University, Omebe, but one thing you have to know is that even if the mouse becomes the size of the cow, it'll be the cat's slave nevertheless.

TEACHER: I beg your pardon?

OBI: Don't come into this, Teacher. The hen knows when it is dawn, but it leaves the crowing to the cock.

TEACHER: Meaning what?

OBI: No matter how big the antelope grows, it does not wear the shoes of the elephant.

TEACHER: Your statements are outrageous and preposterous. In this modern age you should know that a woman is equal to a man. What a man can do, a woman can also do.
(She addresses the women.)
Am I not correct?
(They do not respond.)

OMEBE: You're perfectly right, Teacher. But one thing you have to learn is that if you see a fowl eating your neighbor's corn and you do not drive it away, someday it will eat yours.

TEACHER: Meaning what?

OMEBE: When the men were scolding us unnecessarily, were you not on their side? Even though you've been to school, you're still part of us.
(She addresses the women.)
Am I not correct?

WOMEN *(In unison):* You are correct.

TEACHER: *(To the men):* I do not understand these local women. Let's get to work.

OKAFOR: Make sure you don't join them. All they have are big mouths. (*mimics*) That's their only weapon. Adaeze, you better go and prepare our lunch. The rest of you follow us and we'll show you what to do.

SCENE FOUR

(The TEACHER and the MEN show the WOMEN where to work. The MEN disperse and work on different locations. The WOMEN break into a song as they work.)

ALL: Proud woman of Kiliki
The jewel of the world.
Born into a land of gold and silver
She mines but does not reap the gold.
(Solo)
When I was growing up
My mother said to me,
"You're a beautiful girl.
If you match your beauty with good manners
You'll marry a rich farmer.
Be obedient
Serve him
Do his will
And he will give you glory
A husband is a woman's crown."
(Solo—Another person.)
When my daughter was growing up
I said to her,
"Go to school
Listen to your teachers
And pass your examinations.
Continue to read
And develop your mind
For education is the foundation for progress.
With education, you can dine with the king."

ALL: Never a farmer's wife be
Our children will never be farmer's wives

The lot of the farmer's wife is hard.
The farmer's wife is a farmer.
She's a water carrier and hewer of firewood
She toils in the sun and plods in the rain
A farmer's wife is a mother,
A cook and a nurse.
She is non-sexual, non-feeling
And always in the wrong.
If the child is bad
He belongs to the mother
If he is good,
He's his father's child.
In the court of hawks
A hen is never found innocent.

SCENE FIVE

(Sound of a car off stage. All turn in the direction of the sound. ABUA sights somebody.)

ABUA: Isn't that Mrs. Akunne?
(A woman wearing a Kampala suit enters carrying a hoe.)

OKAFOR: Madam!

MRS. AKUNNE (*To the Men*): Ogbuefi!
(To the Women)
Oliaku! Greetings to all.

OBI (*Speaks with affectation.*): Good morning Mrs. Akunne. What are you doing here?

MRS. AKUNNE: I came this morning from Enugu. My father in-law told me you were working for him.

OKAFOR: You didn't have to join us. This is only for the local community.

MRS. AKUNNE: I am part of you.

OMEBE: Don't say that, madam. You're too educated to be part of us.

MRS. AKUNNE: Education does not liberate one from her people.

OKAFOR: You better go home, Madam.

OBI: No need to dirty your hands.

ABUA: Or soil your clothes.

TEACHER: She can stay and supervise with me.

ALL: That's a good idea.

MRS. AKUNNE: I've come to work with you, and also to talk about the present developments in agriculture.

OKAFOR: You mean you brought good news from the headquarters.

MRS. AKUNNE: You can make good news yourselves.

OBI: How?

MRS. AKUNNE: Let's get to work. We'll talk during the break.

OKAFOR: (*To ADAEZE, who has joined them.*): Why are you here, beautiful one? You should be cooking.

ADAEZE: Just to say welcome to Madam. (*Leaves.*)

OKAFOR: You did well.

(The women return to their work.)

MRS. AKUNNE: What do you want me to do?

OKAFOR: Anything you wish, Madam.

TEACHER (*To Madam*): You better not do this.

MRS. AKUNNE: Why?

TEACHER: If you work with these peasant women you'll lose your self-respect.

MRS. AKUNNE: Beg your pardon.

(Joins the women and starts to work. The Women resume their last song. After a while, OBI calls her aside.)

OBI: We want a word with you, Madam.

(She joins the Men.)

My ears have been itching since you said we could make good news. Can you shed a light on that?

MRS. AKUNNE: Certainly. Let me call the women.

OBI: Don't do that yet.

OKAFOR: Coming from the headquarters and from the Ministry of Agriculture, you must have some useful information to offer us.

MRS. AKUNNE: I have some useful hints. You've all heard of the Green Revolution.

OBI: I heard about it on the radio.

OKAFOR: They said it was in the newspapers, too.

MRS. AKUNNE: That's the point. You're the farmers and you're part

of the revolution. You're supposed to feel it, experience it, and pass it on to the younger generation. But that's not happening.

OBI: Is it true that the government is buying us tractors, fertilizers and pesticides?

MRS. AKUNNE: They ordered them. Then the big contractors, politicians and some government officials received money for them, but they never purchased all the order. Some machines were brought into the country but they never got to you. A few got to the rich and others just disappeared.

OKAFOR: Is there any way we can get some of them? We heard that tra ( )rs will do many of the jobs we do with hands.

MRS. AKUNNE: Just acquiring tractors will not solve our problem. We need to sit down and plan on what we want. Let me call the women.

OBI: Not yet.

MRS. AKUNNE: I'm afraid that I can't discuss this any further without the women being here.

OKAFOR: Carry on. Obi and I will talk to them later.

MRS. AKUNNE: No. They must hear for themselves and offer their own opinions.

ABUA: I don't think the women will have anything to offer in this matter. Farming is strictly a man's profession and women are only helpers. If they need to know anything, they'll hear it from us. As you know, the thread follows the needle.

MRS. AKUNNE: I'll not accept that statement. You cannot underestimate women's contribution to agriculture. Irrespective of how you feel and what you say, women have a voice and must be allowed to express themselves.

OKAFOR: Can the women drive tractors if we get them?
(OBI and ABUA laugh.)

OBI: You should as well ask if chickens are going to grow teeth!
(More laughter.)

MRS. AKUNNE: A few years ago, you could have asked, "Can a woman go to school? Can she drive a car?" Let me answer your question. Yes, a woman can drive a tractor. She can manipulate any farm implement if taught how to do so.

OKAFOR:(*Jeers*) They'll probably knock down the giant iroko tree.
(Laughter from other men. MRS. AKUNNE leaves.)

SCENE SIX

(MRS. AKUNNE joins the women. She starts to weed and as she does so, other women watch her in admiration.)

OMEBE: Where did you acquire this skill, Madam?

MRS. AKUNNE: Don't forget I'm a farmer's daughter.

OFUNNE: We didn't think that "book" people have any strength for manual labor.

MRS. AKUNNE: I accompanied my parents to the farm and from then I developed a love for farming. When I grew up I decided to study agriculture. After obtaining my B.Sc. in Agriculture in Ibadan University, I proceeded to London where I studied Agricultural Science and Technology for my Master's degree.

NNEKA: What is Agricultural Science and Technology?

TEACHER: It is the use of science, that is chemicals and machines in farming.

MRS. AKUNNE: I had hoped that agriculture would be revolutionized by the time I came back and I wanted to set up my own farm.

TEACHER: Ask the government for tractors and fertilizer. As a big shot in the ministry you cannot be denied.

MRS. AKUNNE: You're right, Teacher, but I wouldn't feel comfortable using the government's property on my private farm while my own sisters here who pay tax labor without help.

TEACHER: You went to school and to the University and so deserve anything from the government. If anybody envies your position, they should go to school.

OFUNNE: Are you insulting us, teacher?

TEACHER: No.

OFUNNE: I hope not.

NNEKA: Ofunne! Mind your words.

OFUNNE: Leave me alone. Teacher may be a teacher, but she's not teaching me and I've no child in her classroom.

OMEBE: She doesn't feed any of us here so why should she insult us simply because we didn't go to school.
(Turns to the teacher.)
Are you aware that some of us are older than you?

TEACHER: Are you referring to me?

NNEKA: Don't listen to them teacher.

TEACHER: I'm not going to listen to illiterates and bush people. *(OFUNNE and OMEBE stare at her.)*

OMEBE: I don't blame you. If I had gone to school, you wouldn't talk to me this way.

MRS. AKUNNE: Enough of this. You have not come here to quarrel.

TEACHER: I'm sorry, Mrs. Akunne. I'm only paying the price of mixing up with. . . .

MRS. AKUNNE: That's an unpleasant thing to say.

TEACHER: Are you supporting them?

OFUNNE/OMEBE: Half baked bread!

MRS. AKUNNE: Where did you hear that?

OMEBE: That's what our sons from the city call her.

TEACHER: (*Sobbing*) I'm afraid, I have to leave.

MRS. AKUNNE: (*Restraining her*) Please don't leave. Don't, please. *(Takes her to the side, others resume work.)* They respect you and have no intention to insult you. But . . . but you should not have provoked them.

TEACHER: In what way?

MRS. AKUNNE: They're not content with their lot as illiterates and farmer's wives. Mind you, these are modern women that are deprived of the modern essentials of life which we take for granted.

TEACHER: They should have gone to school like any of us.

MRS. AKUNNE: Not everybody had the same opportunity as us. Besides, not all fathers believe in sending their daughters to school.

TEACHER: Is that my fault?

MRS. AKUNNE: No. But try to be understanding and cooperative. Like . . . you can help with hoeing.

TEACHER: With what?

MRS. AKUNNE: As women, we should come together.

TEACHER: My father was not a farmer.

MRS. AKUNNE: I know.

TEACHER: I didn't study agriculture.

MRS. AKUNNE: I didn't say you did.

TEACHER: I was born and bred in the city.

MRS. AKUNNE: Why are you telling me?

TEACHER: I wouldn't be here if I wasn't specially requested.

MRS. AKUNNE: I understand that many teachers keep some sort of farms.

TEACHER: Those are teachers brought up in villages. I could have left if not for you.

MRS. AKUNNE: Thanks. Can we go back to work?
(She joins the rest. TEACHER follows but doesn't join. The women break into a song.)

ALL: God creates life
The farmer nourishes life
The farmer sustains life
The farmer is next to God
But in his society
He is at the bottom
The poorest
And the most neglected

Gone are the yester years
Gone is the past
When everyone was a farmer
And farming respected
And farmers self-sufficient.
It's not so today.

The man who went to school
And never sweated a drop
Is the rich and respected man
Where we build huts
He builds a two story building
Why should it be so?

SOLO: Never a farmer be
Never be a farmer's wife
Our children will never
Be farmers wives.

ALL: God forbid.
(ADAEZE enters.)

ADAEZE: Can somebody help me with the cooking, I'm almost through.

NNEKA: I'll help you Adaeze.
(They exit.)

SCENE SEVEN

(A fire place. A pot of yam is cooking. There are scattered utensils including a big mortar and a small one.)

ADAEZE: I'm going to pound the food. You can help with the soup.
(ADAEZE puts down the pot of yam and begins to put some in the mortar. NNEKA grinds some ingredients in a small mortar.)
Do you want some yam?

NNEKA: Maybe a little.
(ADAEZE brings out some yam and pours out some palm oil. She pounds the rest. Both eat the yam as they work.)

ADAEZE: What's that "been to" trying to tell you?

NNEKA: You mean Mrs. Akunne?

ADAEZE: Yes. I'm wondering what a "book" woman like her is doing in our midst.

NNEKA: She likes us and thinks we're very important.

ADAEZE: Is that why she's here?

NNEKA: She said something about agricultural . . . I'll tell you when I remember the words. But she feels that we could use machines on our farms.

ADAEZE: Machine? That's for "big" people.

NNEKA: I heard that some of our past leaders and some other "big" men are using these machines.

ADAEZE: Do you want to compare yourself with them?

NNEKA: Why not?

ADAEZE: I haven't gone crazy yet. *(Deliberates)* No, I can't compare myself with "big men."

NNEKA: Why can't you? Are you not a human being like them?

ADAEZE: I don't know that. I'm a farmer's wife and I know my place.

NNEKA: Do you want to die a poor farmer?

ADAEZE: That's for our creator to decide. I'm a bit suspicious for these government people do not do anything for nothing. I'll advise you to be careful.

NNEKA: You know me very well. It's only a cow that follows it's master to the slaughter house. However, I seem to like her ideas.
(They continue with their work.)

ADAEZE: Didn't she bring any news from the headquarters?

NNEKA: She hasn't said anything yet.

ADAEZE: Do you trust her?

NNEKA: As an educated and "big" woman who is close to the government, she probably has something to say. But I'm a bit afraid. She's the type of woman who says, "Two" when her husband says, "One." Our husbands do not like us to be close to such women.
(They get the food ready and dish out.)

ADAEZE: I'm confused.

NNEKA: Maybe we shouldn't listen to her.

ADAEZE: Supposing we listen and say nothing?

NNEKA: Should we listen then?

ADAEZE: I don't know.
(They carry the food out.)

SCENE EIGHT

(ADAEZE and OMEBE appear with pounded yam food and soup and set them in three places. The biggest portion is for the men. Another portion is for MRS. AKUNNE and the TEACHER, and the third portion is for the other women.)

ADAEZE: Here is the food. (*To the Men*) My dearest ones, this is yours. Madam and Teacher have this. My fellow women, this is for us. (*The MEN sit down to eat. The TEACHER tries to move her plate to another spot, but MRS. AKUNNE stops her and takes her aside.*)

MRS. AKUNNE: Let's finish from one plate and go to the other.

TEACHER: Do you expect us to eat with these illiterate women?

MRS. AKUNNE: I'd feel uncomfortable doing otherwise.

TEACHER: You want me to eat alongside peasants who hardly wash their hands. My dear, I've seen people die of cholera, and I'll not make myself a victim of that.

(While she speaks the other WOMEN wash their hands and begin to eat.)

MRS. AKUNNE: I'm a native of this village. I spent my childhood here. We never ate without washing our hands first.

TEACHER: No need to argue. You can just go and join them.

MRS. AKUNNE: I think it's wrong for those of us who are educated to snub the village women. It's our duty to enlighten them and we can't do that unless we can work together, eat together and live together.

TEACHER: Don't say "we." If *you* want to interact with them, go right ahead. As for me, I find their mentality very low. It's useless speaking with them. I'm going to join the men. They are not much better but they think clearer and are cleaner.
(She goes over to them. MRS. AKUNNE joins the women.)

TEACHER: (*To the men*) Can I join you please?

OBI: Do you want some of our food, Teacher?

TEACHER: I want to join you.

OKAFOR: I don't understand.

TEACHER: I want to eat with you.

OKAFOR: If you want some of our food we'll be glad to give you some.

OBI: I don't even think we can spare any of our food. The mouth must have enough to eat before it spills into the beard.

ABUA: How about your own share, Teacher?

TEACHER: Mrs. Akunne decided to eat with the women, so I decided to join you.

ALL: (*Laughter*) To join us, eh?

OKAFOR: We don't want to quarrel with you since you're educated. However, thunder is not rain.

TEACHER: I don't understand.

OKAFOR: We know that if there was no elephant in the jungle the buffalo would be a great animal. But, thank God, the elephants still exist and remain the giants of the forest.

TEACHER: You're all stupid!
(She goes over to the women.)

ADAEZE: Join us, Teacher.

TEACHER: I took a laxative this morning and can't eat yet.

OFUNNE: Do you want us to save some for you?

TEACHER: No, thank you. I just want to sit here with you.

MRS. AKUNNE: I was just telling them about mechanised agriculture. They're fascinated.

TEACHER: Isn't it a pity to know that, despite modernization and mechanization our farmers have to toil all day on the land and produce very little.

OMEBE: Our condition is hopeless. We have no say in the government. Nobody will listen to a woman, much less a farmer.

MRS. AKUNNE: That's not true, my dear. A woman has a voice, but unless she uses it, she'll remain a slave to men, to the government, and to the society as a whole.

OMEBE: You mean we can talk to the government?

MRS. AKUNNE: You can talk to the government. You can talk to the world. If you want to know, you're the most important people in the world.

OMEBE:We are?

MRS. AKUNNE: You're mothers, wives, and individuals who have their own lives to live and contributions to make to the progress of the nation. At present, you're tied down by traditions, superstitutions and contradictions. You must learn how to rid yourselves of those burdens.

(The Men, who have finished their meal, join the Women, who are also finishing up.)

NNEKA: How do we unload ourselves, Madam? Should we stop providing for our families?

(The Women laugh)

ADAEZE: Should we divorce our husbands?

(More laughter.)

MRS. AKUNNE: This is not funny, Nneka and Adaeze. We are the majority in the society today. If you don't raise your voice now, when agriculture becomes mechanized, it will be dominated by men, and you women will be turned into nothing but cheap labor.

OKAFOR: (*To OBI*) Do you hear her? She's coming from the city to turn our women against us.

(*To ADAEZE*) Your food is delicious. We enjoyed it.

ADAEZE: Thank you. I'll go and clear the plates.
(She leaves.)

MRS. AKUNNE: My fellow women, you must assert yourselves, otherwise you'll be poor, unable to purchase the food you grow, and your children may never have the opportunity to advance beyond your present status . . .

OKAFOR: When you came here, Madam, we welcomed you. Little did we know that you'd come to poison the minds of our wives.

MRS. AKUNNE: I've no intention of turning the women against you. I only want them to realize their importance in agricultural development.

OBI: I can see you're one of these "libbers" and you've come to divide our house. If a man is rich, does his wife not bask in his wealth?

MEN: Of course.

OBI: Let's go back to work. Get up, women, and return to your assignments.
(He turns to leave.)

MRS. AKUNNE: Don't leave. Everybody, both men and women are going to benefit from my ideas.

ABUA: Obi, listen to her.
(They stop.)

MRS. AKUNNE: Women are not the only exploited group. Farmers like you in rural areas are equally victims of industrialization. If we don't come together and decide how we want to mechanize our farming, corrupt officials and greedy corporations will take over our lands and transform us into cheap laborers.

ABUA: What can we do?

MRS. AKUNNE: We must fight hunger, starvation, poverty, squalor and loss of self-respect. You must say no to exploitation and degradation.

OBI: How can it be done?

MRS. AKUNNE: Simply by making farming a respectable profession. Let's see what's happening in other parts of the world.
(She shows slides or films of medium scale farmers in developed countries who farm and maintain livestock with the help of technology. She also shows the picture that reveals how the farmers eat well, enjoy amenities—good

homes, tap water, electricity. Infrastructure like good roads, good transportation are shown.)

OKAFOR: Mrs. Akunne, you must take responsibility for this exposure you are giving these women.

OBI: Don't deceive the women into believing that we're equal.

MRS. AKUNNE: I've not ignored you men, have I? Why are you afraid whenever a women gets enlightened?

OKAFOR: If modernization will divide our families, then we don't need it.

MRS. AKUNNE: Modern farming is not intended to divide the family. It shouldn't make one sex subordinate to the other either.

OBI: How? Is a woman not a member of a man's family? Doesn't she enjoy her husband's status and wealth? Is she not allowed to own and control her own wealth? Why have you come to corrupt our women?

MRS. AKUNNE: Do not view this as a fight against men. Women are only fighting for recognition and respect as equal partners in life and in jobs. Women have to join in decision-making and cannot contribute their best if they have to take commands from you.

OKAFOR: Don't you want our wives to obey us?

MRS. AKUNNE: No.

NNEKA: We like to obey our husbands, Madam. They married us, not we them.

MRS. AKUNNE: No, Nneka. Two of you married each other out of love. You should make decisions together.

OBI: How is the government going to help us? That's what we should be discussing.

MRS. AKUNNE: Supposing we unite to form an association or a cooperative and march to the government to tell them what we need.

ABUA: That's a great plan.

WOMEN: Let's unite and form a cooperative.

OKAFOR: Let's tell the government that we need heavy duty tractors!

ABUA: Heavy duty tractors will knock most of us out of our farms. Let's request small tractors so that many of us can still farm.

OBI: No form of tractor, no matter how small, will guarantee everybody sufficient land to farm. Isn't that so, Mrs. Akunne?

MRS. AKUNNE: You're right. But we don't all have to be tied to the soil. With machines, fertilizers and high yielding crops, farm labor will be reduced. At the same time, we'll have surplus food and will have to open up processing and packaging factories and other industries that will provide jobs. We'll have money and time for education and travel and entertainments. Farm mechanization will not be a means to an end. It will be a means for progress in other developments.

TEACHER: Our plans are great. But what happens if tomorrow the government takes over our lands and then passes them out to its employees, favored firms and rich individuals?

MRS. AKUNNE: If united, we can fight any legislation that goes against our interests.

OMEBE: Our land is a gift of God. We were born in it and we inherited it. The pride and joy of everyone is the knowledge that he is occupying the land of his ancestors, the abode of the dead and the living. If a man has no education or technical skill, he's not useless. By his natural strength and the gift of the land, he can still farm, earn a living and educate his children.
(They break into a song.)

ALL: We're children of Kiliki
Kiliki is our homeland
Kiliki was not bought by money
Kiliki is not a free gift.
Kiliki is our land.
It is the land of our forefathers
It was the home of our ancestors
The great land of heroes
Who died defending their home.
Kiliki is our home
And we must make it fruitful.

(Solo)

When my father was on his death bed,
He called me, my three brothers and two sisters,
And said to us,
"Children, I'm dying a poor farmer.
I leave no money for you to inherit.
I have no treasures
Hidden anywhere in the world.

My only property is the land
And I leave it for you to inherit.
Till it, plough it, farm it.
Make it fruitful and bountiful
For land is wealth.

OMEBE: (*To others.*) God forbid that strangers we do not know should take possession of our land and turn us into laborers.

ALL: God forbid that strangers should take over the land of our forefathers.

OMEBE: Say God forbid that you should sow for others to reap.

ALL: God forbid that we sweat on our land and reap no reward.

ADAEZE: We've worked to feed our families and the whole nation. May we live long enough to see progress and improvement in our lives.

ALL: Long life is our goal and progress our determination.

NNEKA: When new development comes to ease our labor and pain and brings us prosperity, may we live well and educate ourselves and our children.

ALL: Ami! Ami! God will hear our prayer.

TEACHER: Let's pray that this meeting today will be a beginning to a joint and a cooperative effort.

ALL: It will be!

OFUNNE: May we be an inspiration to other communities and may they come together and form their own associations and cooperatives.

MRS. AKUNNE: May our organization be an example to all suffering farmers all over the world. May those who gave their lands away out of need and ignorance or those whose lands were forcibly appropriated, come together and struggle to regain what is rightly theirs.

ALL: God will help the dispossessed regain their birth rights.

ADAEZE: May we as partners in life and in business enjoy the fruit of our labors. May our men recognise that as wives and mothers, we carry the extra burdens of bringing the little ones to the earth and nursing them to maturity. As such, we deserve more rest and better treatment than we're receiving today. Let the men promise us that they'll always give us a fair share of our labor.

OKAFOR: (*To OBI*) This is turning into something else.

OBI: (*To OKAFOR*) It will get out of hand if we remain here and listen to them.

OKAFOR: Thank you, Madam, for being with us today. You can go back now. Teacher, please mark down the names of the women who are not here. The rest of you get back to work.
(The women do not respond.)
Are you going back to work or not?
(Some women ignore him, some are restless and undecided.)
Adaeze, Omebe, Ofunne, Nneka, do you hear me? Before I count ten, I want you back to work. One, two, three, four, five
(OFUNNE and NNEKA start to pick up their hoes, MRS. AKUNNE fixes her eyes on them.)
six, seven, eight,
(OFUNNE breaks into tears but does not move.)
nine, ten. Let's go home, men, and tell our elders what our eyes have seen today!

OBI: I don't think our lips can repeat such terrible things! Nneka, if you know you're my wife, get back to work!
(NNEKA hesitates. Tries to go back to work, but all the women's eyes are fixed on her. She steps back.)
You've made your choice Nneka. When you leave this farm, return to your mother's home.

NNEKA: What about our children?

OBI: My mother will take good care of them.
(NNEKA breaks into tears.)
Let's go men.
(ABUA is reluctant to leave.)
Are you not coming Abua?
(ABUA calls them aside.)

ABUA: Ofunne and Nneka are crying.

OKAFOR: (*Teases*) Are you bothered by a woman's crocodile tears?

OBI: Don't waste your spit on Abua. After all, not all those with male organs are really men.

ABUA: I don't mind your insults. I'm concerned about our women and their state of mind. What is going on inside them? How many times have our wives cried and we've ignored them? We know their tears are expressions of their inner feelings, a drowning of words they cannot utter for fear of being dismissed as bad women. Some of

us are bothered by the tears, but we have to be *men*, and to be *men* we have to hide our own good feelings. Should we not find out what is happening in the women's minds, the pain, the sorrow, grief and anguish they are trying to suppress in order to remain under our roofs and serve us and the children. I'm a man but I'm not a man without feelings or conscience. A woman has a voice, let's hear her.

OBI: Okafor, let's go. Abua can join "her" fellow women.
(As they try to leave, MRS. AKUNNE stops them.)

MRS. AKUNNE: Stop gentlemen. We're here to discuss our fate, organize our lives, and plan the future. We can't do that unless we change our present attitudes and behavior patterns. You men have as much liberation to do as the women. You must liberate your selves from yourselves. To do this you must discard your false ego. You're not supermen, you're not heroes. You're not failures if you show emotions or concern and understanding for your female counterparts. A man also suffers humiliations. Is it not humiliating to any of you that a city man who is educated or who has a good job should come here and treat you as inferiors?
(Pauses.)
You must recognize women as your working partners, and cooperate with them if you want to transform your lives and the entire community.

OKAFOR: We've heard what you said. Let me drink some water and then I'll reply to you. Adaeze, please get me some water to drink.
(ADAEZE leaves reluctantly.)

TEACHER: We women, too have to change our attitudes and behavior. I've learned from Mrs. Akunne's good example and we should all learn by it. We need education but education doesn't necessarily admit us to the men's cult. We must prove ourselves by bringing out our hidden talents. We must show the world that women are as gifted as men. We must cooperate and re-educate ourselves in order to accomplish this.

OBI: How about the men? Don't they need adult education?

TEACHER: You need education to broaden your understanding, better your standard of living and improve your profession, which in this case is agriculture. If we can assemble here today to work on one of our elder's farms, we can also assemble for a joint cooperative venture. When the spider webs unite, they can tie up an elephant.
(ADAEZE brings water for OKAFOR.)

OKAFOR (*To ADAEZE.*): Thank you, beautiful woman.
(To others.)
Thank you for your fine speeches. We're all lovers of progress. But the question is this: if our women start acting like men, who will fix our food, and who will give us water to drink?

TEACHER: You and your women will do it together. Let's hear more from you, Mrs. Akunne.

MRS. AKUNNE: Let's progress according to our own pace. A little rain each day will fill the rivers to overflowing.

OBI: Thank you, Madam, for spending your time with us. We've heard what you said, but we must go home and consult with the elders for a final decision.
(OKAFOR exits.)

MRS. AKUNNE: Don't say goodbye yet, Mr. Obi. We still have to reach an agreement. Then we can all march to the elders.

OBI: I appreciate your advice. However, I'm not in a position to make any kind of agreement with a pack of women when men are still alive. Good day.
(OKAFOR enters with some yams.)

OKAFOR: Okpara has asked me to distribute these to you.
(The women consult among themselves.)

ADAEZE: Thank Okpara for us. Tell him we'll be coming tomorrow to finish the work.

OBI: Do you make decisions by yourselves now?

TEACHER: Since we spent part of the day talking, we only think it is sensible to make up for it tomorrow. We also need to talk more.

OKAFOR: Please yourselves.
(Leaves with OBI. ABUA remains.)
Are you not leaving, Abua?

ABUA: What do we lose if we cooperate with the women? Why are we always impatient to listen to our best instincts?

OBI: Do you want to listen to your female instincts?

ABUA: I don't care how you describe it. How many times have we fought ourselves in endless wars? How many times have we killed each other, died in order to satisfy the ambition of a fellow man? By warring have we not caused destruction, hunger, misery and destitution to our people? Why should we be afraid of being called

'weak' if by weakness we defend a just cause? My instinct tells me to cooperate with these women and I'll do so.

OKAFOR: Let's go, Obi. If he chooses to become a woman, it's his business.

NNEKA: I want to leave, Madam. If I don't, my husband will lock me out.

TEACHER: Stay Nneka. If your husband locks you out, we shall not abandon you.
(NNEKA remains reluctantly.)

MRS. AKUNNE: We cannot rely on our men to dream our dreams. Having laid our eggs, we must hatch them. Let's march to our men and the elders with our demands and tell them that a woman has a voice. Let's awaken our sisters and brothers in other villages and invite them to join in our dream. Let's make demands and make them known to the government and the world and let them know that we are united. Let's make demands and insist on them.

NNEKA: What if we are rejected by the government, or even thrown into prison?

MRS. AKUNNE: Threats and punishments will not still our voice. We're special people and deserve special treatment. In the past, and in the days of the British rule, Aba market women went on riot against the government's unjust taxation. Many of them lost their lives but they fought a good cause. May their souls rest in peace.

ALL: Amen.

MRS. AKUNNE: Let's observe a moment of silence for the dead heroines. (Pause) In Abeokura, women united together and rioted against their king and the British government for general injustice and unfavorable taxation. They got their way. Should we disappoint the spirits of our dead heroines by saying "Yes" to neglect, injustice and degradation? We've heard that teachers strike, doctors "go on work slow" and government workers refuse to go to work unless a demand is met. But how many of you have ever heard that farmers have gone on strike?

ALL: Never.

MRS. AKUNNE: Well, if teachers and doctors can go on strike, farmers can lay down their tools if their voice is ignored.

TEACHER: This looks like a revolution but we don't have a name for it.

ADAEZE: I have a name—"Green Revolution."

MRS. AKUNNE: That sounds good, but a Green Revolution is not our own idea and it could end up with us losing our lands.

OMEBE: How about "Agricultural Revolution"?

MRS. AKUNNE: Better, since we intend to mechanize. But remember, we're going to be concerned with other industrial development as well.

TEACHER: "Industrial Revolution" then.

MRS. AKUNNE: That fits our aspiration, but the world has passed the age of industrial revolution. We can take advantage of industrial and technological developments in the world. We have intelligent, educated and skilled women and men in our country, don't we?

ALL: We do.

MRS. AKUNNE: Talent and genius are gifts of God and we are not deprived.

ALL: God knows we are not.

MRS. AKUNNE: Given the right atmosphere and motivation, we are capable of being like any developed nation. God has bestowed us with natural gifts, to name a few, petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, limestone, lead, zinc. We're not lacking in fertile land, ocean, rivers, streams and underground water. We have people who can exploit these resources and create and invent. For this to happen, we need well-nourished and healthy people. We need people who are not glued to the land and have to expend all their energy and time for food production on a mere subsistence level. Why are we scared of the word "technology," and why do we have to be perpetually dependent on other nations? What is "technology" anyway?

TEACHER: There are several definitions, but, principally, it is the science of the application of knowledge to practical purposes, a technical method of achieving a practical purpose.

MRS. AKUNNE: Thank you teacher. We do not have to go to the moon, but we're capable of developing our own technology to suit our particular circumstances. We need schools of Agriculture and Research Centers so that we can work with them hand in hand to develop the best crops for our farms and fertilizers, preservatives and insecticides that do not poison the food or pollute the environment. We have gas for production of fertilizers. Our petroleum en-

sures us of power for our machines. Why can't we produce our farming needs by ourselves? We need an infrastructure of good roads, water supplies and electricity. Can we not construct them? Let's call our revolution a "Brain Revolution." A revolution which is going to open the door for other developments and decrease our dependency on other nations. We must stand on our feet for a borrowed fiddle does not finish a tune.

ALL: That's true. A borrowed fiddle does not finish a tune. We must create, invent, develop and build a powerful nation. This is a brain revolution.

MRS. AKUNNE: Thank you all. We can get ready to go.

OMEBE: I want to fetch some firewood for dinner. I'll give some to you, Teacher.

TEACHER: No thank you. I use a gas cooker.

(OMEBE and the others, except the TEACHER and MRS. AKUNNE fetch firewood. They also share their yams and balance their loads on their heads. ABUA follows behind with no load.)

MRS. AKUNNE: You can put some of your things in my car. Let's carry our placards and march and let our men, the government and the world know exactly our needs.

(She hands out placards bearing the following information:

1. *Brain Revolution*
2. *Small tractors.*
3. *Farming implements.*
4. *Fertilizers, pesticides, and high yielding crops.*
5. *School of Agriculture in our communities.*
6. *Agriculturalists and extension workers to teach us.*
7. *Research Centers.*
8. *Adult Schools.*
9. *Social welfare for the needy. Medical facilities for all.)*

(They walk away singing.)

No matter how long the night is
Dawn is sure to come
Proud women of Kiliki
Strong community of Kiliki
our day is dawned
We must use the day
To prepare for the night.

DUAL: We ploughed and toiled
We worked hard
To maintain our generations
And regenerate ourselves
Today, a revolution
Is in progress
It is the brain revolution
A child of the brain

ALL: No matter how long the night is.
Dawn is sure to come.

END